



The Phonographic Record

The Journal of The Vintage Phonograph Society of New Zealand

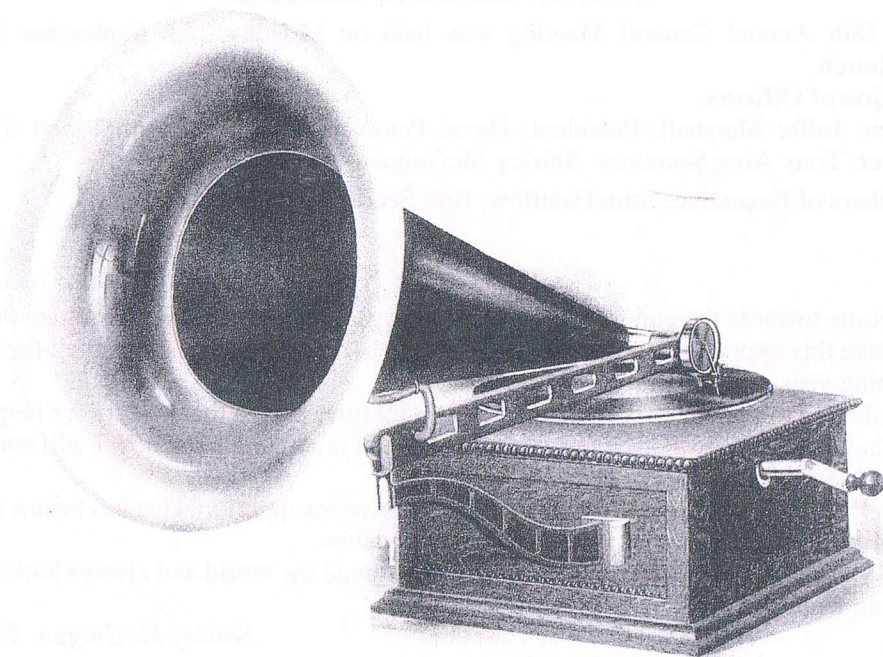
A Society formed for the preservation of Recorded Sound

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**COLUMBIA DISC GRAPHOPHONE
"REPUBLIC" MODEL BA.
NO 9 1906**

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Well here we are, another year is almost behind us, how time goes. The New Zealand dollar continues to rise, today 62 NZ cents to the US dollar — where will it end?

We are fairly well stocked with parts, and have many reprints of catalogues for sale.

It is only through Larry Schlick's generosity that we are able to bring you more pictures of Larry Donelys last Swap Meet.

We are able to include another small leaflet with this issue, and we hope you will all have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

In the next issue we hope to include illustrations and information about a large auction of phonographs, music boxes and artefacts held in Auckland belonging to the Wagener Museum. Unusual for so much to come on the market at one time. Held over four days with up to 4,427 items offered for sale.

We were sad to lose two fine artists during the year — Slim Dusty and Johnny Cash.

Walter Norris, Editor

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 38th Annual General Meeting was held on Monday 24th September 2003 in Christchurch.

Election of Officers:

Patron: Joffre Marshall; President: David Peterson; Vice President: Robert Sleeman; Treasurer: Tony Airs; Secretary: Shirley McGuigan.

Members of Executive: John Hastilow, Bob Searle, Wilf Boon.

SECRETARY'S NOTES

We come towards the end of another year yet again and with Christmas almost upon us would take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy festive season and all the best for the coming year.

I would like to welcome Tony Airs back as Treasurer and to thank Tony for helping out while I have been away visiting family in America. It is a big help to know I will come back and find everything well organised.

To the members of the Committee, thank you for your support in what has been a difficult year for me. I appreciate your help and your friendship.

I enjoy the contact with all our members from around the world and always look forward to hearing from you.

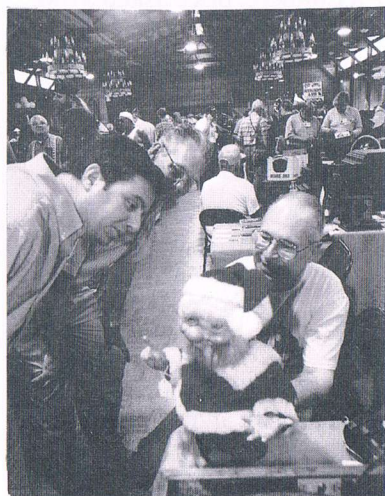
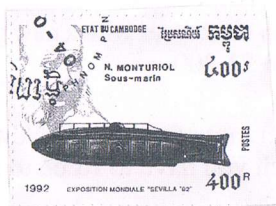
Shirley McGuigan, Secretary

ILLUSTRATIONS

Stamps:

These stamps are from the State of Cambodia, in Asia, between Thailand and Vietnam. A very colourful set of stamps which feature inventions — R. Fulton with his paddle steamer, Bell's first telephone, Edison's electric light bulb, Morse with his telegraph, De la Cierva with his autogiro and N. Moniuriol with a submarine. The stamps are postmarked 04.05.92.

