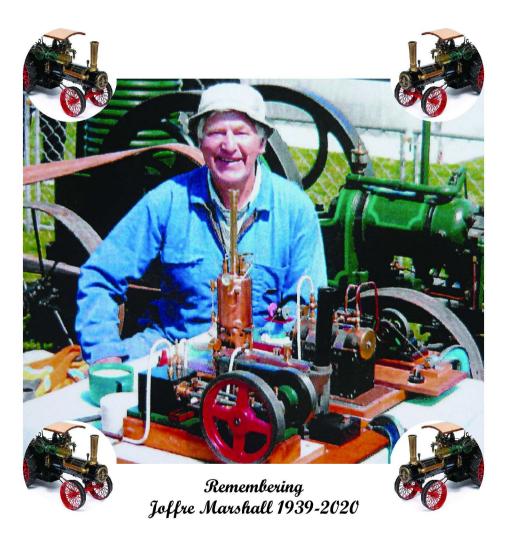
The Phonographic Record

Journal of the Vintage Phonograph Society of New Zealand (Inc.)
A society formed for the preservation of recorded sound
Volume 55, Issue 1, January/June 2020



Joffre in his element at a vintage fair with stationary engines full size and miniature

THE PHONOGRAPHIC RECORD

Volume 55, Issue 1, January/June 2020

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For your information

What can I say about the world upheaval of the last six months that hasn't already been said? Right up until late March we were thinking we could hold the monthly Christchurch area meeting but as the virus situation deteriorated day by day, and with the age of many members very much in mind, we had to face the fact that this would not be possible. The nationwide Level 4 lockdown was a bizarre experience but I think that most New Zealanders agree that it was the only way to avert disaster. As the daily statistics continued to look encouraging it was so much easier to put up with the restrictions. Of course we were also fortunate that New Zealand's isolation made border control viable.

The Covid-19 pandemic is still very much in all our minds as we follow the international situation. With so many of us having relatives and collector friends in Australia, the spread of the virus in Victoria is especially shocking so I am sure we are hoping that the emergency restrictions there work.

On a more positive note, we welcome new New Zealand members Graeme Holden, David Penny and Wayne Smith.

This issue is shorter than the last but I hope you find it interesting. As always, thanks to the contributors and to Bethany for creating the finished product.

Gavin East Editor

Lockdown Projects by David Peterson

On March 23rd 2020 the New Zealand Government announced that as from11.59pm on Wednesday March 25th, the nation would enter a minimum four week 'stay at home' period in order to control the spread of the Covid-19 Virus that was quickly becoming a pandemic with major health implication in many countries around the world. Our requirements were strict with all business apart from essential services closed and in New Zealand this included closing all restaurants and cafés, retail stores, hair salons and barbers. The only businesses that were allowed to operate during this 'Level 4' period were supermarkets, petrol stations, doctors and pharmacies.

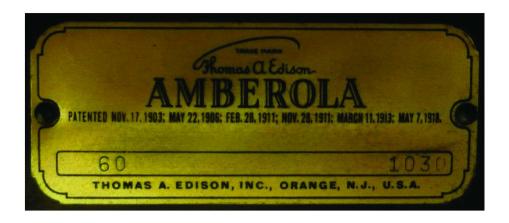
For a collector like myself with lots of projects in line for a tidy up or a makeover (and generally little time to get on to them), this presented an opportunity to spend considerably more time in the workshop and I used the time to sort records, clean up some magic lantern slides and tidy up a few machines for addition to my collection.

