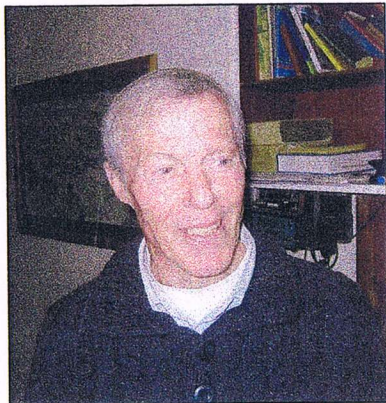


The Phonographic Record

Journal of the Vintage Phonograph Society of New Zealand
 A Society formed for the preservation of Recorded Sound
 Volume 44, Issue 2. February/April 2009



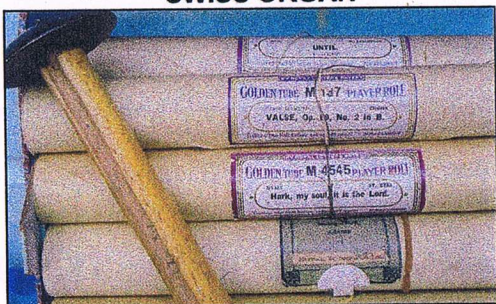
ROGER BROWN
OUR NEW PRESIDENT



RUDOLF VALENTINO



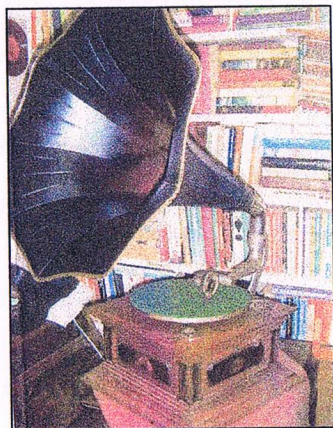
SWISS ORGAN



GOLDEN TUBE PLAYER ROLLS



MUSICAL PICTURE



JOHN SLEEP PHOTO JUNIOR MONARCH

THE PHONOGRAPHIC RECORD

VOLUME 44, ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY/APRIL 2009

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION

We hope the year 2009 will be a good year for members, even though times are difficult for some.

We are fortunate to have received from a member, Leon Clements of Pukerua Bay, Wellington, photos of his collection. I enjoyed a most interesting visit to Leon and Yvonne's home in January.

I would appreciate any items of interest to include in this, your magazine.

Walter Norris
Editor

ILLUSTRATIONS

MUSICAL PICTURE

This hangs on the wall in Leon Clements' living room. Has a gilded picture frame and six tunes. Sounds like a large disc music box. Is Swiss made, has clock which will play one tune each hour.

Description: Wind up Musical Picture Clock in an Antique Gilded Frame. Dimensions approx 1000 x 800. Oil Painting of a Swiss Scene. Swiss Movement Clock c1850's. Musical Box c1860's by B A Bremond, Geneva. Plays 6 airs including one on the hour if desired.

TRANSLATION OF 'AIR' SHEET

Triumphal March of Saire.

The Devil's Loves.

Ballet No.1 The Prophet's Waltz.

There is happiness in my Head.

Elise Waltz.

Nelly Waltz. (Ballet)

Etouffoirs en acier (Steel dampers)

Soit a Spiraux (Easy to Wind)

OUR NEW PRESIDENT ROGER BROWN

See article by Gavin East.

SWISS ORGAN

Part of Leon Clements' Collection.

This was a new machine, Leon purchased while in Switzerland. It uses a paper roll. Note his Collection of Radios and Golden Tube Player Rolls.

This was a most interesting Collection of Player Rolls I have ever seen. I didn't know such Rolls existed.

GOLDEN TUBE PLAYER ROLLS

Two examples of the rare Golden Tube Roll Adaptor. To avoid the need for a separate wooden spool for each piano roll, there was one spool which could be inserted through the centre of a roll mounted on a central core of card or brass. This saved both cost and space but did not catch on.

JUNIOR MONARCH

Photograph of a Horn Machine owned by John Sleep of Great Britain.

He purchased one of the Horns the Society makes.

MUSICAL PHOTO ALBUM

See article by David Dennis and newspaper clipping.

Music album works i.e. motor.

Picture taken by David Peterson.

CYGNET HORN

John Sleep in England sent us a photo of his Edison Fireside with a Cygnet Horn which was made in Christchurch. These are so well made one cannot tell them from an original.

BALTIPHONE

From an English Catalogue.

This is a cabinet made for fitting your own radio player and gramophone in.

ROLL PUNCHING MACHINE

This strange-looking machine is the last original piano-roll punching machine in regular use in England. It was used by the Aeolian Company, and later by Artona in Ramsgate, Kent, and is currently used by the Universal Music Roll Company in Rye, East Sussex, to make new rolls, just the same as in the 1920s, but with the advantage of computer input, editing and recording.

GOLDEN ROD AND GOLDEN ROD TUBE ADAPTOR AND REEL

Looking at the end of the centre part of the reel.

CONSTANT VELOCITY RECORD

Label was discovered in one of Kurt Nauck's catalogues. Same idea as the World Record. See article.

CLEMENTS COLLECTION

A picture I took of Leon's Player Pianos. He has eight of them plus two sixty-five push ups all in good playing order. Note the shelf loaded with piano rolls.

DULCEPHONE

Owned by John Sleep in England. It has an Apollo Horn.
Photo kindly sent to us by John.

UNUSUAL HORN

Picture taken by Larry Schlick at Larry Donley's Swap Meet. We believe two of our local members each own one.

COLLARO SPRING MOTOR**LATERAL TONE ARM**

Kent attachment which enables the user to play needle cut discs on an Edison Diamond Disc Phonograph.

Patented March 1915, as far as we know Edison didn't make attachments to play needle cut records on a diamond disc.

Illustration provided by Leon Clements.

AMPICO CATALOGUE

A rare 1923 catalogue, this is the coloured cover.
Also owned by Leon Clements.