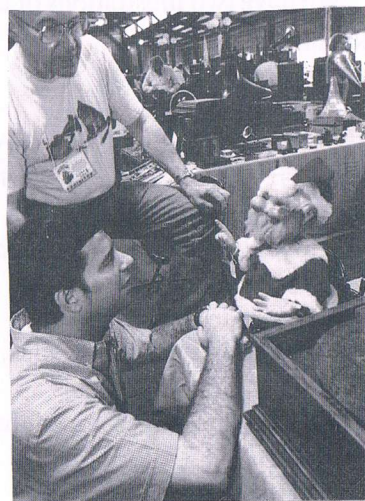
STAMPS



SANTA CLAUS NODDER DOLL



EDISON OPERA



NODDER DOLL

Nodding Doll:

Santa Claus Nodder Doll — asking price \$300 US.

Edison Opera:

An Edison Opera machine — a very nice one in good condition — \$7,500.

Trademark Berliner:

Trademark Berliner — National Gram Co. New elbow but wrong reproducer. \$4,500. Also Victor model C \$3,500, and a glass sided Zonophone, all original \$4,500.

Talking Dolls:

Seven lovely talking dolls owned by Robin and Joan Rolfs. Joan has a large collection and has published a book on talking dolls. She is now working on a new book on Children's phonograph records. Her book on dolls is excellent and well worth the price, Larry says. The dolls are Mac Starr, Madam Henore and Jumeau. Her address is: Audio Antique, S4994 W6273 Hortonville, Wisconsin.

Radios:

Edison Diamond Disc radio phone's \$4,500. Next on right a Brunswick Panatrope automatic, and the third on the right is an Edison Diamond Disc, made in 1924, price \$4,000.

Columbia Q:

A Columbia Q cylinder machine in nice order with a new glass horn — never seen this type of horn in New Zealand — priced at \$1,800.

Klingsor:

This model also looks in fine order, not often seen in New Zealand — price \$2,500. Also, on the right is a musical chair, which you have to sit on to make it play, price \$400.

Pathe Diffusor:

We have two illustrations of this machine, it folds down like a Lumiere, price asked \$780.

Records:

Just no end to them.

Wicker Machine:

The owner, pictured, was very proud of this unusual machine, which he had repainted for sale. Haywood Wakefield "Perfection" works. Asking price \$1,400.

German Symphonium:

A lovely machine, good collection of discs, 22 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch disc, Model 130 Also has metal bells. Asking price \$10,500.

Coloured records:

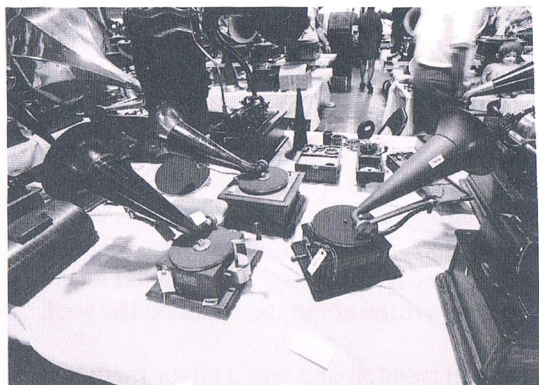
Case full of records, needles, reproducers, record cleaners etc.

Typical Booth:

Back row machines priced from \$1,700 — \$2,500. Nice coin in the slot and a Pathe in the front.

Band Organ:

This is a home made Werlitzer Band Organ. Larry Schlick said it played well.



