The Phonographic Record

Journal of the Vintage Phonograph Society of New Zealand (Inc.)
A society formed for the preservation of recorded sound
Volume 57, Issue 1, January/June 2022



Most Decca record dusters promote the record label founded in 1929 but here is what could be an earlier one from the mid 1920's for the famous machine with its distinctive reflecting bowl amplifier. This duster was found in Australia where the terms "phonograph" and "gramophone" seem to have been equally popular in the 1920's.

THE PHONOGRAPHIC RECORD

Volume 57, Issue 1, January/June 2022

Secretary: Mrs Nuong Wright

Joint editors 1965-1972: Pam Rogers and Walter Norris

Editor 1972-2012: Walter Norris

Magazine team 2012-:

Honorary Editor in Chief 2012-2014: Walter Norris

Editor 2012-: Gavin East, Email: gavexcat8@gmail.com Photographer 2012-: David Peterson Email: nzphonosociety@hotmail.com

Vintage Phonograph Society of New Zealand (Inc.), 4A Lyttelton Street, Lincoln 7608, New Zealand.

For your information

I hope that the mixture of material in this issue proves interesting. Mike Tucker's article on rebuilding an Edison Class H coin-slot phonograph is a record of an outstanding restoration. Some of Mike's illustrations may not have reproduced very clearly but they document the research and attention to detail involved in this project. When Bill Dini died in Christchurch in 1980, the machine he was working on was one of this model. He had imported an original case and an early Edison Home mechanism, possibly the one originally in the case, but had none of the coin-in-the-slot mechanism. Knowing Bill, he could have rebuilt his machine if he had good photos of a complete example but it would have been a huge challenge even for him. I remember that on one of my last visits to him he said that the H project would take him six months.

The pictures of film projectors and a certain old clock may seem out of place in a phonograph magazine but there are connections with our society. As for player pianos, I make no apology for including them with other mechanical music machines as part of the history of sound recording - though a personal enthusiasm for reproducing pianos no doubt has a lot to do with this attitude.

As always Bethany Bond has done a great job assembling this issue from my barrage of emails and choosing attractive graphics.

Gavin East Editor

LAST GREAT RESTORATION by Mike Tucker

Many thanks to Mike for this contribution from Sydney. We have printed the illustrations out of order so as to use four for the centre colour spread – Ed.

Having undertaken or been involved in the restoration of a considerable number of rare and unusual phonographs, I had decided enough was enough and there would be no further undertakings of that sort.

Life does not always go as one plans, and my intentions were thrown out when a long-time collector friend obtained the cabinet for a very rare Edison "H" coin-op table model phonograph. It had no mechanism, perspex instead of the curved glass and was something of a wreck. Illustration 1.

He asked if it was possible to restore the machine to working condition and I replied that it was probably not possible, but I would try.

As there were no known "H" machines in Australia, my only option was to contact a friend in the USA to see if any information might be available. His response was to place me in contact with a well reputed restorer in Canada who had, some years prior, restored several "H" projects. He was incredibly helpful and provided me with his hand drawn diagrams of all the "H" parts, together with measurements. An example is shown at Illustration 2.

Let me assure you that trying to manufacture a myriad of parts (yes, a myriad) from such drawings was something of a nightmare.

With some luck, however, another USA collector friend who had been involved in the Canadian restorations had some left-over parts, including a couple of castings of the unique reproducer carriage. He was kind enough to donate them to the project. This saved a great deal of time and effort, particularly as regards the carriage castings. Illustration 3.

It was decided that to amortise costs we would construct four machines.

The first order of business was to obtain genuine Suitcase Home Model A mechanisms, which was not too big a problem, but somewhat costly.

Next was to organise manufacture of three new cabinets and restoration of the original. Fortunately, I am on good terms with a local cabinetmaker who was prepared to do the cabinet work at a very concessional price.

It was then time for the front curved glass window. Sydney is fortunate to have "Glass Benders", and the owner was prepared to measure the original cabinet and make the glasses for all four machines.