JOHN (HORE) GRENEILL

This is a poster I reduced to fit in the magazine, has his signature. Dated Winter 2005.

REGENT GRAFANOLA No. 22.

The Columbia Grafonola No. 22

"Regent" \$200

The "Regent" Grafonola is a complete table for everyday use in exactly the same degree as it is a complete musical instrument of unexampled versatility, matchless tonal qualities and unequalled durability - the complete instrument ready at any and all times equally for business service or musical entertainment.

The musical equipment of the "Regent" Grafonola being entirely concealed, the instrument presents as its table-surface an expanse of strongly marked, dull-rubbed mahogany, the top measuring 28 x 45 inches. By the opening or closing of the small doors over the grille, the volume of tone may be regulated at will. Space for 200 twelve-inch Double-Disc records is provided in the record compartments at each end.

OUR NEW PRESIDENT

By Gavin East

At the 2008 AGM Roger Brown found himself nominated and elected as President before he knew what had happened. Roger is not one to push himself forward and will probably be embarrassed to read this, but we are very lucky to have him on board. Since he joined the Society a few years back his quiet common sense and readiness to help have been a great asset.

Roger is a panelbeater by trade and works from home at Coopers Creek near Oxford, northwest of Christchurch on the border between the Canterbury Plains and the hills that rise to the Southern Alps. His skill at his craft is well known which is making it hard for him to turn work down and think of retirement. He owns and has restored two immaculate Ford V8 coupes, a 1937 and a 1939, and is looking forward to tackling his 1937 Packard tourer, a very rare car in New Zealand.

His enjoyment of vintage popular music has led him further into our hobby with the purchase of several good playing machines including an Edison diamond disc Laboratory Model and an HMV Reentrant Model 193. Like many collectors Roger has extended his interest into musical boxes and has a table model 15^{1/2} inch Polyphon and an upright 19^{5/8} inch Britannia.

Roger and Voila's home also shows evidence of another longstanding collecting interest, kerosene lamps.

Roger puts a lot of time and effort into helping make the Oxford Museum an excellent example of a local museum. It was at Roger's invitation that we hauled the Society's machine collection out of storage and placed it in the museum on long term loan, an arrangement which has been a great success.

RUDOLPH VALENTINO

Rudolph Valentino is best remembered as the great lover of the silent screen in films such as "The Sheikh". His funeral in New York City in 1926, following his death from peritonitis at the age of 31, was marked by unprecedented scenes of public hysteria.

Valentino's two recordings, "Kashmiri Song" and "El Relicario", were made for Brunswick on 14 May 1923 but were not released until after the actor's death. In 1926 the Celebrities Recording Company of Hollywood issued the two sides with portrait labels. The recordings have been reissued on various LPs and CDs and can be heard on the internet at <http://www.rudolph-valentino.com/rv-voice.htm>

It is fair to say that, had Valentino lived into the era of sound films, he would not have been asked to make musicals.

MUSICAL PHOTO ALBUM

Dear Mrs McGuigan,

This is the first time I have had occasion to write to the Society about anything. I came across the enclosed newspaper item in our local giveaway paper and it so interested me that I made a visit to see this musical photograph album dating from the late 1800s. I suppose numerous other members will be familiar with this type of machine but it was quite unusual for me. Perhaps other members could tell via The Phonograph Record what they know of these sorts of things.

It seems the family which own it know very little about its origin, maker or how common this type of object was in the period concerned. I enclose a photograph which might reproduce better in the journal than the extract from the newspaper.

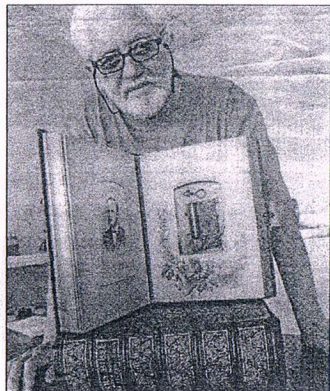
If the item is common and the photograph not worthy of placement in the journal please just return it to me.

Sincerely

David Dennis

From The Horowhenua Mail

9 October 2008



Book repairer Bill Tito has come across a rare find - a book that is half photo album and half music box and 110 years old.

"I don't think there are many people around who would have seen something like this. It's an old album with many old photos with a small spring operated music box embedded inside the back cover. The attached key is used to prime the mechanism through a round key hole accessed from outside the back cover," the Akatarawa resident said.

"It belongs to a Masterton family. It was in bad condition and needed \$500 in repairs. It's a family heirloom but I don't think they know much about it. Getting it fixed up, I suppose, is part of that journey of discovering that hidden family history.

"My work takes me across the country and I always come across situations where parents or grandparents pass away and the kids are left with an heirloom they know is valuable but have no clue about its history."

The well-known 'Don't despair, think repair' man would be promoting books at the Take Note book shop in Waikanae on October 18. The novelty musical album would be on display, together with a 130-year-old family bible.

CONSTANT VELOCITY RECORDINGS

It is a well-known fact that Edison preferred cylinders to discs, primarily due to the fact that the stylus-to-groove relationship remained constant throughout the playback of a cylinder. By contrast, as a disc is played the stylus moves closer to the center of rotation. The increasingly tighter radius and commensurately slower stylus-to-groove speed introduces distortion and decreases overall fidelity. It also limits the playing time of the disc: since a record turning slowly sounds increasingly bad as the stylus gets closer to the label, companies found that speeds significantly less than 78 rpm would not provide adequate fidelity on existing phonographs. Constant velocity recordings were developed to help address these concerns. The disc begins at one speed but finishes at a much higher rpm. This means that the speed of the groove relative to the stylus is constant, yielding a more consistent audio signal and the ability to greatly increase the playing time of the disc. (Obviously, some sort of special mechanism is required to properly play such a disc.)