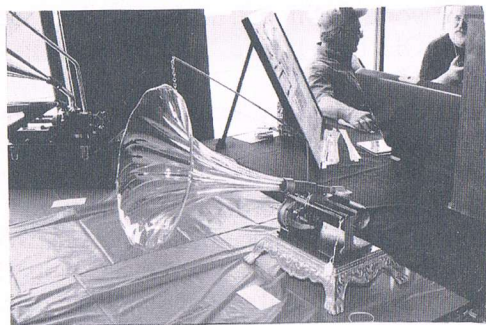
TRADE MARK BERLINER



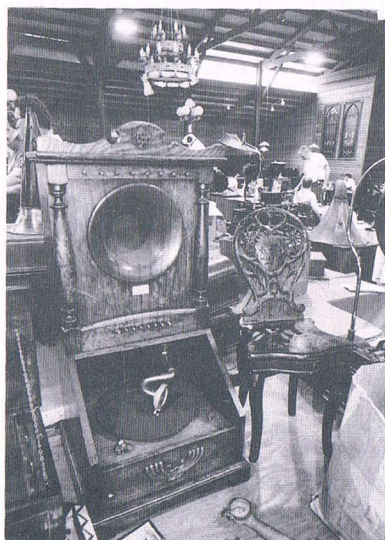
TALKING DOLLS



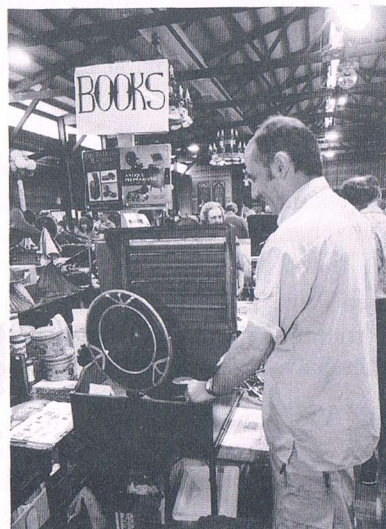
RADIO'S



COLUMBIA Q



A KLINGSOR



PATHE DIFFUSOR

Multi Wood Horns:

We have shown pictures of these inlaid horns before. They range in price from \$300 to \$1,250. Sights and Sounds of Edison, Don Gfell, 21 Main Street, Milan, Ohio, USA 44846.

Ivy Moloney Dance Band:

This lady Ivy Moloney was a wonderful pianist, she and her husband who played the saxophone formed an old time band who played in the Caledonian Hall in Christchurch (New Zealand) every Saturday night. They recorded quite a number of long playing records, which are not hard to find, and if real old time music is what you like, I can recommend these records. They were recorded at least 25 years ago. Both Ivy and George Maloney have passed on, so you can no longer hear her play. I have included what is written about the Band on the back of a record sleeve.

Ivy Moloney, Pianist: Leader of the band was born in London and was a silver medallist at the Trinity College of Music, London. Came to New Zealand, and has wide experience in dance work, traditional, modern, and is a specialist in old time dance music. Has been playing for the Old Time Dance Association for the last 20 years. Ivy played for her first dance at the age of 13 years.

George Moloney, Saxophone: Husband of Ivy, was born in Dunedin, and has been associated with music all his life. Has a wide experience of all types of music and played in many of the larger dance bands, then started playing for old time dancing 20 years ago.

Bob Mellis, Accordion: Was born and brought up in Scotland where he had his own Scottish Country Dance Band called the Westburn Accordion Band. Came to New Zealand where he started his own Scottish Country Dance Band, then several years ago joined Ivy's band. Has introduced a bit of Scottish music to some of the old time dances, which has proved very popular.

Maurice Mackrell, Drums: Born in New Zealand, and has a wide experience in all types of music having played with some of the well known bands. Joined Ivy's band several months ago, and enjoys the change to old time music, but still has a great love for Dixieland and Jazz music.

Music Boxes:

Starting from the left, a 9" Miraphone \$2,700, Victor Regina 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ " Disc \$4,950, a Mira 12" disc machine \$2,450, an empty Regina case \$475, a Criterian 20 $\frac{3}{4}$ " \$4,450. Down the side a Tanzabar self playing Accordion, a Reginaphone 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ " disc machine \$3,600, a Polyphone \$1,175 and a Reginaphone \$5,900.

More Rare Treasures:

Front left, another glass horn Pathe \$1,800, and in front of it is a grey French Gem \$1,950. At the back are some early radios and a Pathe in a box \$1,200.

Rudy Vallee Record:

Recorded by Rudy Vallee and his Connecticut Yankees. These are flexible records only a few had pictures on the back. We think they are early long playing records — they play twice as long as standard records.

Resona Record Sleeves:

A company we have not come across in New Zealand.

COLUMBIA DISC GRAPHOPHONE

(Illustrated on Front Cover)

Model Republic (BA) 1906

No. 9

This model manufactured by Columbia, never carried the Columbia anywhere on the case. It is considerably larger than the Empire, but used the analyzing reproducer with automatic needle clamp. This machine was designed exclusively for sale through mail order companies — it was offered first to George Shaw & Co., and after to Spiegel, May Stern Co. Universal Home Furnishers.

The illustration on the front cover and the following wording came from a Spiegel May Stern Co. catalogue through the kindness of Larry Schlick.

Republic Disc Machine, Type BA.

The Republic Disc machine is considerably larger than the Empire type, and for this reason is more desirable. The cabinet is made of selected solid oak, highly polished, and is 12 inches square and 6 inches high. It is a most handsome design made with decorated beading around the top and at the base of panel. The horn is of black and gold and is made of the best steel, with an elegant brass bell. It measures 21 inches in length, and the bell measures 13 1/2 inches.

The Reproducer is the latest concert analyzing type, with automatic needle clamp, and the motor is of the powerful spring design, absolutely noiseless. Has the latest type worm gear governor and latest speed-regulating device. It is made with 10-inch turntable and adapted for 10-inch or 7-inch disc records. Machine can be wound while playing, and will play two records with a single winding. Is furnished with 100 needles and two-part needle box. Shipped on 30 Days' Free Trial:

Outfit No. 6: Republic Disc Machine, complete as above described, with twelve 7-inch Columbia disc records. Price, \$18.95; preliminary deposit with order, \$3.95; \$1.85 monthly until paid.