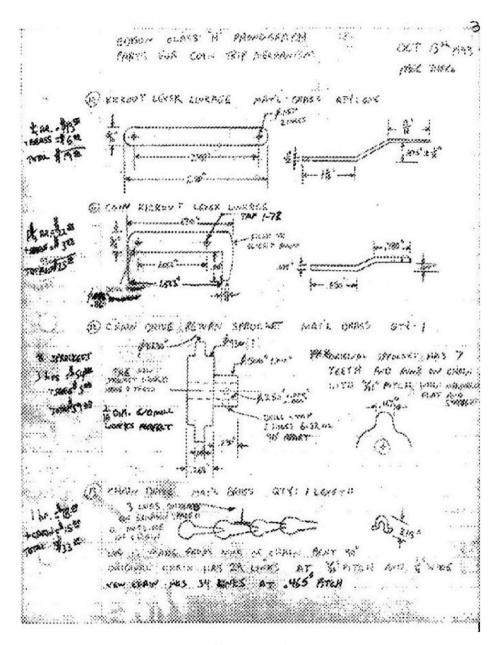


Illustration 2



Illustration 3



They were the easy parts!!!

Next was to fabricate parts and, where required, make patterns to enable castings to be made. This was a very time consuming and labour-intensive process. Cleaning and polishing castings and plating parts as required had to be undertaken. Once again, we managed to achieve this, including putting together assemblies as required. It seems that the "H" coin-op was designed empirically, and reference to Heath Robinson would not be out of order.

Having all the parts, the next job was to machine, drill and tap the "H" mechanism followed by black japanning as necessary (Using an original formula and a portable oven) and fitting of parts. One particularly difficult part to assemble was the Geneva stop which was attached to the spring barrel flat plate. Ensuring the screw holding the stop did not interfere with the mainspring was a difficult task, requiring frequent disassembly and reassembly of the mainspring barrel to get it right.

Another particularly difficult part to organise was the chain for the return mechanism. Initially a correct size chain was sourced in New Zealand, but it proved to be too flimsy. For many years I had a piece of chain in my junk box, and it turned out that it was the correct shape and thickness. Unfortunately, there was not nearly enough for one machine, let alone four. The solution was to purchase a sheet of appropriate thickness brass and take it, with one of the correct size and shape links, to a local laser cutting business. Again, not cheap. The new links then required careful bending and shaping to enable manufacture of the



Illustration 5

chains. Illustration 4. It all worked out and the chains performed as required. Illustration 5.

Another issue was the wire which worked on the coin activation assembly. Length was critical as well as keeping it clear of other parts.

The correct setting for coin activation was achieved with an odd-shaped casting which was held in place by a thumbscrew and this allowed adjustment to fit the record length. Illustration 6.

The reproducer was an Automatic, and these were expensive in their own rights. The tone arm assembly used original Edison angle connectors, suitably altered to allow the correct sliding fit. The coin chute was manufactured to accommodate an American 5 cent coin. Illustration 7.

The cast winder has a groove so that when in place a pivoted arm rotated into the groove and prevented removal unless the arm was raised, which was only possible when the front door was opened (or the machine was turned upside down).

Once assembled and adjusted, the "H" coin-op performed well and reliably. The finished machine is shown at Illustration 8.

The next big challenge was the coin drawer – and a big challenge it was. Having accessed photos and, where appropriate, measurements of original partial coin drawers and slides, or the remains thereof, it was still necessary to make an educated guess as to how the drawer worked as no

complete original drawer was known to exist at that time. This was done and the drawers appeared to work correctly. Goes to show how easily one can be misled. Some time after the project was deemed to be completed, a friend let me know that a previously unknown "H" coin-op had turned up in the USA and the remains of the original drawer were present. Photographs were provided and the proverbial penny dropped. The coin drawer was in two parts — the actual drawer and the surrounding cover. Both came out of the cabinet as a single assembly and the important part was to have an appropriate two-way lock which, when the assembly was in place in the cabinet, had the tongue down through the whole assembly and into the cabinet, locking it in place and preventing the drawer from being removed. The cunning part was that when the lock tongue was moved into the top position, the whole assembly could be removed in one piece. To access the coins, it was then necessary to again move the lock tongue into the down position and the drawer was freed. All this toensure the service mechanic could not get to the coins. Illustration 9.

