



Not only is this label different with its royalty tab\* in the twelve o'clock position, but it initiated the first of many distinguished recordings in the Italian 12 inch series. Coloured lime green with gold lettering, the design was a special concession to the great Italian tenor Francesco Tamagno who created the role of *Otello* in Verdi's opera of the same name. The *Andrea Chenier* Un di all'azzurro aria recorded in April 1904 (the second to last he made) was a repeat of the earlier 10 inch version made in February 1903. In this case the recording engineer was W. Sinkler Darby. This and two others from this initial release came to my collection from the late Wally Golledge, in the 1960s, a collector from Nelson who specialised in cylinder phonographs.

\*Tamagno received four shillings or a fifth of the cost for every 12 inch record sold.

### Editorial:

I think it is a widely accepted fact that one's current collecting habits and music preferences generally determine the way a programme is prepared for presentation.

My dilemma in selecting records for this evening's programme has been compounded by a series of events which have had some considerable effect on me over the last twelve months.

First there was the arrival from two different sources of back issues of the *Record Collector* which I had stopped taking when James Dennis died in 1983. These arrived in time for me to take them away for the summer holidays. As I read them in chronological order, I was inspired to assemble a programme of records featured in the pages of the *RC* over the intervening years. Not very original but it would at least get me into corners of my collection which I tend to forget unless something stimulates me into action like a well written biography and discography.

This prospect was given additional support by the appearance of a double CD set commemorating the 50th anniversary issue of the *RC*. It is made up from a wonderful selection of arias and songs by those who'd made the pages of the journal over the last half a century and I can not recommend it too highly for its choice of items and production (although I do bemoan the lack of numbering every item in the printed material which accompanies these discs so you can use a remote control to select and play items at will).

On top of this I became wildly obsessed for a time with the idea of assembling a programme built up entirely of pupils by the great Polish tenor Jean de Reske. But as I surveyed my collection and drew up a list of singers who supposedly received tuition from him (there are conflicting statements on a definitive list), I began to waver in my endeavours. Then I temporarily became imbued by an article on the first recording sessions by Francesco Tamagno - the great Italian tenor who created the leading role in Verdi's *Otello*. Spearheading this idea was a man called Wm. Michaelis who not only figured prominently in these sessions in Italy, but later went on to play a prominent role in the establishment of the Fonotipia company. What a fascinating prospect this offered, interweaving Tamagno's G&Ts with early Fonotipias. But I rejected the idea as it came close on the heels of Rod Cornelius's Fonotipia programme and I lacked sufficient information to expand the concept.

Finally there was Dennis Brew's evening and on the back of this a visit to Peter Edwards Foxton Museum of 'Sound and Film'. After a couple of trips my collection expanded by about 50 records. Some of these feature tonight. In the end all the above ideas held some merit and so this is what you will hear, a hotch-potch of recent collecting milestones. I hope you enjoy it as much as I have had pleasure in preparing it for your entertainment.

## Comparison tests with HMV pressings

There has been a lot of discussion recently at our meetings about an irritating surface noise which seems inherent in English His Master's Voice gramophone records dating from the mid to late 1920s and carried on to the demise of 78rpm era. Even mint copies from this period have a disturbing hiss proving intolerable for even those who have over a period of time developed filters in their ears when listening to early recordings.

Word has it in our midst that records made by this company can be listened to without the accompanying surface noise simply by securing pressings that have come from other HMV factories. This has activated local collectors into clamouring for pressings that originate from HMV's New South Wales branch at Homebush, Australia.

While I don't wish to pour cold water on this concept, I have recently put this theory to the test and find that it would be folly to suppose that NSW pressings are superior. While my research is only in its early stages, I have recently been in the position to play next to mint copies from differing sources and can report as follows.

For a start, I used a diamond stylus for these experiments with a conical tip measuring .0035 x .0012 which I believe is accepted as the recommended one to use on recordings from a period covering the period under examination.