Outfit No. 7: Republic Disc Machine, complete as above described, with six 7-inch and six 10-inch Columbia disc records. Price, \$20.45; preliminary deposit with order, \$4.45; \$2.00 monthly until paid.

Outfit No. 8: Republic Disc Machine, complete as above described, with twelve 10-inch Columbia disc records. Price, \$21.95; preliminary deposit with order, \$4.55; \$2.15 monthly until paid.

Outfit No. 9: Republic Disc Machine, complete as above described, with twelve 7-inch and twelve 10-inch Columbia disc records. Price, \$26.15; preliminary deposit with order, \$5.35; \$2.60 monthly until paid.

Outfit No. 10: Republic Disc Machine, complete as above described, with twenty-four 10-inch Columbia disc records. Price, \$29.15; preliminary deposit with order, \$5.95; \$2.90 monthly until paid.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Vintage Phonograph Society of N.Z., A.G.M. — 22/9/03

It is incredible that already a year has passed since our last AGM

With the support and assistance of the members who regularly attend our monthly meetings here in Christchurch, the Society operates as a strong network of like-minded people. As a group we take pride in being able to offer advice to members concerning their machines, and assistance with parts to resurrect and restore phonographs and gramophones to their former glory. It is always a thrill when a project nears completion, and the first disc or cylinder is played on an almost complete restoration. In many cases, it may be the first time in perhaps 50 or more years, that sound is reproduced from the machine.

I would like to pay tribute to Shirley our Secretary, who in a very busy year personally, has continued to do a fine job for the Society throughout the year. Packing and sending away the parts orders is also a busy role, and I would like to thank Gavin for very efficiently taking care of this.

The first edition of the "Phonographic Record" was printed in 1965, soon after the Phonograph Society was formed. Walter has been Editor since 1972, and Walter is still Editor to this day, of our very popular and informative magazine. A vote of thanks must go to him for such loyal commitment to the task!

Tony continues to supply us with the majority of items on the sales list, and hardly a month goes by without receiving comment from members on the fine quality of reproduction and manufacture of the many parts we are able to provide in order that members can complete projects they are working on.

As always there have been many interesting and informative discussions throughout the past year, and it is pleasing to note that the Society has consistently continued to increase in membership numbers. And so finally, I would like to thank the members who attend our monthly meetings for their input in the running of the Society, and thanks also to those who have made their homes available for the meetings to be held.

LETTER FROM ROGER COLE, NELSON, N.Z.

BEWARE THE INDIAN FAKES.

In my travels through Australia I have come across a number of "reproduction" external horn gramophones. These are made in India, and frequently use motors, tone arms and sound boxes from HMV portables — even to the extent of having angled winding handles in some cases. The horns are sometimes originals but often modern reproductions. They are sold in reputable antique shops, but the proprietors acknowledge what they are and sell them as recently made reproduction machines for between \$300 and \$400. The cases are usually completely newly made but sometimes originals are used. Often no brand decal is on the case, sometimes a reproduction square green HMV decal as found on suitcase portables is used. Generally, the needle holder, which on a properly set up machine should touch the turntable spindle, is significantly out of alignment when put to this test.

These are now appearing in New Zealand. I have found one locally which has an HMV portable tone arm which has been cut in half and welded with the back half turned 180° so it goes up into a reproduction — and chromed — rear horn bracket. The sound box is HMV No. 4, the case clearly labelled Columbia, the louvers replaced with a slab of wood masquerading as oak. The horn is original, fastened with a self-tapping screw to a reproduction and again chromed elbow. The asking price — \$1,195. The need to adjust the price has been recognised!

The proprietors were devastated when I explained to them what it was. I don't think these machines would fool anyone with some collecting experience, but they could fool a novice.
Kind regards to all, Roger Cole.

Reprinted from "THE PHONOGRAM", January 1901

Printed each issue for those interested in Phones, Graphs, Grams and Scopes.

Devoted to the Arts of Reproducing Sound.

(Part 14)

N



**N is for NICKEL
That's dropped in a slot
It makes music (and money)
For the druggist, I wot.**

A NEW NIPPER FOR CAMDEN

By Ewart Rouse and Douglas A. Campbell

Every stained glass window, Philadelphia artist John Beirs was saying, tells a story.
"When the medium works well, as it does in this case, it's telling the story of Little Nipper," he said.

The reference was to the stained glass panels with images of a dog listening to his masters voice over a gramophone at the tower of the landmark Nipper building in Camden.

Dominating the city's skyline, the four decorative windows, which date to the building's

opening in 1916, also told the story of a city that, in its prime, was the economic centre of South Jersey.