The assistance of a number of friends in this project was essential and much appreciated. As a piece of whimsy, I decided to use the information in "The Phonograph and how to use it" and the format of Edison brochures to create an Edison "H" coin-op brochure. This looked the part. Illustration 10.



Illustration 9

Edison

Coin Slot Phonograph Model "H"

DIRECTIONS FOR

SETTING UP AND OPERATING



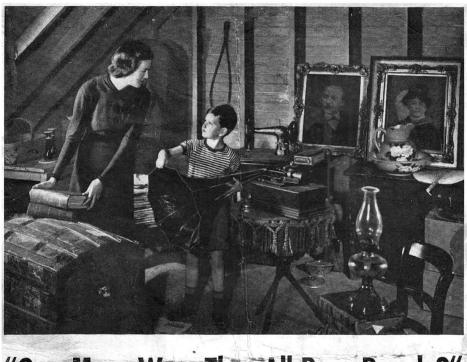
Do not lose this sheet. You will always find it useful

NOTICE

Every Edison Phonographs and sevry Edison Record and Blank is sold by the NATIONAL PHONOGRAPH COMPANY and the property of the property of the prices at which such Phonographs, Records and Blanks are to be sold, and as to the removal or change in whole or in part of the serial numbers on such Phonographs. Any violation of such restrictions terminates the license to use and vend such Phonographs. Recording the license to use and vend such Phonographs. Recording the property of the Phonographs. Record the property of the Edison Patents.

National Phonograph Company Orange, N. J., U. S. A.

The Attic We Dream About!



"Gee, Mom, Were They All Poor People?"

Walter Norris' albums and scrapbooks yielded this photo, possibly sent to Walter by longtime American contributor Larry Schlick. From "Mom's" dress and hairstyle this picture could date to the 1940's or even the 30's.



Illustration 1



Illustration 7

Mike Tucker's Edison Class H restoration before and after



Illustration 6



Illustration 8



Here are two of the flimsy and now rare early covers issued by the Gramophone Company. These two came to light recently containing their original dog label Gramophone Concert Record single-sided pressings. Thanks to Edan Bowman for spotting them. Oakley and Proudfoot's HMV book dates the two models above to 1911-1913. The cabinet (not table as printed) grand model XIIa must be very rare in New Zealand if any came here but the table grand IXa, sold in Australia and New Zealand as the Melba model, is sometimes found.



These two Gramophone Company models were produced between 1910 and 1913. The Oak Library Grand was better known as the Library Bijou Grand from 1909 to 1910, then model X from 1910 to 1913. In New Zealand (or at least in Christchurch) we are more familiar with the mahogany version which we know as the Library Bijou Grand though in England this name was used only for the oak model. The version of the Monarch Senior illustrated is the 1910-1913 model with "dog's tooth" serrated carving. Many examples have been found in New Zealand.

David Peterson took the records out of their covers so as to show that these covers were made for singlesided pressings and to show part of the trademark on the reverse of each one.

Meeting Reports December 2021 to June 2022 by Gavin East

As we enjoyed a pre-Christmas lunch at the Plough Hotel in Rangiora in December 2021, many of us may have been hoping for a more "normal" year of meetings in 2022. However that was reckoning without the spread of the Omicron variant of Covid and the imposition of the official "red traffic light" system in January so we did not meet in January, February and March 2022. By April we felt reasonably safe to hold another monthly meeting, hosted by Kathleen Campbell at her home in Kaiapoi. We welcomed Edan Bowman to his first meeting. Edan is a player piano enthusiast who gets plenty of leg exercise pumping his own pianos plus the one in Curragh Cottage at Ferrymead Historic Park. After many years' involvement with Friends of Ferrymead, in which Kathleen is also active, Edan has recently been appointed to an assistant curator position at the park so he will be able to keep us up to date with developments in the new display of the Dini Collection.