Two examples which I used to base my opinions on are Chaliapin singing Rachmaninoff's *The Prophet* on DB 1103 which was recorded in 1927, and Rosa Ponselle's *Casta Diva* from Norma on DB1280 and Victor 8125 made in 1928/9. In both instances, I had English or American pressings measuring up against their NSW counterparts.

First the Chaliapin which I had in the form of a NSW pressing which would date from about 1928 at the earliest or up to the mid 1930s at the latest when he toured Australasia. This was compared to an English pressing made after the second world war. Despite a decade or so between both pressings, they were both very noisy and destroyed any enjoyment I might have anticipated from listening to them as pristine copies. From this I can conclude that HMV standardised the same ingredients in the fabric of their records in all their factories throughout the world. Unfortunately I am not sufficiently experienced with the technical background to say if to say if the original matrix used to make these stampers was at fault. As an adjunct to these experiments I found one version was several seconds in longer, proving they were indeed different takes. But despite this discovery, both had the same disconcerting hiss.

Then the Ponselle was put to the test. Here there was no competition. The Victor was as smooth as silk while the NSW pressing was distinctly noisy with its abrading hiss.

While my disclosure may dampen what we all have come to believe regarding the qualities of English vs. Australian pressings, the composition of American recordings might hold the answer, with their products offering a

much smoother surface. Therefore I concluded that it was false to surmise that the NSW Homebush plant was gifted by some divine intervention to providing silent surface recordings.

Finally as a postscript to my experiments. When all my tests were concluded, I left one of the noisy items playing on the turntable while I walked into the next room to get something. It was then I made a startling discovery which will revolutionise listening to noisy HMVs! Don't attempt to filter out the hiss on your amplifier. Just wind up the volume and walk into an adjacent room leaving the door open. Sit down and enjoy the music. It is amazing what this will do. It is as if the singer is a comfortable distance away - somewhat similar to that which you'd find yourself if you were listening to them in a concert hall. Not even my keen ears could detect any hiss!

No I'm not going to patent this discovery!

## TONIGHT'S ARTISTS

TINO PATTIERA [1890-1966]

Despite his Italianate sounding name Pattiera never sang in Italy. His lyric tenor voice was used to good effect during the revival of interest in the Italian repertoire in Germany after the first world war where he found steady employment in Dresden. With only one season in Chicago in 1921-22 there was little chance of him making much of an impression on the international scene. J.B.Steane writes ...'(his) 'voice was on an unusual type, more Italian in its vibrancy than most tenors from other countries... (yet) he rarely achieved that kind of flow that seems to be second nature to the latins'. Michael Scott on the other hand finds merit in part by writing ...'Pattiera was a singer of genuine artistic intentions. On the evidence of *La donna é mobile*, he is not the most elegant or refined Duke, but his manner is engaging'

JOSEPH SHLISKY

In a *Record Collector* article on 'The Development of the Cantor' by Don Goldberg, Shlisky's name crops up thus. 'Between Sirota and Kusevitsky, there were many important cantors whose voices and styles influenced those who were to follow... the lyric Joseph Shlisky, whose untimely stroke around 1940 ended a most magnificent career. Shlisky's recording of the prayer *Omar Rabbi Elosor* (Rabbi Elosor said) is beloved of Jews and non-Jews alike for the placing of the voice and expression, and the use of a sublime, high-voiced mezza voce'.