"In those days . . . people could literally see those windows lit up . . . from miles around," said Fred Barnum, who wrote a history of RCA, *His Master's Voice in America*, published in 1991.

That spectacle is about to come back.

Come July 4th, the Nipper tower, now an eyesore with its stained glass panels shattered by vandals, will again light up, showcasing a brand new Nipper.

That's the time frame for Cooper's Ferry, the non-profit agency charged with marketing the building to developers, and Beirs, the Philadelphia artist commissioned to recreate Nipper from scratch.

The lighting to be done at a formal ceremony, is intended as a statement.

"It symbolizes hope," said William Spearman, manager of the project for Cooper's Ferry. "It's saying that maybe there is hope that the city will turn itself around."

With the aid of a computer, Beirs and his assistant, Emily Selvin, have completed the first set of panels for the four circular windows, each of which measures $15\frac{1}{2}$ feet in diameter.

To purists who might fret that his Nipper, brought to life through high-tech methodology, isn't the real thing, Beirs points out there is no way to restore what's left of Nipper in the tower.

"It's not worth it," he said. "There's nothing there, just a few pieces of glass."



Pieces of the windows, which are nine stories up, are missing. The building dates to 1916.

Besides, what's left isn't the real thing. The original panels suffered extensive damage and were replaced in the late 1970s he noted.

Cooper's Ferry has budgeted \$50,000 for the tower project. The money is part of \$900,000 provided by the Delaware River Port Authority to clean and secure the building to make it more marketable to potential developers.

Building 17, as it was known, was erected in 1916 by the Victor Talking Machine Co., RCA's ancestor, and was used to make cabinets to house Victrolas, said Barnum. The building has 500,000 square feet spread over six floors, plus the tower on top, which is three stories high. It is one of four remaining buildings from the 20 building complex that once comprised RCA.

"The reason for the tower and the ornate windows was that they had to hide an unsightly set of water towers," explained Barnum, 40, who lives in Cherry Hill and works there for RCA's descendant, Lockheed Martin Corp.

One of the country's best known advertising trademarks, Nipper was a mutt, part bull terrier and a trace of fox terrier. The trademark was registered in the United States in 1900.

Victor commissioned Philadelphia's D'Ascenzo Studios, a noted stained glass maker, to build the four windows, Barnum said. RCA bought Victor in 1929 and went on to make a variety of products there, "from early commercial radio apparatus to sophisticated space and defence electronics in the later years," Barnum said.

In 1969, RCA decided to upgrade its image and replaced the "Nipper" windows with "RCA" in block letters. The four Nipper windows were donated, one each, to the Smithsonian Institution, Pennsylvania State University, Widener University and the Camden County Historical Society.

In 1979, RCA commissioned a new set of Nipper windows, the ones that have been deteriorating since the early 1990s, when Martin Marietta, Lockheed Martin's predecessor, turned the building over to the city, Barnum said.

In November, work crews began removing asbestos from throughout the building. They also started removing debris from the first floor and courtyard, and sealing up the windows with canvas.

Electricity is being run to the tower to light it up, and security cameras will be installed in an effort to protect the new investment.

Beirs, who has been working in glass for 30 years, also views the project as an opportunity to showcase his work.

"I've done a lot of restaurants, about 40 restaurants, but none of them are existing," he said. "When you do public building, they tend to stay a lot longer, and it doesn't get any more visible than this – nine stories high, and lit up at night."

Beirs designed the illustration in his computer and printed it out on an ink-jet printer in 3-by-9-foot sections, then pasted the pieces together.

"I was then able to draw over it, and draw it to full size," said Beirs. "It (the computer) made it easier. Otherwise, I'd have to have a 16-foot ceiling and draw the whole thing by hand."

While a lot of the work is high-tech, "it still takes an artist to make the critical judgments as far as scale, size, correct drawing, colour and glass choices," he explained.