The constant velocity records listed here were made for the Cinematone Penny Phono jukebox. Beginning at 16 rpm and ending at 50 (our estimates), these 12" records contain 10 songs and play for 15-20 minutes per side. The venture was launched in 1939 and only lasted for a couple of years, as there wasn't much money to be made at a penny per play. Given that the records would have been useless apart from a machine that could properly play them, few were saved and they are exceedingly rare today. By the way, it should be noted that 10" Cinematone records, though rare, are normal 78 rpm pressings. They cannot be played on the Penny Phono jukebox, and are not constant velocity discs. (Modern CDs are constant velocity discs!)

A number of years ago, Scott Corbett and Steve LaVere discovered that Spike Jones served as music director at Cinema tone, and it is possible that "Fine and Dandy" and "The Johnson Rag" on Lot 5849 and 850 were recorded - as straight renditions - by his orchestra. Since all of the tunes are not listed on the labels, we have listened to the records to determine song titles. ;Jot all/ tifes are necessarily fully accurate, and the identities of one or two instrumental pieces elude us.

12" Cinematones (all selections are vocal unless indicated with an 'i' for instrumental), MB \$150.

848* VS-1050 Pagan Love Song - i; Make Believe Island; Violetta; Meet The Sun Halfway; My, My! - i; Woodpecker Song; You're Lonely And I'm Lonely; Siboney - i; Fools Rush In; You And Who Else
[?]/ Same SM LT LAM, GR E-

849, VS-1056 Tennessee Fish Fry; The Breeze And I - i; Where Was I; I'm Stepping Out With A Memory Tonight; Sierra Sue; Tuxedo Junction - i; Does Your Heart Beat For Me; Perfidia; Six Lessons From Madame Lazonga; Fine And Dandy - i//Same WTR DMG LBL SD 2 E-

850. VS-1059/1060

What Can I Say Dear, After I Say I'm Sorry - i; Looking For Yesterday; We Three; Call Of The Canyon; Somebody Stole My Gal - i; Our Love Affair; Wedding At The Heuriger; Now I Lay Me Down To Dream; [?] - i; Practice Makes Perfect//Bartender Polka - i; Pretty Little Peasant; Maybe; Ferryboat Serenade; And So Do I; Some of These Days; There I Go; Johnson Rag - i; That's For Me; Crosstown

SM PR MKS E-

July Meeting Notes

By Wilf Boon

The July meeting was held at Gavin East's home in Lincoln with nine members present. Gavin chaired the meeting temporarily as David Peterson was unable to attend until a little later in the evening. Gavin read the minutes of the previous meeting, business from the minutes and financial statements, and later circulated copies of the 2006/2007 accounts, complete, but not yet signed off by Gilbert & Associates. I noticed payment for 50 cast feet for front fitted cranes has now been made, so these should be available for members interested.

Received in the mail was a letter from U.K. member John Sleep enclosing photos of a Monarch Junior, Fireside and a Dulcephone, and also a letter from new member Bruce Leask of Palmerston North, New Zealand.

Robert Sleeman mentioned the purchase of a complete collection, including two Edison Operas. From this collection he brought along a Gem Roller Organ which played "Annie Laurie" and other cobs very well. It appeared to be in very good and original condition. Also Bob Wright kindly donated a 1940's mantel valve radio to anybody interested. It was Walter who was more than pleased to up the offer but I think I noticed a raised eyebrow from Hilda sitting in the other corner of the room.

Joffre Marshall demonstrated his recently completed working Meccano model sawbench powered by a Mamod model stationary steam engine, but adapted for demonstration purposes. Members admired this rare Meccano item. The meeting closed at 10.15pm followed by a good old chat over supper.

August Meeting Notes

By Wilf Boon

Unfortunately Monday 25th August was one of those very cold and wet winter evenings that only the bravest ventured out for the meeting held at Walter and Hilda's home, 'Waipapa' at Swannanoa, but thankfully five members, David Peterson, Roger Brown, Gavin East, Joffre Marshall and Robert Sleemen were able to be present.

David chaired the meeting starting at 8.15pm and commencing with the previous minutes and financial statements, and in correspondence mentioned the company New Zealand Export Books, who have joined the society and were keen to acquire back issues of our magazine.

Gavin mentioned his email correspondence with Brisbane collector Claude Boulenaz who intends to join the society, and will be visiting Christchurch shortly. For those members interested in the supply of parts, David Peterson has placed an order for Ken Jane, our tin smith, to make a dozen of those beautiful aluminium witch's hat horns.

Later in the evening Walter Norris showed his remarkable collection of twelve, five inch Berliner discs acquired with his machine (Berliner) from Dunedin about 40 years ago. Gavin had brought one of his discs to try playing it on Walter's hand crank machine, but deterioration of the machine rubber drive wheel under the turntable unfortunately prevented this. Nevertheless, members were interested to examine the machine and its sound box closely. Much interest was also shown of a most unusual high quality model steam engine Robert Sleeman had bought from a well-known Christchurch antique dealer, John Stein, some years ago.

The meeting closed at 10pm. After supper members viewed Roger Brown's CD of photos of Keith Harding's mechanical music museum in England after which Walter Norris showed some DVD excerpts of violinist Andre Rieu.

September Meeting and Annual General Meeting Notes

By Wilf Boon

Many thanks to Anne and John Hastilow for inviting members to their home for the Society's September 22nd meeting which also included the A.G.M. There was an excellent attendance of fifteen members.

The meeting was chaired by David Peterson and the minutes from the previous meeting were read, followed by the election of officers for the year 2009.

Those elected were;

Patron - Joffre Marshall

President - Roger Brown

Vice President -- Robert Sleeman

Treasurer - Gavin East

Secretary - Shirley McGuigan

Executive - Wilf Boon, Bob Searle, Walter Norris

Subscriptions to remain at NZ\$20.

The A.G.M. closed at 8.55pm.

Report continued next page

With Roger Brown offering to take the position of President this year may we take the opportunity to thank David for all the extra effort and hard work he has put into the Society as president for the past year, and hopefully take the time to enjoy the position as past president with not quite so much responsibility. Thanks again David.