NORMAN ALLIN [1884 - 1973]

While it seems England can claim many fine tenors, the names of rich resonant basses can be written on the back of a postage stamp. Excluding Malcolm McEachern who was Australian and a past veteran Robert Radford, only one bass of any consequence emerges - Norman Allin. Like many of his colleagues his name is linked with the Beecham Opera seasons at Covent Garden and the establishment of the BNOC. He came on tour to Australia with the Fuller Opera Company in 1934, but does not seem to have made the journey across the Tasman. As regards his records Richards and Fryer have this to say in the *Record Collector* of October/November 1955. 'In the earlier recordings Allin's voice is

comparatively light, almost baritonal. The top notes are freely produced and well placed. In later recordings a gradual change is noticeable, the voice grows darker, the low notes become even more effective with a slight loss of quality at the top, while the interpretative powers show a steady growth resulting in an authority which precludes the possibility of a complete failure in any of the middle or late recordings. Allin's phrasing is generally good, his intonation uncannily correct and his diction nearly always extremely good'.

WILHELM FURTWÄNGLER [1886-1954]

Wilhelm Furtwängler was one of the most charismatic conductors of the 20th century. Born in Berlin, Furtwängler showed great natural musical ability as a child. He originally intended to be a composer but first decided to take up conducting. In spite of a somewhat unconventional technique, he soon revealed special musical qualities which quickly took him to the top of his profession. When Nikisch died in 1922, he succeeded him as conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, a post he was to retain until his death. An international career followed at the end of the second world war. His almost metaphysical approach to conducting resulted in deeply moving interpretations of Beethoven, Brahms and Bruckner, much of which he recorded for EMI. Menuhin said of him 'In listening to him, it is the impression of a vast, pulsating space which is most overwhelming'.

EDNA THORNTON [1875-1958]

A product of the Manchester College of Music, Thornton is mainly remembered today as the contralto who sang in the *Rigoletto* quartet with Melba, Sammarco and McCormack. Years in minor roles at Covent Garden saw her transformed when she became a member of the Quinlan Opera Company which toured Australia in 1912 and again in 1913, the last with a very successful 'Ring Cycle', which would have toured New Zealand but for an ill-timed shipping strike.

Michael Scott draws attention to her rendition of 'Gentle Troubadour' from Wallace's *Lurline* and goes on to sing the praises of the item I am playing tonight.

TRISTAN UND ISOLDE - BAYREUTH 1928

Between 1927 and 1930, following arrangements with Siegfried Wagner, a Columbia recording team led by Arthur H. Brooks and Charles Gregory made the first ever recordings at the Bayreuth Festival. Initial releases were a great success and this led to sessions where portions of *Tristan und Isolde* were made. Fred Gaisberg later wrote admiringly of the remarkable standard of recording achieved by Gregory at Bayreuth and the demands the new electrical recording technology made on engineers. 'The outstanding quality of these records was due in no small measure to the careful positioning of artists and orchestra in relation to the microphone', However it seems, working so far from base was not easy: Brooks for example recalled how on arrival at Bayreuth, he found the hundreds of wax blanks needed for the recording sessions had failed to arrive. On enquiry to London he discovered that, by mistake they had been despatched to Beirut (in the Lebanon) EMI - *the first 100 years*. - Peter Martland.

ERNEST NEWMAN [1868-1959]

Music critic Newman's greatest love was opera and Wagner in particular. His *Wagner as Man and Artist*, *Wagner Nights*, *Fact and Fiction about Richard Wagner*, and above all the four-volume *Life of Richard Wagner* form the most authoritative and valuable collection of works on this composer.

KARL ELMENDORFF [1891-1962]

Was a distinguished German conductor who was renowned for his interpretations of Wagner's works. He conducted at Bayreuth from 1927-1942.

NANNY LARSEN-TODSEN [1884-1982]

This Swedish soprano is not mentioned in Michael Scott's book(s) and gets only a passing mention in Steane's *Grand Tradition*. Kutsch/Reimens are a little more circumspect and claim her international fame began when she gravitated into Wagnerian roles. Proof of her acceptance in this field is revealed by the fact that she was on the Bayreuth roster from 1927 through to 1931. She ended her career teaching in Stockholm.