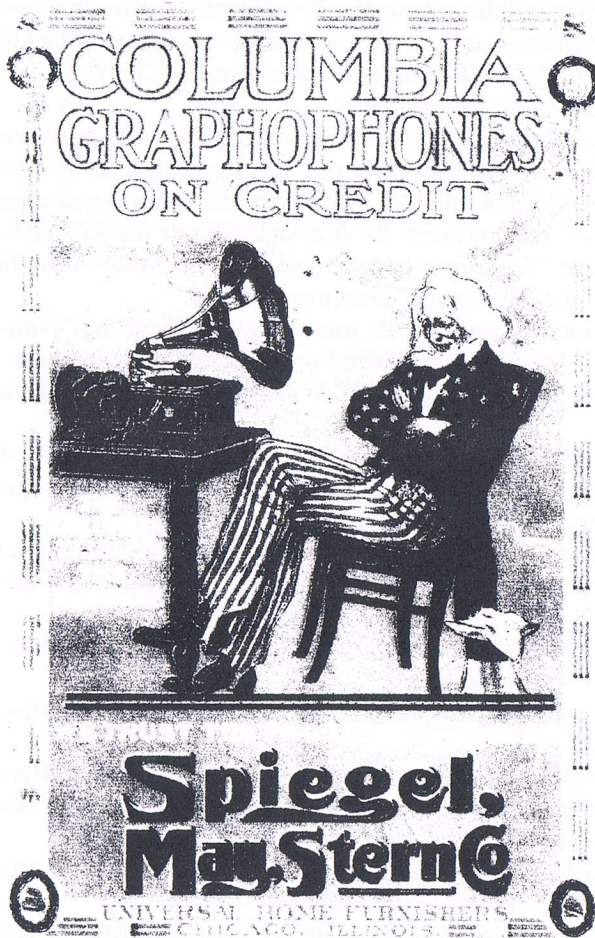
He made the glass choices at a New York warehouse late last month, selecting glass that he thought would give the "right contrast and vibrancy, and the dynamics of colour working together."

He has been hand-painting Nipper's image on the glass, going from a solid green to a greenish brown, with some brown around the dog's ears, eyes and nose. The gramophone that Nipper listens to is being done in brown and gold tones.

"We are trying to create the same feeling of (the current Nipper) but more in the spirit and keeping of what was originally done," he said.

Nipper is being made over as a more attentive animal, one that shows a greater sense of expectancy, he said.

Taken from "The Philadelphia Inquirer", May 5th 1998.



Cover of A Columbia Catalogue

TAKEN FROM JANUARY 1901 COPY OF "THE PHONOGRAM"

Brainerd H. Warner, Jr., United States Consul at Leipsic, Germany, in the consular reports, says that "the telephonograph," a new invention in which the German Postmaster-

General, Von Podbielski, is much interested, is a combination of a telephone and a Phonograph for the purpose of recording messages received during the absence of the operator. This apparatus was invented by a Dane by the name of Paulsen. The person called up has only to hold the trumpet to his ear upon returning to the office, even after an absence of days, to receive the message. Many inventors have tried to effect such a combination, but all failed on account of the difficulty of transferring the message on to a wax cylinder.

Instead of a wax cylinder, Paulsen used a flexible steel band in his Phonograph, which is much simpler in construction than the Edison Phonograph. Messages are much more easily removed from the steel band than from the wax cylinder. It is wound on two spools, moving quickly from one to the other, and comes in contact with a very small electromagnet, switched into the circuit, which affects the steel band in such a way as to record on it any sounds that may penetrate to the Phonograph. It is only necessary to cause the steel band to re-pass the magnet in order to have the sounds repeated. Each vibration of the electromagnet produces a corresponding vibration of the steel band. In order to remove a message from the steel band, a magnet is passed over the surface on which the message was recorded.

The tests recently made in the engineering department of the Copenhagen Telephone Company, whose service the inventor has recently entered, were surprisingly successful. Up to the present time, the apparatus records a song better than a spoken message; but the latter is nevertheless quite clear, and the experts who have been making experiments in co-operation with the inventor declare that it is only a question of time until the telephonograph will repeat a message as clearly as it can be heard through the most improved telephone. — From the Inland Printer.

But the importance of the invention reaches much further. Through the use of magnetophonograph, it is possible to multiply the effect of the sound and to give the sound greater force. Thereby it is possible to greatly extend the lines of the present telephone system. The distances will become much greater.

There is still another advantage; simultaneous conduction for several conversations through the same wire. — from the London Mail.

TWO EXCERPTS FROM EARLY RADIO “CANTERBURY SKETCH BOOK”

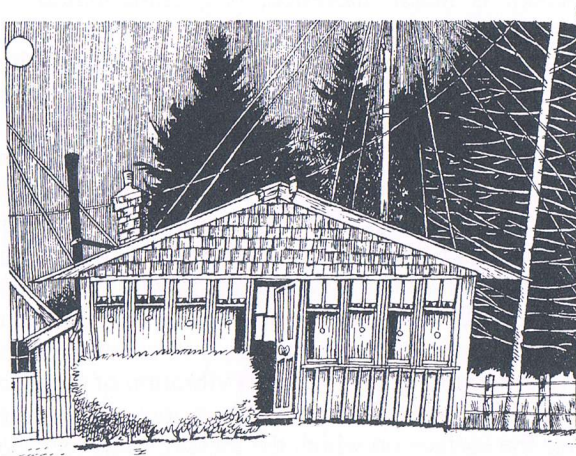
Radio Days with A. R. Harris at the Selwyn Huts

By Peter McLauchlan

Ambrose Reeves Harris (a New Zealander, not an American as stated in an earlier Canterbury Sketchbook) saw the great potential of radio when he worked with Thomas Edison for some years before World War I.