There was very little official business to work through so we were soon able to enjoy a good session with some of Kathleen's extensive collection of stereoscopes, slides and cards. Steve James had brought two items from his collection which complemented Kathleen's; an unusual early folding viewer and a neat cased set of viewer and cards.

Though Wilf Boon had celebrated his 94th birthday in February, this was the first opportunity we had had to congratulate him in person so we did not neglect to do so!

Wilf kindly hosted the May meeting at which a variety of items and topics made for a very pleasant evening. Martin James of Friends of Ferrymead had asked if we could still supply steel needles for the table model gramophone in Curragh Cottage so of course we were happy to supply some. Robert Sleeman had a quantity of 78's to give away on a "per crate pot luck" basis and found several takers to lighten his truck for its trip home. I showed some record dusters recently obtained and spoke briefly about the book "Edison" by Edmund Morris which I had enjoyed reading. Wilf showed us some recent additions to his collection of children's 78's and demonstrated his HMV Model 102 portable in green finish with the separate record tray, an impressive machine both in appearance and sound. Beth Lomas helped Wilf serve a delicious supper which rounded off the evening.

In June we were at last able to make the postponed visit to Ian and Bev Fisher's private cinema in Christchurch. Every detail is so perfect that a voice was heard regretting a lack of Jaffas, the little hard spherical orange sweets famous as projectiles at "the pictures". Ian told us that when one cinema was being demolished, a cascade of Jaffas fell out of its curtain! Ian had compiled a varied and entertaining

programme using his 16 and 35mm projectors. The films included a dramatised documentary from the 1940's about the great English electrical inventor R.E.B. Crompton, a Ford Motor Company film from 1953 promoting the company headquarters at Dearborn, Michigan as a holiday destination and a vintage New Zealand Tourist and Publicity Department feature on the West Coast of New Zealand's South Island. Following the film showing Ian and Bev served supper while Ian told us more about his large and well displayed collection of projectors.

An evening at Ian and Bev's by Edan

On a cold, wet Christchurch winter evening a small group of members and a couple of guests met outside Ian and Bev Fisher's home in the suburb of Hoon Hay before being welcomed into the warmth of their private cinema.

Ian talked to us about some of the projectors and films he has in his collection, including many films he made until 2013 when the processing costs became too high. We were then asked to take our seats as the lights dimmed and the scalloped curtain rose. We heard the tell tale clicks of true vintage coming to life and the flicking of film going into the projector.

I can't recall the names of all the films that evening but I'll try. The New Zealand one about the Westland district had members chatting and recalling visits to the district, The feature "Our old car", made in the 1940's, had Gavin pointing out that the "1913" Ford was actually a 1915 model. The cartoons had us giggling, especially Georgie and the dragon. We even got to travel to America and see the Ford Motor Company's production line as well as its museum and the living village next door as well.

Afterwards we adjourned and had supper before heading out into the night.



Presumably this dire warning didn't apply to the shop selling the record when new. Steve James came across this unfamiliar sticker recently.

A Prominent New Zealand Collector in the 1970's



From Walter Norris' albums comes this photo of Jack and Renee Root. In the 1970's Jack built up a very fine collection which was displayed in his and Renee's home at Pauatahanui near Wellington. Jack no longer lives in New Zealand but keeps in touch with friends here.

THURSDAY, JUNE 13

ARIETY

A.B.C. (MELBOURNE) SYMPHONIC DANCE BAND. Conducted by CECIL FRASER. ASSISTED BY:

JEAN HAMBLETON, MASTER FOUR QUAR-TETTE.

DICK BENTLEY & ABE WALTERS in Novelty Musical Acts.

BAND. "Conversation Piece"
(Noel Coward)

NOVELTY MUSICAL ACT

DICK BENTLEY ABE WALTERS.