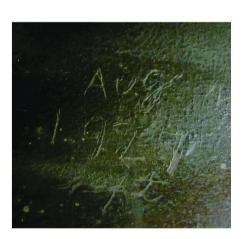
Date of Birth Revealed? One machine that I have owned for a number of years is an Edison Amberola 60. In my view the Amberola 60 is not a particularly attractive machine, however although they turn up on occasion here in New Zealand, I understand that much like the Amberola 80 they are not often found in the Northern Hemisphere. Both the Amberola 60 and the Amberola 80 were models 'created' by the Edison factory in an attempt to use up a surplus of diamond disc cabinets when sales of the disc models were dropping severely. The 60 was created by fitting a double spring Amberola 50 or 75 works in to a London table model diamond disc cabinet, and the 80 by using the same double spring Amberola fitted in to a Sheraton model diamond disc cabinet. Most of these were exported to smaller 'far away' markets where cylinder records were still selling while in America 78's were gaining a strong market share however it appears that they were not a big seller anywhere!

I purchased the machine from an auction several years ago and it is in nice original condition. It is serial number 1030 and it really didn't need a whole lot to be done in order for me to be happy to put it on display in my collection. Display space is always a problem and I think that the reason it has languished in storage for so long was in part because I had to work out where to put it.

In the past several weeks I have oiled the motor, given the cabinet a good clean and polish and completed a few other minor tasks in order to now have it on display. It plays well! I was intrigued to find a date scratched in to the interior of the cabinet alongside the front of the horn while cleaning up the inside of the case. That date is August 29th 1927 and there is a word scratched underneath the date which I can't read properly but which may say 'export'.

The mystery is this: Was this the date the cabinet was made, the date the machine was exported or determined to be destined to be, or the date it was sold by the selling dealer in New Zealand? I guess I will never know...







Dousona Goes Full Circle! Another machine that I was very pleased to put on display over the stay at home period was a table model gramophone made by an English company called Dousona. It's a machine that has special meaning to me as I first owned it as a budding collector when I was a teenager. As a lad of about 14 years of age I saved money earned from delivery papers after school and collected about half a dozen machines. One of those was a mahogany Dousona table model with a lovely internal wooden horn and it was my favourite, standing out alongside HMV and Columbia portable and table model machines.

As interests changed during my teenage years and I wanted to experience other hobbies and activities, I sold my collection to a local antique dealer in Christchurch. His name was George Arneric and he had a store on Manchester Street called Eureka Antiques. In the early 1990's and then in my late twenties, my interest in gramophones and phonographs was rekindled by the idea of one nice cabinet model machine to sit in the living room of my home. My first purchase as a second time around collector was an HMV 157 and around this same time I was introduced to The Vintage Phonograph Society based in Christchurch. When I first viewed the collection of local collector Robert Sleeman I was surprised to see a Dousona just like the one I had owned more than 10 years earlier. Could it be the same one? It turned out that Robert had purchased it from Gavin East and you guessed it... he had purchased it from George at Eureka Antiques! It was wonderful to admire the machine again and I'm reminded what a small place Christchurch is sometimes!

Roll forward to the present day and I own the machine again. Robert kindly offered me the opportunity to buy the machine from him and I was pleased to be able to do so. I've given the nice quality Garrard double spring motor some oil, repaired the lid which had separated at the joints and given it a good polish up before putting it on display in my collection. I still have photographs I took of the machine when I owned it around 1980 and now I have some updated photos too!





Diamond Spaghetti - The Timaru Milling Co by Adam Miller



The example shown is a paste-over label on an NZ-pressed Columbia DC681 of Bertie King's Jazz Group performing *Rosetta* (CM336) backed with *All of Me* (CM337), recorded October 28th 1954 [1] and released in 1955.

It featured Bertie King (1912-81) on clarinet and George Chisholm (1915-97) on trombone. Apparently it was used for a 1985 TV advertisement as described below. The bogus serial "TM225" is obviously for Timaru Milling, but the 225 meaning is unclear. It is also unclear why "three cheers" has become "three 'chias'".

In Nga Taonga Sound & Vision there is a film recording [2], with the following write-up:

A (mock-up) label on a 78 rpm record - "Three 'Chias'. Produced by the Timaru Milling Co. Ltd" and with the 'Diamond' spaghetti logo as the record company logo - is glimpsed before it begins to turn on the gramophone. The Italian "Santa Lucia" plays, with operatic male vocal, over quickly-cut images of different families - Māori and Pākehā - and individuals enjoying spaghetti. A packet of 'Diamond' brand spaghetti. Voiceover and onscreen text: "Three 'cheers' for Diamond." (The voiceover adds the word "spaghetti"). The record sticks: "-chia - chia".