It was noted in correspondence, the joining of two new members, Claude Boulenez from Brisbane, Australia, and Paul Oaten of Taupo, N.Z. who is a needle tin specialist and lists surplus tins on TradeMe much to the interest of several members. On email a Christchurch Phil Foster has generously offered to the Society some 78s and LPs free as part of his house clearance, before moving to Australia. These records will be available at the next meeting.

Following the general business of the meeting, Joffre showed the result of his recent experiments with flanging. Robert Sleeman brought along two interesting models, a Mamod steam car and a Franklin Mint model of the 1885 three-wheeled Benz car, and Walter, would you believe it, displayed a most unusual wind-up torch which produced an excellent light.

Robert also reported on the local auction a few days before, at which an eight-tune drum, and three bells musical box had sold for a hammer price of \$4,000, considered very high by those members at the sale. The auction also included a small Polyphon with four or five discs (about \$1,000) and a musical photograph album and an Excelda camera phone.

Finally, the meeting closed 10.10pm after which members enjoyed supper and further conversation. To end the evening David thanked both John and Anne Hastilow for once again hosting the September meeting in their beautifully restored Edwardian bay villa.

MORE ELECTRIC BATTERIES

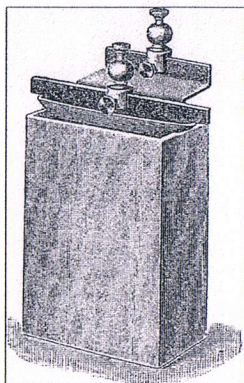


FIG. 17 - Grove Cell

GROVE CELL - This is a double fluid cell, the solutions being moderately dilute sulphuric acid in the outer jar, and concentrated nitric acid in the porous pot. An amalgamated zinc plate placed in the dilute sulphuric acid serves as the positive plate, and a piece of platinum foil placed in the nitric acid forms the negative plate. The Grove cell (fig. 17) is usually made rectangular in shape, and the zinc plate is bent round into a U-shape; the porous pot, also rectangular, being placed inside the bend, so that there is a surface of zinc opposite to each side of the platinum foil. When made in this form the internal resistance is diminished. This cell is very powerful, but runs down rather rapidly after a few hours' use. The E.M.F. is high, being about 1.9 volts.

BUNSEN CELL -

This is very similar to the Grove cell, but has carbon for the negative element in place of platinum. It is usually made circular in form (fig. 18), the inner porous pot containing strong nitric and a carbon rod or plate, and the outer cell a solution of 1 part of sulphuric acid to about 10 of water, in which a circular zinc plate is immersed.

The cell has a low internal resistance, and gives a large current. It is therefore suitable for charging small accumulators when current from a dynamo is not available. It is also largely used for electroplating. The E.M.F. of a single cell is about 1.9 volts. Instructions for making up a Bunsen cell are given in Chapter IV.

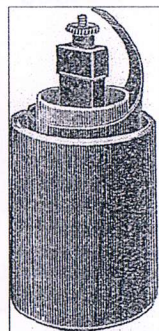


FIG. 18.
Bunsen Cell

GRAMOPHONE NEEDLES

"EMO" Needles

The very finest steel needle yet produced
for the gramophone.

Soft Tone ...	Packed
Medium Tone ...	200 in Box
Loud Tone ...	3/- per 1000
Extra Loud ...	(5 boxes)



"SONGSTER" Needles

A well advertised brand.

Loud Tone

In boxes of 200 3/- per 1000



"SONGSTER" Collar Needles

The loudest needle made.

In boxes of 50.

4½d. Box. 4/- doz boxes.



The famous "SIRROM" Needles

In very big demand.

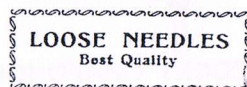
High grade. Loud Tone.

In boxes of 200 1/6 Per 1000

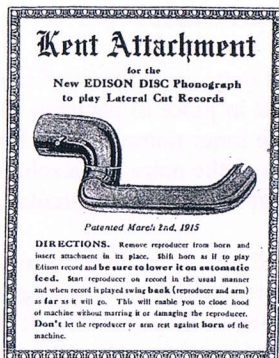
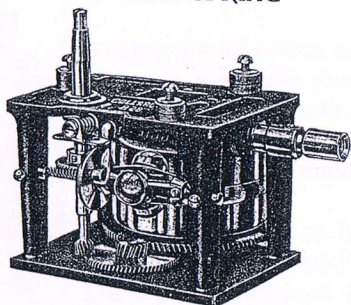


You can box or packet these yourself.

Loud Tone, in bags of	1,000	1/4 per 1000
	10,000	1/3 per 1000

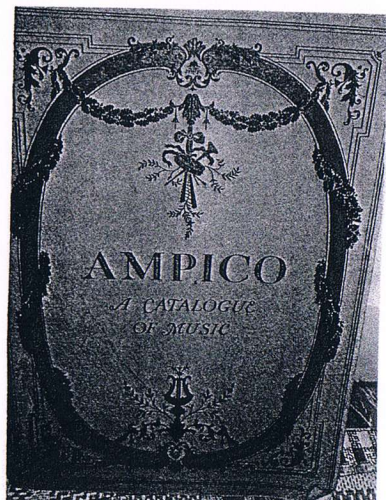


FAMOUS "COLLARO" MOTOR, No. B28
DOUBLE SPRING

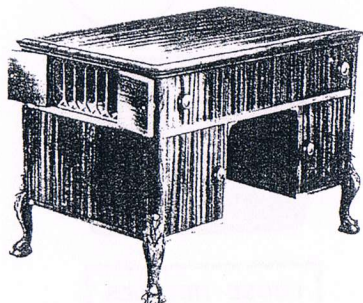


LATERAL TONE ARM

JOHN GRENNELL
I'VE BEEN EVERYWHERE



AMPICO CATALOGUE



REGENT GRAFONOLA



CONSTANT VELOCITY RECORD

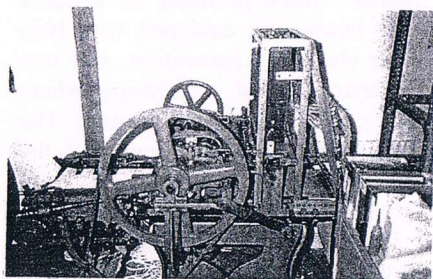
THE "BALTIPHONE" RADIO GRAMOPHONE CABINET

This console Cabinet we recommend as the most suitable design for both gramophone and radiogram work. The outside dimensions are 34×33×20 ins. The gramophone section inside is 15×18×14 ins., leaving 13 ins. space under Motor Board.