ROSINA BUCKMAN [1881-1948]

To save myself from struggling to say something new about Rosina Buckman, I have asked Des Wilson to write a note about the play he attended which featured this soprano. He writes... 'Last November I travelled to Palmerston North for the opening night of *Downunder Diva*, a stage piece written by local author Malcolm Hopwood to celebrate two anniversaries - the hundredth anniversary of Rosina Buckman's first trip to England to study singing, and the fiftieth anniversary of her death. One actress played the older Rosina reminiscing about her career, and a small team of actors filled roles such as the younger Rosina, Melba and Beecham. A group singers accompanied by piano appeared on stage singing songs and arias which were either in the Buckman repertoire or which she would have known.

The acting didn't rise above the 'not especially good' amateur level, but the singing afforded more pleasure. The women were all local Manawatu performers with two male imports, Auckland tenor Greg Patel and Wellington baritone Roger Wilson.

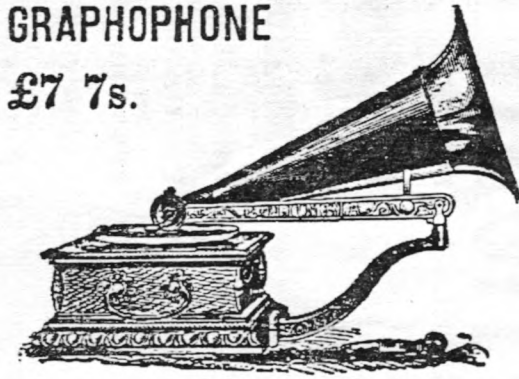
The highlight for me was the after-show supper which took the form of a Buckman family reunion. There are still many Buckmans living in Apiti, the small Manawatu settlement where Rosina grew up, and others had travelled from Taranaki and Hawkes Bay. A long-standing mystery was solved for me. My mother often told me how, as a 14 year old, she met Rosina in Apiti when she was back here touring in 1922. At the time mother was staying with my great aunt and I had always understood that the "lady next door" whom Rosina was visiting was her mother. But several years ago

I learned that Rosina's parents had left Apiti for Taranaki long before that. A member of the family was able to tell me that Rosina was, in fact, visiting an aunt.

It was also a great thrill to meet two of Rosina's nieces. These were the daughters (one named Melba!) of her younger sister Clarice who was a mezzo and who sang with Rosina in opera companies in Australia. The memories of these elderly women reach back many years, and it seems a shame that nobody, as far as I know, has thought to have them formally recorded.

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NZ Illustrated Magazine October 1903

Advertising techniques for gramophones and recordings during the first decades of this century make a fascinating study. In England the Gramophone and Typewriter Company (HMV-EMI) were proud to take whole page spreads in weekly newspapers like the *Graphic* (see the following double page layout). The strategy of spending heavily in places where the right sort of people would read of their achievements paid off handsomely for the company. According to records in their archives the G&T company recorded over 2,000 Melba sales within the first week of her records being released on the English market. In New Zealand, quarter page advertisements were apparently all retailers could afford (see above). In America where competition was greater with companies like Edison who had a strong following, some very sophisticated ploys were used to attract buyers (see last page of this supplement).