Unfortunately, the film is yet to be digitized and made available online.

The Diamond brand was established by the Timaru Milling Company Ltd in the late 1880's supplying oats for breakfast cereals and flour for baking. The Timaru Milling Company was issued with a licence to manufacture pasta in 1941 and the small-scale production of Diamond pasta began. The milling ceased in 1998 at the original 6-story site, and pasta production followed in 2003.

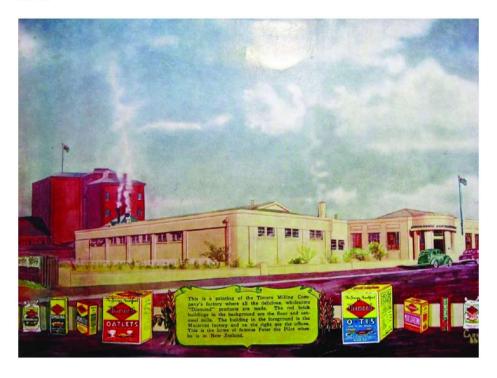


Image shows the Timaru Milling Co offices on High St and Mill St, with the original mill in the background. [3]

While the film soundtrack is Santa Lucia, the image could be of the record in hand, as there is no reason why multiple copies would be required, unless there was felt to be a need for spares. Any old 78 could be used to create the prop. Have readers seen any others?

References:

- [1] Bertie King Discography. http://henrybebop.co.uk/bertking.htm
- [2] Ngā Taonga id C1523. https://ngataonga.org.nz/collections/catalogue/catalogueitem?record_id=147213
- [3] The ABCs of flour milling in South Canterbury, N.Z. http://sites.rootsweb.com/~nzlscant/mills.htm

A Tale of Two Records by Chris Neave

(This is a tale of two Edison Diamond Disc records and how I acquired them. It involved an unusual find; a lot of curiosity and a search for the original owner)

My interest in music & collecting began not long after I commenced working at the age of 15 in 1962. Some of the first things I purchased then were a portable record player, LP records and a set of Encyclopaedia Britannica (for my love of history). The later I remember very clearly, as it cost me the princely sum of £172 in 1963 (to be paid off in monthly installments). The record player I bought on Hire Purchase from HG Palmer in Newcastle NSW. Prior to this, the only source of music in our home was the piano my father loved to play (often and loud) and the wireless. I also learned to play the piano, a love of which I still have today. In late 1961 my parents purchased a TV set which I can't say added to my interest in popular & classical music and was possibly why I purchased the record player so early in my working career.

In the Garbage Bin In 1970 while visiting my brother in Brisbane, I noticed two old records he had discarded into his garbage bin. My brother said that the records had been given to him and that they were of no interest as he had nothing to play them on. I was welcome to keep them. Please don't think I am in the habit of going through other people's garbage bins looking for records, this was a one off occurrence!! As I was showing early signs of an inveterate collector with a taste for the unusual, I gratefully accepted the records because they were so different to what I had seen before. By this stage of my life, music played a big part and influenced the things I liked to collect.

Unusually Thick Records My new records were very strange; they were unusually thick compared to other records and had the word 'Edison' on them. What could they be? From my school days I knew that Thomas Edison was the inventor of cylinder records and that what I had was different. Until I knew more about the records, I thought it wise not to try and play them. I had never associated Edison with disc records. This led me to my trusty Encyclopaedia Britannica and while it did not fully tell me what I wanted to know, it did give me a better understanding of what they were. By the way, the article I referred to back then in the Encyclopaedia was by an expert named Edward Washburn Kellogg. I can't remember when I fully identified them as Edison Diamond Disc recordings, but I dutifully took some notes, cleaned them and then packed them away until the day I could safely play them without causing any damage.