He returned to New Zealand in 1913 and founded A. R. Harris Co. Ltd in Christchurch, a business which represented Edison's interests. In 1925 he set up the Radio Broadcasting Company and became managing director. Stations in the four main centres, including 3AC in Christchurch, were bought and Harris's dream of a national broadcasting system began.

Harris's son Winstone, middle child of seven, remembers his father's early days in radio: “My father was very impressed with the proportions of a chiming clock which he had purchased in the United States and it was used as the basis of the design of the 3YA Building (A. R. Harris Building in Gloucester Street). You can see the resemblance between the clock



and the building. The clock was always on the mantelpiece at my parents' home and is now at my son's farm.

"One of the highlights of the company's days was the radio contact with Kingsford Smith during his crossing of the Tasman" (3YA followed the flight of the Southern Cross from Richmond near Sydney to Wigram).

"One of my earliest memories is memories of Jack Bingham, the engineer with the Radio Broadcasting Co, standing by the kitchen table in our hut at the Selwyn Huts, tuning banks of amplifiers to get a reception from England for a rugby test.

"Dad used to put a radio receiver out on the lawn in front of our hut and dozens of people would come and sit on the grass to listen to the news and music."

A Quick Cheerio While Grace Turned Her Back

Many of the early broadcasters are still fondly remembered, and none more so than Grace Green, long-time announcer, first on 3ZM and then 3ZB.

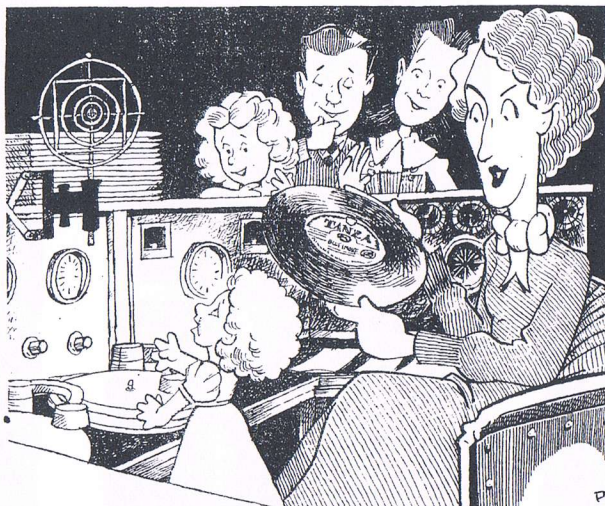
It was Grace who read out children's names on their birthday, telling them to look behind the radio or under a certain bush in the garden to find a present.

Nance Sepie remembers Christchurch Saturday afternoons in the 1940s: "the pictures", followed by a visit to 3XB and Grace Green.

"Blinking in the daylight after coming out of the dark theatre, we were off at a fast pace. Up into Colombo Street, joining with other children all on their way to 3ZB. The long staircase was taken two at a time in our rush to get to the receptionist who sat upstairs in a very art deco foyer, waiting to take our names."

"We had to wait until the doors were opened, so we pressed our faces against a large window and watched the announcers at work, impatient for our own show to start."

"At last we filed in and Grace Green would be standing with a sheaf of papers in her hand and seated behind her at the piano was Maisie McNair. The patience of these two women is very strong in my memory. They let the children sing, recite, play the piano, and even read a small commercial. We were on the air, our parents listened, we hoped with pride."



“One day, my small sister came with us. She watched in awe as all the items were presented and as Grace Green turned her back, she climbed on to a small stool and in a breathless voice said into the microphone ‘Cheerio Mummy and Daddy’.”

Taken from the Christchurch Press

GRAMOPHONE OR PHONOGRAPH

The large bright blue horn of the gramophone with its delicate gold coloured trim in the drawing room display at the South Canterbury Museum acts like a magnet to many visitors. In a cabinet next to it – and also eye catching – is the brass horn of an Edison Gem phonograph. However, for many the distinction between gramophone and phonograph is confusing.

The phonograph, invented by Thomas Edison, came first, as early as 1877 but was originally marketed as a dictaphone. It was not until the early 1890s that it was used for prerecorded music. The “Gem” Phonograph displayed at the South Canterbury Museum was first available in 1899 and was sold with many variations until 1913.

Edison used a wax covered cylinder for his phonograph rather than the flat disc used for the gramophone and this is the easiest way to identify the two.

The gramophone, with its flat disc record, came into existence due to the efforts of Emile Berliner in 1888.

For several years the battle raged between cylinder and disc. Initially the gramophone was not as popular despite being cheaper than the phonograph as it had to be manually driven. A reliable spring motor developed in 1896 changed this and the better quality, longer playing time and ease of production of the flat disc records meant the demise of the cylinder was assured.

Many gramophones were put together using components from several companies. The large blue one at the South Canterbury Museum with a wooden base has a sound box made by Diploma in Switzerland while the other parts were made in Germany around 1906.