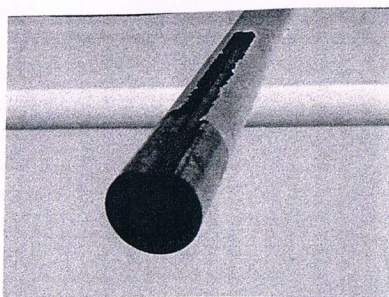


No. 720

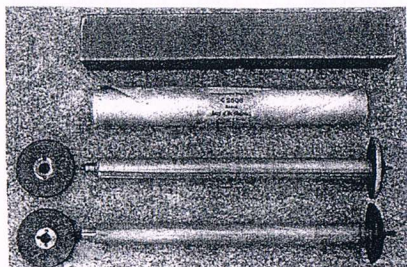
CYLINDER CABINET



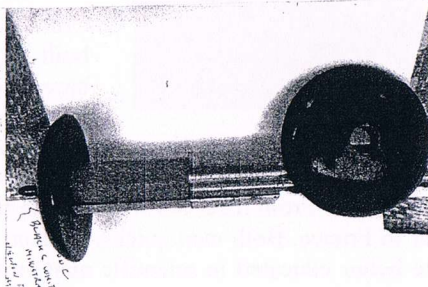
ROLL PUNCHING MACHINE



GOLDEN ROD



GOLDEN ROD TUBE ADAPTOR



Louis John Crossley (1842 - 1891)

In 1877, the year after his patent application was filed, Alexander Graham Bell visited England while on his honeymoon. It was also a business trip. He demonstrated his telephone to various business and scientific groups, but he returned to America almost penniless and disappointed by the lack of interest shown. Lord Kelvin, who had seen the telephone in action in the United States, seemed to be the telephone's only European supporter.

In spite of this lack of public enthusiasm, European inventors took note of Bell's invention and started experimenting with it. Some of these inventors had a good knowledge of the physical sciences, and the money to put their ideas into practice. One such was Louis Crossley. The son of British wool mill owners at Dean Clough in Halifax, Crossley was a young man of poor health but great ability. He had become familiar with the boilers and machinery at the wool mill at an early age, and at 19 began to study electricity at Halifax under John Waterhouse, an early pioneer in the electrical field. Crossley was able to introduce electricity to light the family wool mill, a first in industrial Britain.

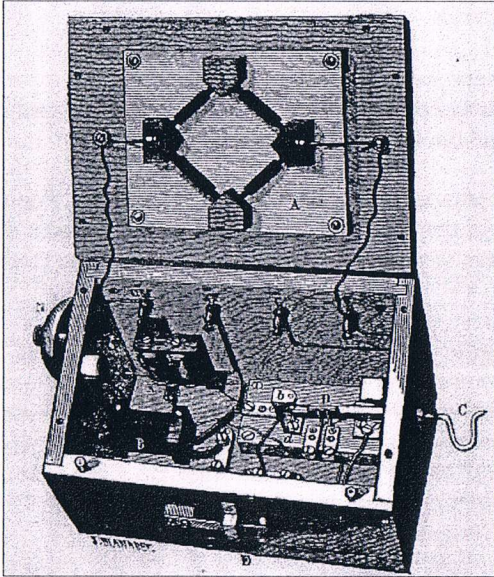


He married in 1865 and built a new home at Moorside. "Manor" would probably be a better description. The house was equipped with twin Otto engines for electricity generation, and was fitted with laboratories and workshops where Crossley could continue his experiments. The house was quite a local feature because of the electric lighthouse he had built on the roof. With careful design of the lenses and electric light, it gave off sufficient light to read a newspaper by up to two miles away. A Gramme generator provided power to run a small electric tramway around the grounds.

Crossley was interested in Bell's invention, and built a pair of telephones for his experiments based on the work of Breguet. Breguet's telephones were an improved version of Bell's receiver, using a strong bar magnet and a much larger coil. Crossley was able to demonstrate and study the principles of telephony, and installed telephones in the family mills. From here, his work on the telephone closely parallels that of Clement Ader in France. Both men quickly noticed the defects of Bell's telephone. Both men were better educated in scientific matters than Bell, and were able to do something about it.

The Bell telephone had a very limited range, measured in hundreds of yards rather

than miles. The range could be increased by adding more batteries to increase the voltage, but this caused noise from electrical arcing within the transmitter and eventually burnt the electrodes. The telephone used a Bell receiver as both receiver and transmitter, and so was clumsy in use. The receiver was adequate, but as a transmitter it left much to be desired. Crossley and Ader independently turned to the work of Professor Hughes to improve the device. Hughes had developed and published, but not patented, a device that he called a Microphone. It used a carbon pencil mounted loosely in carbon blocks, glued to a diaphragm. It gave the varying signal needed to transmit speech. It also had its weaknesses.



Ader's solution was to arrange a group of up to ten pencils in a series/parallel arrangement. The extra contacts gave a more sensitive transmitter. Crossley used fewer pencils, usually four, arranged in a diamond pattern. This also produced a very sensitive transmitter. The Crossley was so sensitive compared with the Bell telephone that it is sometimes incorrectly noted as an amplifier. Both men put an induction coil across the transmitter, which lifted the voltage and improved the range dramatically. Berliner in the United States was also developing Blake's transmitter along the same lines for the Bell company, but he was

working on a single-contact transmitter which still had some distance limitations.