Finally Got to Hear Them Play A long time was to pass before I finally heard my two Diamond Discs. It was not until May 1993 when I purchased my first Diamond Disc Phonograph machine (London table model L-35) that I was able to hear that full and glorious 'Edison' sounds. The two records I found on that auspicious occasion in 1970 were 50853 (*The Invincible Eagle March/Here There & Everywhere March*) and 51281 (*Fox Trots- Dream Daddy/Take, Oh Take Those Lips Away*). Both of the records have quiet surfaces and a good loud

sound; it is still a pleasure to have them in my expanded Diamond Disc record collection. Relevant to my story now was to try and establish the original recording and pressing dates of these records. While the music on record 50853 was recorded in 1917 & 1918 respectfully, the actual disc itself was not pressed until 1921. This date was arrived at as the record has an engraved label (M-6B) introduced by Edison in early 1921 (discontinued June/July 1921). Record 51281 was recorded in 1923 and possibly also pressed the same year. I know this because it has a paper label (P-1D) which was in use from September 1923 until Sept/Oct 1926. With this information, I believe the approx issuing dates to be between 1921 and 1924. Now that I have given you some of the relevant background information on my Edison Diamond Disc records, I can now proceed to the next part of the story.

Who Was the Original Owner? After my brother gave me the two Diamond Disc recordings, he told me they had been given to him by his mother-in-law Mrs. Omilla ('Millie') Bronwyn Kurth nee Matthews. At the time, I did not think to ask the important question how Millie came by the records. Even if I had it was too late as Millie had died in 1969. To be truthful, my curiosity about the story behind the records and the Australian connection only started when I decided to write this article. By the way, I had known Millie for several years before her death; she was a delightful lady with a great sense of humor.

Who were the people that originally purchased Diamond Disc recordings in Australia in the 1920s and why? This has often puzzled me as the cost of a Diamond Disc in Australia in the 1920s was not cheap. The standard 50,000 popular series, to which my records belong, sold for 6/6 (the various classical music and art song series sold from 9/- to 12/6 each). Edison Diamond Disc recordings were a specialized item which could only be played on an Edison Diamond Disc Phonograph machine. Records and machines were directly imported to Australia from the USA and sold through the Edison Shop and other specialist dealers in each capital city. Owning an Edison Disc Phonograph was a 'prestige' purchase. The US Edison factory closed in 1929. So the question is: Could Millie have been the original owner of these two records by being in a financial position to purchase an expensive Edison Phonograph machine? Unfortunately, I cannot answer yes to this question except to say that from my research into her life it is possible to answer in the affirmative, based on supposition.

Millie was born at Mt Morgan Queensland in 1896, the seventh of 10 children born to John Evan Matthews (1860 -1914) and Omilla Ellen Morgan (1862-1933). Millie's parents were both born in Wales and migrated to Queensland disembarking at Rockhampton in April 1885. Upon his arrival in Queensland, John Matthews worked for a time on the building of the railway line to Barcaldine. In 1885 the Matthews family moved to Mt Morgan where John worked for the Mt Morgan Gold Mining Co. However, by the 1890s John Matthews had set himself up in bus ness as a Tobacconist & Newsagent. When the shop burnt down in 1896, John abandoned the business and



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resumed working for Mt Morgan Gold Mining Co. as a cabinet maker. John Matthews was the Mayor of Mt Morgan from November 1893 to February 1895. He died at Mt Morgan in 1914. Millie's family was devout Baptists and loved music. She maintained her faith and love of music all her life What is known about her early years is that she spent most of it in Mt Morgan. She was a hard worker and by the mid 1920s she had two small girls and is believed to have lived in Rockhampton where she worked in a restaurant in order to support her family. By the late 1920s her cane cutter husband H. F 'Harry' Kurth, had moved the family to Gordonvale (south of Cairns). They remained in Gordonvale until 1931 when they moved to Brisbane just after my brother's wife, Dorothy, was born. Millie spent the rest of her life in Brisbane.