Clarrie Blackwood remembers having a Orchime gramophone – “You had to wind it up



RECORDS



WICKER MACHINE



GERMAN SYMPHONIUM



COLOURED RECORDS



TYPICAL BOOTH



BAND ORGAN



MULTI WOOD HORNS

and put the record on it" – and how he used to go down to Beggs music shop in Timaru where you could get three records given to you to take home. You could play them and decide which one to keep and take the other two back!

Of even earlier vintage is the small black wooden music box that has a brass cylinder with small spikes. The wind-up mechanism is now broken but when turned by hand, these spikes ping against little pins and the sound of the tune *Claire de Lune* can be heard.

While these early attempts at sound reproduction seem crude in comparison to today's CDs and DVDs, it was a major technological achievement at the time. Its impact can be summed up in the words of Ella Gardner of Waimate in her oral history: "We had a gramophone and that was good we thought . . . Cheered up the place a lot".

Supplied by Bryan and Marian Blanchard, Timaru. Taken from the Timaru Herald.

EDISON RECORD No. 1731

By Victor Herbert and his Orchestra

The Idol's Eye – Selection

Victor Herbert was born in Dublin, Ireland, February 1st 1859, and is a grandson of Samuel Lover, the famous Irish novelist. At seven, he was sent to Germany to begin his musical education. His first position of prominence was that of principal violoncello player in the Court Orchestra at Stuttgart, and he was heard in many important concerts throughout Europe, before accepting in 1886, an engagement as solo 'cellist in the Metropolitan Orchestra, New York City. Here Herbert has been prominently connected with the best orchestral organization and as conductor of his own orchestra has become favourably known in the principal cities of the United States. As a composer he has written many comic operas that have achieved an extraordinary degree of popularity. Among these may be named "The Wizard of the Nile," "The Fortune Teller," "The Idol's Eye," "Babes in Toyland," "Wonderland" and "The Lady of the Slipper." He also has written one grand opera, "Natoma," based on the life of the American Indian, in which Mary Garden sang the title role.

These selections from "The Idol's Eye" played by Mr Herbert's own orchestra include, "Entrance of the Brahmins," "Nautch Girls," "Fairy Tales," "I Just Dropped In," "He was a Human Picture Gallery," "March Song" and then "Fairy Tales" again, leading into "Oh Come, Be Off."

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To relieve the monotony of long business trips and the lonesomeness of the wife and family behind, a travelling salesman carried with him an Edison Recording Outfit and a few blank cylinders, and left a duplicate outfit at home. By this means he was able to hear the voices of his wife and children, and they to hear his, for the Records were interchanged by mail, weekly. At almost every town the husband stopped he was able to obtain the use of an Edison Phonograph either at the Hotel or from a friend. In this way the trip did not seem near so long, nor his absence near so hard to bear at home. Perhaps the best of all was to hear the prattle of his little ones. The plan is feasible not only for travelling husbands, but for distant friends and relatives, and particularly so for family reunions and special birthday occasions where the sender of the record cannot personally be present.

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THE CARNIVAL'S NOT OVER

By Pete Barnao

Sixties popstars the Seekers used to joke that they were more likely to clean up a hotel room than trash one, front woman Judith Durham says.

The band thrived almost as a counter-culture to the vice-ridden mainstream of popular music. More than 30 years later, their clean-living alternative is attracting a born-again following – almost literally.

The newest generation is barely out of nappies. “I’m talking about three and four year olds, even. We had a live, in-concert video done from when we had our big (25th) reunion and apparently they get quite addicted to this video. We’ve had lots of letters from parents telling us about it,” Durham explains.

She puts much of the success down to the simplicity and sing-along melodies behind hits such as *Georgie Girl*, *A World of Our Own* and *The Carnival is Over*.

“So often people say it’s so lovely we can understand all the words. You wouldn’t think that was such a big ask, would you, but these days more and more people are frustrated that they can’t quite hear what’s going on.”

Kiwi fans will get another chance at concerts in Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin this month. Durham says the shows will almost have the feel of a family reunion.

“Our fans were always – and still are – so warm and it’s almost like a family atmosphere, even on stage. So you come away from that with a warm feeling – you don’t want to go around trashing hotel rooms after experiencing something like that!

“While other bands are launching wild parties, the Seekers often wind down with an after show meal. We were, and still are, just your normal citizens. We had a very conventional upbringing, we had good schooling, wonderful parents. Each of us had a tremendous foundation. It never would have occurred to us to just become idiots a just make a wreck of our lives in some way.

“I was never in a situation where I was offered drugs, even though I’d heard talk of drugs all around the place. That never happened in my life, I just wasn’t mixing with those people, I suppose. I feel so grateful that I wasn’t led astray because it would have been so easy, wouldn’t it, perhaps to be influenced in that way.

To be Continued.

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