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- 03046 Sur le Lac (*Brenberg*).  
Piano Accompaniment by the Composer.  
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- 03047 Lo, Here the Gentle Lark (*Sir H. Bishop*).  
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- G.C.3615 Auld Lang Syne.  
Accompanied by the Band of H.M. Coldstream Guards (conducted by Lieut. Mackenzie Rogan).  
With chorus of voices.
- G.C.3617 The Old Folks at Home (*Harrington*).  
Piano Accompaniment by Landon Ronald.  
The Chorus to this famous old Plantation Song is sung by Miss Gwladys Roberts, Mr. Ernest Pike, and Mr. Peter Dawson.
- G.C.3618 Good-Night (*Sir Alfred Scott-Gatty*).  
Piano Accompaniment by Landon Ronald.  
Chorus sung by Miss Gwladys Roberts, Mr. Ernest Pike, and Mr. Peter Dawson.
- G.C.3619 Away on the Hill there Runs a Stream (*Landon Ronald*).  
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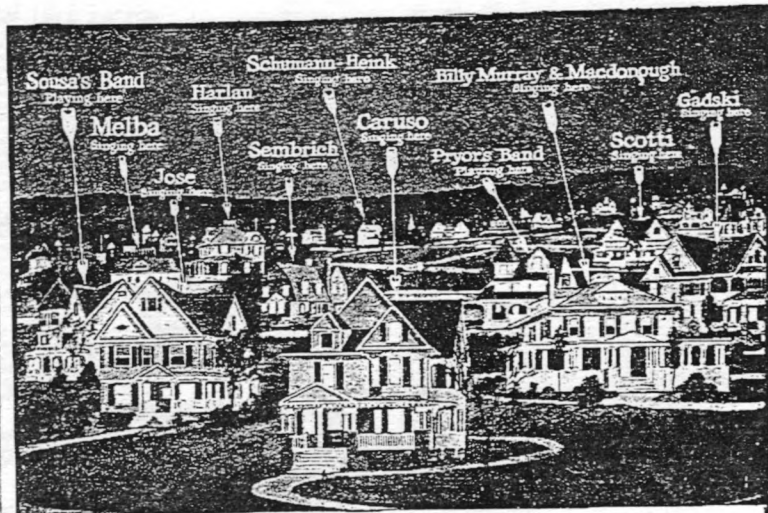
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Scientific American 9 November 1907

BERNARD MILES [1907-1994]

According to programme notes compiled by Brian Rust on the back of a 45 rpm disc in my collection, Bernard Miles was involved with the theatre from the 1930s, doing a whole gamut of jobs from property master to taking the lead in a production of *Tawny Pipit*. His greatest attribute to fame as far as an opera entrepreneur was concerned was when he and Walter Legge approached Kirsten Flagstad in 1950 and asked her to play the lead in 'Dido and Aeneas' which was put on in North London's Mermaid Theatre. Her contract which was published in the Record Collector for August 1952 had a special clause which stipulated amongst a whole bevy of adorations, 'To supply her with two pints of oatmeal stout per diem'. Miles who was knighted for his contribution to the English Theatre, died a few years ago in the north of England virtually penniless, leaving what few possession he had to the National Theatre?

JEAN DE RESKE [1850-1925]

Is it a blot on our society that this famous tenor is best remembered today as a name for a brand of cigarettes! Be that as it may, most collectors' worth their salt will be familiar with the story that surrounds de Reske's recording career. I refer here of course to his mythical session with the Fonotipia company in Paris. After many years of holding out hope that something may have survived, we are faced with the realisation that the only glimpse of his voice we will ever hear are those made in the wings of the Metropolitan Opera House by Lionel Mapleson. As frustrating as these fragments are, we live in the hope that new technology may one day unravel the extraneous sounds and surface noises to allow us an insight into the artistry and stature of this legendary artist.

MAGGIE TEYTE [1888-1976]

Studied with Jean de Reske in Paris in 1907, from where her career was launched by succeeding Mary Garden in Debussy's *Mélisande*. She went on to sing at Covent Garden, the Chicago and Boston Opera Companies, ending in 1951 at the Mermaid Theatre's production of *Dido and Aeneas*. Record collectors treasure the series of French songs which were made towards the end of her career. She made records for Columbia, Edison, HMV and Victor.