Why Buy a Diamond Disc Phonograph? The supposition part of this story is that Millie's love of music was the motivating force for her wanting to own a record player. Why she chose a Diamond Disc machine over a less expensive 78 rpm Gramophone system is unknown. Maybe she was given a machine or perhaps she bought it second hand in the late 1920's or early 1930's as so many people did when they were much cheaper and not in demand. As the depression was still a few years off she possibly had some disposable income to spend on luxury items. the mid/late 1920s were a period of prosperity for people willing to work. The Diamond Disc machine she played her records on is unknown, maybe it was the London table model (L35), which in 1923 was Edison's cheap export machine at a cost of £22 (UK price), late reduced to £19. The purchase of Diamond Disc records were probably not a problem. She possibly could have purchased them locally through an Edison agent in Rockhampton, who obtained stock or filled orders directly from the Edison Shop in Brisbane. She may have also had holidays in Brisbane or had a friend or a family member living there who could have purchased them for her. We just do not know this far removed in time from 'Millie' of the 1920s.

If my two records could only talk, then all my questions would be answered. As it is, I must leave the land of supposition and be grateful Millie gave the records to my brother and that I was able to rescue them from a horrible fate. I am sure they are grateful to me which is probably why they play so well, a token of their







Meeting Reports January to June 2020 by Gavin East

The January 2020 meeting was held at my home in Lincoln. We discussed the final form for the new membership process. I had to report that my enquiries with a Christchurch leather goods manufacturer about phonograph driving belts had come to nothing.

We noted with sadness the death just before Christmas of Ann Hastilow after a long illness. It was always a pleasure to meet at John and Ann's fine old home in Christchurch as we did for the AGM on many occasions. We were touched that Ann was still well enough to attend our fiftieth anniversary celebrations in Ashburton in 2015.

We had also been saddened to learn of the death in early January of Paul Flight of Little River. Paul owned the former picture theatre there and operated an antique business from it for a time in the 1980's before closing it to concentrate on his painting. In the 1970's Paul built up a good collection of early operatic 78's which he retained even after ceasing to collect actively in recent years.

In February 2020 we enjoyed Peter Harris' hospitality once again. David Peterson, Robert Sleeman and I try to answer the emails which come to the Society from non-members seeking advice and the latest concerned the value of an Edison C-19 Disc Phonograph, a reminder of how well this model sold in New Zealand despite its high price (around 115 pounds in 1921 from memory of a price list once seen). At the meeting Robert showed us some unusual Asian 78's just acquired at a garage sale and Steve James handed round the latest additions to his rapidly growing collection of Victorian and later illustrated sheet music. Our host Peter rounded off the evening with milkshakes for us all!

Kathleen Campbell hosted the June 2020 meeting which was a very welcome chance to catch up after the cancellation of the meetings in March, April and May. In fact the conversation happily carried on so long that there was no time for Kathleen's planned magic lantern show. The "advice subcommittee" reported another interesting enquiry from outside the Society, this time concerning a G&T "Captain Scott" style Monarch Senior with wooden spearpoint horn. We had learned that the Dini Collection was soon to be installed in its new building at Ferrymead and agreed that we would be happy to provide any information and advice Ferrymead might need about the machines.

Obituary Joffre Marshall 1939-2020 by Gavin East



Joffre Marshall, our Patron and long time member of the Society, died suddenly at his home in Rangiora on 15 July 2020 aged eighty. In his quiet way Joffre touched so many people's lives, in our group and wider afield, that it is hard to condense his life into a few paragraphs.

Joining the Society a year or two after it was founded in 1965, Joffre quickly became one of our most enthusiastic members, taking part in our early displays with his wife Margaret and their children Diane and Andrew. His technical skills were crucial to the foundation of our replica parts catalogue. Those who attended our fiftieth anniversary celebration in Ashburton in 2015 will remember how movingly Joffre spoke of the early days of parts manufacture and the satisfaction of working out how to make cranes, winding handles etc.