"Mississippi Suite"
1. "Father of Waters."
2. "Huckleberry Finn."
3. "Old Creole Days."
4. "Mardi Gras."

THE MASTER FOUR QUARTETTE. Accompanied by THE SYMPHONIC DANCE BAND

in a Selection of Screen

BAND: "Two Symphonic Rhapsodies" (Eric Coates) DICK BENTLEY ABE WALTERS

Novelty Numbers.

BAND: Two Symphonic Arrange-

Two Symphonic Arrange-ments—
1. "Maori Love Song"
(W. G. James)
SOLOIST: JEAN HAM-BLETON, Contralto,
2. "I'll Love You For-ever" . . . (H. Bennett)

8.45: UNIT TWO:

"RAMBLINGS IN THE ANTARCTIC"
DR. R. E. PRIESTLEY,
M.A., D.Sc., M.C., ViceChancellor of the University of Melbourne.



PERCY GRAINGER

National Relay from 3LO through 2CO, 2FC, 2NC, 8.0 to 11.30 p.m., and through 4QG, 4RK, 8.0 to 10.30 p.m., and through 5CL, 5CK, 8.0 to 9.15 p.m. (E.S.T.)

9.0: UNIT THREE:

"Fantasia and Fugue in G Minor" .. (Schirmer) (Composed for Organ by Bach, arranged for Piano by Liszt.)

by Liszt.)
In this glorious work
Bach's untrammelled
nature revels in the freedom of the Fantasia form
—treating it like a spontaneous improvisation.
The Future is almost taneous improvisation.
The Fugue is almost dance-like in its energetic, set rhythms.

Aportic gem in Debussy)
A poetic gem in Debussy's simple early style, before he became influenced by Javanese gong "El Albaici" – from "Theria" . . . (Albenia) "Moonlight" (Clair orchestras.

"El Albaicin" is the name of the gypsy quarter of Granada. A very forceful and exuberant genius was lost to Spain

PIANO RECITAL BY

when Albeniz died before reaching the age of forty. He is recognised as the founder of the new Spanish school in music, and considered by many as having created the most intrinsically pianistic style of writing since Liszt. "Sonata in B Flat Minor, Op. 35" (Chopin) (a) Allegro. (b) Scherzo. (c) Funeral March. (dd) Finale.

(c) Funerar Marcu, (d) Finale. This is undoubtedly one of the priceless posses-sions of music, ranking forever with the master-pieces of the world. It is a work containing great depth and beauty of poetic content. Schumann considers the four move-ments Chopin's wildest ments

children. The Sonata is said to be based upon the legend of a Polish War-rior. The first movelegend of a Polish Warrior. The first movement is supposed to portray the hero at the wars,
fightling for his native
land, and, in moments of
repose, dreaming of his
betrothed, whom he left
behind. The Scherzo represents the Hero returning homewards—the Trio
of the Scherzo vicing his
yearning for his sweetheart. In the Funeral
March his sweetheart
who has died during his
absence), is being borne
to her grave. He meets
the funeral train, which
is the first intimation to
him of her decease. The
Finale is said to represent a deserted grave, over which a snowstorm is raging.

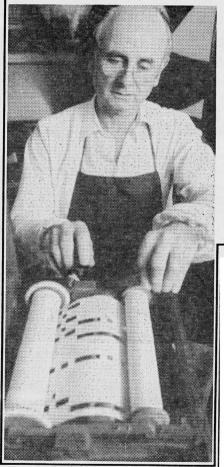
"Cradle Song"
(Brahms-Grainger) (Well-known song (Well-known song by Brahms, arranged for Piano by Percy Grainger.) "The Hunter in His Career" (Set by Grainger) An 18th Century English hunting song, from Chappells "Old English Popular Music," freely set for piano in 1929 and based upon an earlier (1905), setting for male chorus and orchestra.

10.0: UNIT FOUR: "THE RADIO NEWS REEL."
A Review of Topical Events
of the Week.
10.30: WEATHER DATA, ETC
10.40: UNIT FIVE:
DANCE MUSIC
By

A.B.C. DANCE BAND, directed by JIM DAVIDSON. 11.30: CLOSE DOWN.