Crossley demonstrated his transmitter between Saltaire and Halifax, over a distance of eight miles. For a receiver, he used both Bell and Ader-type units at different times. The telephone was improved and put into production by Emmott and Blakely at their Bradford factory. One of Emmott's contacts was Walter Preece, the Electrical Superintendent of the British Post Office. Unlike many of the senior men in the Post Office, Preece, after initial reluctance, saw the potential of the telephone and kept an eye on it.

The telephone was now coming into public usage, marketed by the United Telephone Company and others, such as Crossley's new West Riding Telephone Company. United was also painfully aware of the distance limits of Bell's telephones. In 1879 they bought the patent for Crossley's telephone for twenty thousand pounds. In France, Moulron was also building Crossley phones. The Crossley was therefore the first carbon pencil telephone put into common use. It should also be remembered that all this was within three years of Bell's patent.

MUSIC REVOLUTION SEES CASSETTE TAPES NEAR EXTINCTION

By Rob Kerr

Timaru Herald, 8 August 2008

It gave birth to the Walkman and boombox and proliferated in the 70s and 80s, but the pre-recorded cassette is virtually extinct in Timaru. The Warehouse recently stopped stocking them and retailer Chapters and Verses' taped musical choices are limited to four classical selections or Hayley Westenra.

Chapters and Verses owner Geoff Grigor said some elderly people still asked for a cassette and travellers, with a cassette-only car, sometimes tried for a change in music. Mr Grigor said it was still possible to get the Beatles *Number One* on tape.

For three decades the music cassette was a significant form of technology. Philips introduced the compact audio cassette in the early 60s and, unlike its predecessor, the reel-to-reel tape, it was portable. The hiss of tapes was a problem and this led to Dolby noise reduction.

The development of chromium dioxide tape meant cassettes could produce a reasonable sound. In the 80s the popularity of the Walkman and ghetto-blaster encouraged the sale of tapes and some pretty foul fashion statements. Tapes were cheap and easy to use and a catalyst for musical change. Break dancers had portable music and garage-band musicians could record their efforts. Musician Chris Knox's four-track tape recorder was the start of the Flying Nun label and captured the DIY "Dunedin sound" of the Clean, Chills, Verlaines and Shane Carter.

Tapes remained in common use while the cassette player was the most popular in-car entertainment. In the early 90s early car CD players didn't handle vibration well. John Van Der Loo, of Pauls Audio, said installing CDs in cars overtook cassettes about 13 years ago when car CD players went under \$800. He still occasionally installs a tape player, usually for people with many cassettes. "I just sold one this morning. The old truck driver, he just wanted a radio cassette."

Timaru music buff Michael Woodnorth started collecting music in the late 70s. He said the cassette was once the only way to have your choice of music in your car. Mixing tapes was a way to share and introduce music to friends. You could also save your vinyl records from getting scratched at a party, or plan the music for how you hoped a night might pan out.

The compilation tape had a significance and helped share the "new" music such as punk which couldn't be easily bought in record stores.

"Everyone liked making compilation tapes and it was a great way to seduce women. Guys used it as part of the wooing process. They'd pick a selection of what they

thought a girl might like and give it to them. The girl would appreciate it because she'd realise how much time had gone into it."

The humble cassette is credited with helping Ayatollah Khomeini spread his sermons throughout Iran before the overthrow of the Shah. Cassettes are still widely used in developing countries. In the mid-80s, music cassettes were at their peak and 900 million were sold each year; making up about half of total global music sales. By the early 90s CD sales took the lead.

Mr Woodnorth said with internet downloading and the ability to write CDs, today's music industry was worried about home taping.

"Hence the campaign, 'Home taping is killing music', with a warning on the front of the LP."

He had happy memories of compiling cassettes. The digital era is in and the analogue tape era is over. However, words and phrases such as fast forward, rewind, record and pause owe their everyday use to the cassette.

COMEDIAN HARMONISTS

The Comedian Harmonists were a German singing sensation of the 1920s and '30s. The elegant sextet, five vocalists and a pianist - all dressed in tails, had a repertoire that encompassed many vocal styles, ranging from folk songs to sentimental hits accompanied by banter and even silliness on stage. But they were perhaps best known for their close harmony delivered with humor and style in such



songs as *Veronika, der Lenz ist da*, *Mein kleiner, grüner Kaktus*, *Liebling, mein Herz lässt dich grüssen*, *So schön wie heut'*, *Wochenend und Sonnenschein*, *Musik! Musik! Musik!*, and *Mit Musik geht alles besser*, along with their captivating vocal imitation of musical instruments.

The Beginning

Their story began in 1927, when 20-year-old acting student Harry Frommmermann put an ad in the Berlin newspaper *Berliner Lokalanzeiger* shortly after Christmas 1927 to found a singing group: "Achtung. Selten. Tenor, Bass (Berufssänger, nicht über 25), sehr musikalisch, schön klingenden Stimmen, für einzig dastehendes Ensemble ...gesucht."

Frommermann was a highly talented drama student and musician who enjoyed an uncanny ability to imitate several musical instruments. He had already completed 11 vocal arrangements for the not-yet-existent singing group. Many applicants answered his ad, but only one, Robert Biberti, who sang bass in the chorus of the Charell-Revue, suited him. Both Frommermann and Biberti had admired the music of the American a capella group the Revellers, whose singing was marked by close harmony, rhythm, and precision, and whose records had been producing great excitement in Europe since 1925. By the beginning of 1928 the ensemble was complete: from the Charell-Revue chorus came the Bulgarian Asparuch ("Ari") Leschnikoff as first tenor, and the Pole Josef Roman Cycowski as baritone. The second tenor, the multilingual former medical student Erich Abraham Collin, had been singing with an operetta company. Frommermann himself sang tenor. The sixth man, Erwin Bootz, was a highly accomplished and gifted pianist fresh from the music academy. The hard work could begin. The mixture of musicians was right. Their resolve, musical flexibility, discipline, and hard work would let them achieve artistic heights and even international recognition with their unique musical style.