Around 1970 we had ideas of building clubrooms but changed focus when the opportunity arose to buy a disused church and move it to Ferrymead Historic Park.

No one could have been keener than Joffre when it came to fundraising ideas. We even cut Christmas trees in Balmoral Forest (with permission!) and bagged sheep manure to sell. Happy days!

Brought up at Orari in South Canterbury, Joffre made his career with New Zealand Railways as a stationmaster, first at Lincoln in the early 1960's, then Hawarden on the Waiau branch, followed by Kaiapoi and finally Rangiora. One of our more special meetings in the 1970's was the one at Kaiapoi Station where Joffre showed us the tablet system used to ensure that only one train could be on a section of single track line at a time. Joffre's railway career ended earlier than expected with the closure of Rangiora Station but he was able to buy the stationmaster's house where he continued to live and maintain his large vegetable garden.

Music played a very large part in Joffre's life and he became well known throughout Canterbury as an accordionist with his brother Smokey's old time country music band. His music helped him to fill his life following Margaret's death in the mid 1980's and he loved to bring his accordion to meetings and play us the latest addition to his repertoire. Through his music he made many lifelong friends including Alf and Raelene whom we met when meeting at Joffre's home.

Though not at all a "show off" in personality, Joffre enjoyed nothing better than giving pleasure to people through a wide range of activities. Besides his music he demonstrated his model steam engines and made prizewinning Meccano displays. Having bought his cherished blue Morris 1000 new from Mocketts Motors in Culverden in about 1964, he was still driving it around Rangiora until recently.

In recent years we saw less of Joffre as age and arthritis took their toll but he appreciated being Patron and was very happy to catch up with us at the annual pre-Christmas meal. He was still able to play in the band and maintain his garden and seemed quite well overall so news of his passing came as a considerable shock. It is very sad to farewell one of the last members from the early days of the Society but we will remember him fondly. Joffre's son Andrew has inherited a love of old machinery and intends to keep his Dad's collection, including the "Morrie", which we hope to see in due course.



Flexible 78rpm Records Part 2 – Coloured celluloid by Adam Miller

Goodson Between 1928 and 1931 the Goodson Gramophone Record Co produced a range of thin, very flexible white discs, in a material they called Rhodoid. The first issue was held up when it was found to be very flammable, requiring a rejigging of the plastic's formula.

The main series were 10" and sold at 1/9d and ran from 100 to about 340. They were unusual in having the tune details printed four times on the side, as well as noting the name of the tune on the obverse. Most issues were printed in blue although some later advertising ones were in red. There was also a 7" series retailing at 1/- covering children's nursery rhymes but also (in the 7000 range) dance material from US Marathon masters. Other masters came from many sources including Grey Gull, Emerson and Dominion.

In 1929, the company was taken to court by Boosey & Co seeking an injunction until such time as the copyright stamps supplied by Boosey could be affixed to records being sold – the shiny Rhodoidwould not accept them. Goodsons initially won the case, but lost on appeal, mainly based around the fact that Boosey had been supplying stamps to many manufacturers for over 15 years without incident, and that the owner of the copyright was not bound to supply stamps guaranteed to adhere to whatever material the record manufacturer may choose to use.





The standard printed appearance was self-promoting, especially around the extreme flexibility of the records. They have survived well, often without the warping common to other flexible discs of the time, although they are now quite brittle so flexing in the manner illustrated should not be attempted! The sleeve recommended the use of a used needle, possibly because a sharp new one would quickly cut through the material. As lightweight give-aways or easily posted promotional items, many feature advertising in their design, as shown in the examples on the next page.







OVER 800 BRANCHES IN GREAT BRITAIN







Filmophone The Filmophone Flexible Records Co operated between 1930 and 1932, producing thin celluloid 10" discs in a wide range of colours as shown below, but also including black. The details were printed directly onto the surface in white or gold. Some 380 titles were issued, mainly popular music featuring American and British dance bands.