Percy Grainger (1882-1961) was certainly one of the more colourful personalities in the musical world in the first half of the twentieth century. He made several excellent rolls for the Duo-Art reproducing piano and took a keen interest in their editing. Cutting supplied by Greg Coe, Melbourne.

Tax means pianolas have no role to play



SYDNEY — Australia's only manufacturer of pianola music rolls is in danger of closing.

The Mastertouch

The Mastertouch Piano Roll Company, which was founded in 1919 as G.H. Horton & Co Ltd, is a victim of the technological tide and sales tax.

Mr Barclay Wright (left), a former school teacher who has headed the company since the early 1960s, said yesterday the factory in Petersham was no longer viable.

Sales tax imposed more than a year ago had forced prices up (from \$7.50 to \$9.95 for a single tune, for example) and sales had dropped by about 25,000 to 15,000 rolls a year.

rolls a year.

Mr Wright said he had sacked four employees already.

He said several ideas

had been mooted to save the factory, housed in an old Christian Science church along with a museum featuring pianolas dating back to the early 1800s.

The National Trust has suggested Mastertouch be accommodated in a factory in Bowral.

Mr Wright said he was still hopeful his company would be installed in the National Film and Sound Archive in Canberra where it could continue to function while open to the public as a museum.

He said an exemption from sales tax, which he had hoped for until recently, would "stop the immediate rot".

"The sales tax was the final thing," he said. "When they didn't revoke it, I knew it was the end."

From Greg Coe comes this cutting showing Barclay Wright (1934-2013), the man behind those Mastertouch rolls which often dominate the collections found with player pianos in New Zealand. His passion for the player piano and its music led him to take over Mastertouch from G.H. Horton & Co. in 1962 after many years of involvement in the industry in Australia. The company survived the challenge described above and kept producing rolls until Barclay Wright retired in 2005.





The top photo shows new member Edan Bowman at home in a pensive moment between rolls. The clock in the lower picture is an Ansonia Kobe model, perhaps ca. 1880, which was donated to our society in the early 1970's by Christchurch member George Foster. We lent it to Friends of Ferrymead and it has now spent decades faithfully ticking away in the kitchen in Curragh Cottage. However it remained in our annual accounts as an asset so last year we tidied up the situation by officially donating it to Friends of Ferrymead.



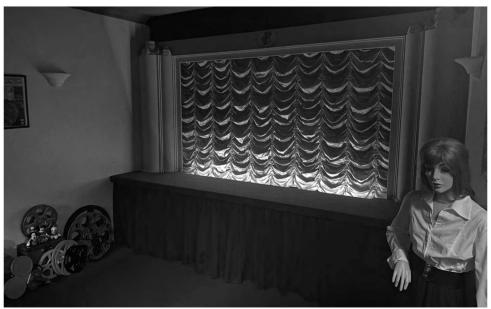
The sheet music annual containing this advertisement is undated but includes songs about the Dardanelles so can be dated to 1915. The Australian and New Zealand model names listed may have been introduced earlier than some of us had thought.





Two photos by Beth Lomas of some of our group at Ian and Bev Fisher's private cinema in June 2022. In the back row in the top view are Lindsey Best, Gavin East, Kathleen Campbell and Peter Harris. In front of them are Wilf Boon, Robert Sleeman and David Peterson while Edan Bowman is at the far end of the front row. In the lower photo Ian Fisher, at right, explains the details of one of his projectors to Ron Gardiner and Kathleen Campbell.





Two views taken by Edan Bowman of Ian and Bev Fisher's private cinema, showing the detail with which they have recreated the magic of what we used to call "the pictures".

Advertisements

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:

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



Record dusters can sometimes be evidence of shops otherwise almost lost to history. Before this one came to light, Christchurch collectors may not have guessed that there was a record shop in the small Canterbury riverside town of Kaiapoi.