They became stars. A great variety of audiences found them irresistible, and the Comedian Harmonists were at home in theaters all over Europe. In 1934 they were a huge success in New York. They were popular on radio and in recordings. Including the legendary hit comedy *Die drei von der Tankstelle*, they appeared in as many as 13 films in the early days of the movie industry; unfortunately, none of their films have been found since the war.

But the picture-book career of the apolitical Comedian Harmonists did not survive the changing political climate in Germany. Their songs -most were by Jewish composers - were criticized by the Nazis as early as 1932, when they were not yet in power, as "Jewish-marxist noise." Indeed, three of the group, Frommermann, Collin, and Cycowski, were Jews. Cycowski's wife Mary had converted to Judaism, and Bootz's wife Ursula was Jewish. The popular, politically naive musicians ignored all the warning signs. But then in 1934 the unapproved Jewish members of the group were forbidden to perform, and the Comedian Harmonists were given *Auftrittsverbot* by the Reichskulturkammer. The Comedian Harmonists split up. They gave their last concert in Munich on March 25, 1934.

After the Split

The three Jewish members formed the Comedy Harmonists with Ernst Engel, Hans Rexeis, and Rudolf Mayneder and continued their singing career outside Germany. Initially headquartered in Vienna, the "exile" group performed all over free Europe and in Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and the United States. Bootz, Leschnikoff, and Biberti formed *Das Meistersextett* with three new singers, Herbert Imlau, Alfred Grunert, and Fred Kassen, and stayed in Germany. But neither of the new groups achieved the success of the original Comedian Harmonists, and by 1941 they had both disbanded.

Harry Frommermann (1906-1975) fled to the United States, where as late as 1951 he was leading a coed group "Harry Frohman and his Harmonists." He returned to Bremen in 1960. Robert Biberti (1902-1985) worked as an antiques dealer in Berlin after the war. Ari Leschnikoff (1897-1978) returned to Sofia, Bulgaria, to work; he was rediscovered there in 1965 and brought to East Germany to be honored. Erich A. Collin (1899-1961) went to the United States via Vienna and was a designer working in plastic. Erwin Bootz (1907-1982), living for a while in Canada before returning the Hamburg, was a popular pianist and composer until his death. The longest surviving vocalist was Roman Cycowski (1901-1998), who lived in Palm Springs, California, where he sang as cantor for a Jewish congregation until his retirement, fulfilling his father's greatest wish.



In a 1997 interview when he was 96, Roman Cycowski commented, "Wenn wir uns nicht hätten trennen müssen, wären wir heute bekannter als die Beatles. [If we hadn't been forced to split up, we would be more famous today than the Beatles.]" Whether or not you agree with those words from Cycowski, you will have to agree with him that the Comedian Harmonists were "a bright light in a dark time."

Their Influence Continues

Their original records are valuable collectors' items today, and many of their songs have been re-released on CDs, with some duplication. For example, *Comedian Harmonists* and *Auf Wiedersehn* both contain the titles: *Barber of Seville*, *Creole love call*, *Holzhackerlied*, *Muss i' denn zum Städtle hinaus*, *Perpetuum mobile*, *Sah' ein Knab' ein Röslein steh'n*, and *Wenn di Sonnja russisch tanzt*, each with other titles as well.

Celebrated today as Germany's first "Boy-Group," the Comedian Harmonists' unique close-harmony sound certainly influenced many American vocalists, such as the Mills Brothers. Great Britain's The King's Singers have recently released a CD *A Tribute to the Comedian Harmonists* with songs in German and English. The Washington Sängerbund included songs from the Comedian Harmonists' repertoire in their 1998 and 1999 Spring Concerts. In Germany, the Comedian Harmonists' admirers and imitators acknowledge their idols openly. Young groups at German universities have kept bringing the Comedian Harmonists' musical arrangements to local audiences. "Matz & Friends" (vocal quartet with piano) perform in Chemnitz, for example, while "Die Mex Brothers" (vocal quintet plus piano) recorded CDs in 1994 and 1996 at the Kolpingsaal (Augsburg) in the style of the Comedian Harmonists.

In 1976 Eberhard Fechner produced a two-part documentary film "Comedian Harmonists"; in 1997 it was shown again in Germany to coincide with the release of a new film. (This documentary was shown in Washington, DC, on December 13-14, 1998.) In 1988 he published a book on the Comedian Harmonists. An even wider revival of interest in the Comedian Harmonists has hit Europe.

The 1997 film *Comedian Harmonists: Eine Legende kehrt zurück* directed and produced by Joseph Vilsmaier has been a sensation in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. The film was shown in Washington, DC, on December 12 & 13, 1998, and is scheduled for general release in the US in February 1999. The film's soundtrack includes recordings by the original Comedian Harmonists, and the film has received praise for that decision. Vilsmaier, with a directorial reputation well established by his previous work in films such as *Stalingrad* and *Schlafes Bruder* prepared for two years (early press releases referred to the film's working title *Mein kleiner grüner Kaktus - Die Comedian Harmonists*) before the cameras began rolling first in Berlin, and then New York City, Prague, Vienna, and Bad Fischau, Austria. Rolf Zehetbauer (who won an Oscar for *Cabaret*) saw to it that every detail looked historically authentic at each of the 50 or so film locations. Vilsmaier, on the other hand, acknowledges that his film is not a documentary; he takes artistic liberty with the story of the personal lives of the group members. The film has received praise since it opened at Christmas 1997, and has won Vilsmaier the 1998 Bavarian Film Award for best direction and six of the actors Special Awards for outstanding performance in the film.

Berlin may have been passed by as too expensive for much of the filming of *Comedian Harmonists*, but it managed to lure the famous theatrical musician Franz Wittenbrink from the Hamburger Schauspielhaus to help bring Gottfried Greiffenhagen's musical comedy *Veronika, der Lenz ist da* to Berlin's Kufürstendamm. The gifted Wittenbrink has managed to reconstruct the Comedian Harmonists' vocal arrangements by listening to their original recordings (none of the original arrangements have survived on paper). Wittenbrink has prepared a new young talented group of six musicians for live stage performance, so that the familiar blended tones of the Comedian Harmonists can again be heard in Berlin.