Most examples found nowadays are wavy and difficult to play, but a good one plays near silently.



Phonycord Looking similar to Filmophone, and sold around the same time, they were in fact initially made in Germany and so did not have Filmophone's "BRITISH MADE" inscription. The foreign series ran from 1 to 691 (using odd numbers only and often German Artiphon matrices) while the later British P-series ran from 74 to 135. These later ones were produced by UK Decca judging by the stamper reference codes. There were also German 2000, 3000, 4000, 6000 and 8000 series.



Impressed text on one record reads "Phouycord" rather than "Phonycord"

(to be continued)

Advertisements

Phonograph Society of New South Wales Inc:

From cylinder to CD, the Society is for those interested in all aspects of historical sound recording and reproduction at is monthly meetings in Sydney. One subscription for all: \$A30 pa Australia and overseas. Write to The Secretary, Phonographic Society of NSW (Inc), P.O. Box 215, Epping, NSW 1710, Australia, or visit our website www.phonographicsocietynsw.welcome.to

Phonograph Society of South Australia:

An organisation of enthusiasts interested in the collection and preservation of the artifacts of sound recording and reproduction and research into their evolution. The PSSA NEWSLETTER, containing interesting articles and news, is published quarterly. Relvant books and reprints are also sold. Annual dues (Australian currency); NZ, Asia and South Pacific \$28.00; Rest of the world \$32.00; Write to: the Secretary, PSSA, P.O. Box 235, Kent Town, S.A., 5071, Australia. Phone and Fax (=61-8+8337-7134) E-mail: nelsent@picknol.com.au

The Antique Phonograph Society:

The California Antique Phonography changed its name at the beginning of 2012. We are now The Antique Phonograph Society. Our mailing address remains P.O. Box 169 Victorville, CA 92393 USA. However, out website changed a few years ago to: www.antiquephono.org Rates for members outside North America are \$40 USD (check) or \$42 USD (through the website/paypal)

The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society Limited (CLPGS):

To join us, contact the Membership Secretary: Tim Wood-Woolley, 28 Park Terrace, Westcliff on Sea, Essex, SS0 7PH, United Kingdom or email clpgsmembership@blueyinder.co.uk. For more information visit the CLPGS Web page at www.clpgs.org.uk

Wanted to Buy:

Dancing Rastus or similar figures to fit on old gramophone records. Please email: v.rbrown@amuri.net or phone 064 3 312 4477 (NZ)

Wanted to buy (or exchange for what you need):

Reproducer, arm and "horn" or amplifier for a Mikiphone – or complete Mikiphone in any condition. Bruce Leask, 20 Hind Place, Palmerston North 4410, New Zealand. Phone (06) 3550636.

Wanted to Buy or Exchange:

HMV No.4 soundbox, gold finish and early style with "His Master's Voice" printed on front. Record dusters with New Zealand shop names. Gavin East, 4A Lyttelton Steet, Lincoln 7608, New Zealand, email: gavexcat88@gmail.com

Wanted to Buy:

TANZA 78's featuring vocals by John Hoskins. Please contact Wilf Boon via the Society's email address, nzphonosociety@hotmail.com or phone (03) 332 2897

Wanted to Buy:

TANZA records Z90: Pixie Williams singing "Maoriland" and "Sailing Along on a Moonbeam", with the Allan Shand Orchestra. Would be interested in other TANZA records, please send me numbers. Contact Francis Young at hjyoung@xtra.co.nz or phone 07 549 2767.

Wanted to buy:

Large cygnet crane with adjuster spring. The repo ones the society used to make would be fine. Chris Rogers 3 Windham St Vic Australia 3749 email c.m.rogers@bigpond.com.au



Though this appears to be a late-1950's RCA New Zealand 78 label, it is actually a small (about one and three quarter inch diameter) metal badge. Would an Elvis fan have wanted to wear one of these? Personal memories welcome!