Broadway may not be left completely out of the picture, either, it seems. Barry Manilow (music) and Bruce Sussman (book and lyrics) have shepherded their musical "Harmony" at California's La Jolla Playhouse (near San Diego) through a seven-week run beginning in October 1997 and are now raising money for a possible Broadway opening. Telling the story of the Comedian Harmonists, the musical does not use the Comedian Harmonists' own songs or arrangements, however, and the "fatally bland" music by Manilow has been described by at least one reviewer as the show's weak point. "Harmony" is reported now to be playing in Switzerland. It remains to be seen whether the Comedian Harmonists' story will be told today as compellingly in American theaters as it is being brought to Europe's audiences.

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"Harmony" with interview material

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This brief biography, compiled by Carol Traxler from several internet sources, appeared in the February 1998 issue of Quarter Notes, the newsletter of the Washington Saengerbund edited by Walter Mueller.

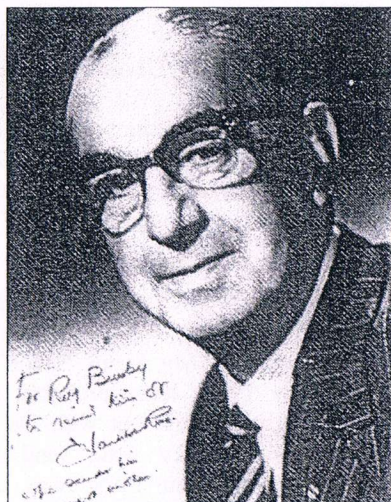
CLARKSON ROSE

English entertainer and songwriter

By Peter Fry

Not very many motor cars have been celebrated in song. Offhand I can think of just a handful: My Merry Oldsmobile, the Stanley Steamer, the Cadillac, the Beetle, the Model T Ford, GM's Australian Holden and not least, Sir Herbert Austin's iconic "Seven".

I think you'll all be familiar with the unlikely adventures of Clarkson Rose's 'Portable Typewriter'. What impact the catchy little ditty may have had on the Austin Seven's sales in the late 1920s is open to speculation but it made its composer a small fortune. So, who was Clarkson Rose?



Well, he wasn't just a songwriter or a voice on an old record. In his day (and it was a very long 'day') he was one of Britain's best-loved music hall and variety comedians, and a celebrated pantomime 'dame' whose slightly naughty touring revue "Twinkle", was a star attraction at British seaside resorts for many years. Rose was also a highly respected figure in variety circles and an influential member of the charitable organisation, The Grand Order of Water Rats.

Born in Dudley, Worcestershire, in 1890 Clarkson Rose began his working life as a bank clerk, entertaining in his spare time. Still in his teens he formed an eight-strong concert party and began dabbling in serious theatre.

His first London appearance, a 'walk-on' part in a production of Julius Caesar, might well have paved the way for a distinguished Shakespearean career, but for World War One.

In the autumn of 1914, when the Liverpool Repertory closed for the duration, he joined a troupe of actors who toured the country, doing variety and pantomime in the summer seasons.

It was at Westcliffe-on-Sea in 1918 that he met the pianist and comedienne Olive Fox. They married, and formed a successful and long-lasting Music Hall double-act as Fox & Rose. Three years later, answering a desperate call for help from an entrepreneur at Ryde Pier, on the Isle of Wight, Rose presented "Twinkle". Olive would be its leading lady till she retired in 1956. By the mid-1930s "Twinkle" was the established number one summer show wherever it appeared, and in March 1933 "Clarkie" and Olive took it to Australia. Mindbogglingly billed as a "Revusical gay-as-you-please show of nimbleness and nonsense - for laughing purposes only" it took the Aussies by storm. They wanted a follow-up tour but home commitments took priority and "Twinkle" was soon back in Old Blighty, knocking them out at Shanklin, Eastbourne, Torquay, Llandudno and of course London.

During World War II "Twinkle" did its bit to brighten things up for civilians and the armed services alike. With the peace, "Clarkie" took the show around the variety theatres of London and the provinces, giving young entertainers like Terry Scott. Bobby Dennis and Norman Vaughan a launching pad for future success. Clarkson Rose staged his 45th and last "Twinkle" at Leicester at Christmas 1967. He was booked for Teignmouth in 1969 but died that April, aged 77.

"Clarkie" was a prolific recording artist: between 1922 and 1937 he and Olive produced over 150 songs for HMV's economy label, Zonophone. "My Austin Seven" made its appearance on 25th January 1929. Rose probably had no real affinity for Herbert Austin's 'baby' but with Depression in the wind, the timing of his cheeky little send-up, adapted for 'Columbia' by Rose's close contemporary Norman Long was exquisite, and should have been received at Longbridge with gratitude. Was it, I wonder??



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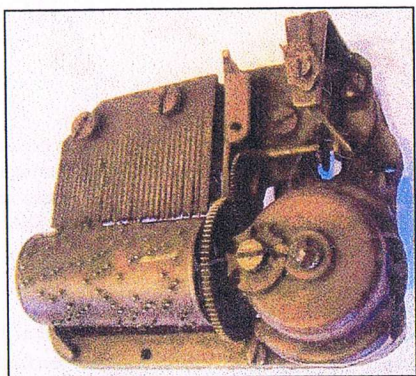
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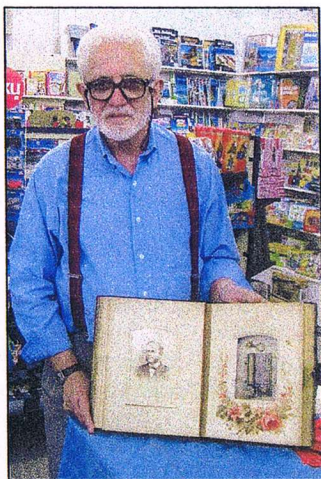
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