RICHARD BONELLI [1889-1980]

Also studied with de Reske in January 1914 keeping detailed notes on his teachings

Lesson no.5 Feb.12 1914 - "He immediately started me singing way down in the body with very deep support, for I have a habit of singing too much in the glottis. This makes for a much richer tone... 'the diaphragm is where you want it when you want it', Then I started out on *Le Roi de Lahore: Promesse di mon avari*. 'Start out very deep down - and dignified at "aux troupes du Sultan"... 'Comme si les chassairmeme invisible main" enunciate very lightly in the pp pages...' Next we went to *L'Africaine: Adamastor, roi des vagues*. All darker - more head resonance. Then he said I sang it well. After to *Hamlet*: 'refrain should not be too fast. Keep smiling and deep support most important. Watch out on high tones to keep larynx from going up to shut off tone'. We had about \$1.96 worth of conversation afterward. I told him I wanted to get his opinion as to the length of time necessary to study before beginning to sing for a living. He said

COLUMBIA L SERIES 1001-2374  
TONIGHTS PROGRAMME

MONDAY 20th SEPTEMBER 1999

**Tino Pattiera** - tenor [1890-1966] with orchestra  
La Danza (Rossini)  
Vox 03614E Recorded Dresden? 1927

**Josef Shlisky** - cantor with male chorus  
Reboni Shel Oilom (Traditional)  
Vocalion K-05030 Recorded 1920s

**Norman Allin** - bass [1884-1973] with piano  
*In a Persian Garden* (Lehmann) - Myself when young  
Columbia L1466 Recorded 1925 <sup>22</sup>

**Edna Thornton** - contralto [1875-1958] with orchestra  
*Nadeshda* (Goring Thomas) - My heart is weary  
HMV 03122 Recorded 1908.

**Wilhem Furtwängler** - conductor [1886-1954]  
*Invitation to the Waltz* (Weber-Berlioz)  
Brunswick-Polydor 90313 Recorded in Berlin 1932

INTERMISSION

**Ernest Newman** - critic [1868-1959] with piano  
*Tristan und Isolde* (Wagner) - Themes  
Columbia L2203 Recorded London 1928.

**Karl Elmendorf** - conductor [1891-1962] Bayreuth orchestra  
*Tristan und Isolde* (Wagner) - Prelude Act 3  
Columbia L2203 Recorded in Bayreuth 1928.

**Nanny Larsen-Todsén** - soprano [1884-19..] KING, MARK: ANDRESEN  
*Tristan und Isolde* (Wagner) - Liebestod pt.1  
Columbia L2206 Recorded in Bayreuth 1928  
<sup>G. GRARY</sup>  
<sup>ROSEB</sup>

**Rosina Buckman** - soprano [1881-1948]  
*Tristan und Isolde* (Wagner) - Liebestod pt.2  
Columbia L1122 Recorded in London 1917

**Bernard Miles** - spoken word [1907-1994]  
*Tristan und Isolde* (Wagner) - Monologue  
HMV EB167 Recorded 1940s.

INTERMISSION

**Jean de Reske** - tenor [1850 -1925] with orchestra  
<sup>LUCIFER</sup> <sup>MU-RATÖR</sup> *Siegfried* (Wagner) - Ho-ho! Ho-hei!  
Mapleson Cylinder IRCC L-7006 Recorded New York 19th March 1901.

**Maggie Teyte**-soprano [1888-1976] with orchestra  
*Indian Love Lyrics* (Woodforde-Finden) - Kashmiri Song  
Edison 82205 Recorded 1919.

**Richard Bonelli** - baritone [1889-1980] with orchestra  
*Hamlet* (Thomas) - Brindisi <sup>BY RADIO BROADCAST APRIL 1934 USA</sup>  
Vocalion 20000 Recorded 1918.

**Francesco Tamagno** - tenor [1851-1905] with piano  
*Andrea Chenier*(Giordano) - Improviso  
G&T 052100 Recorded 1904

**Maria Barrientos**- soprano [1883-1946] with piano  
Voci di primavera (Strauss)  
Fonotopia 39012 Recorded 1904.

INTERMISSION

**Giuseppe Di Stefano**- tenor <sup>1921</sup> [1883-1946] with piano  
*Santa Lucia Luntana* (Mario)  
HMV JK33 Recorded 1944

**John Freestone** - tenor [1909-19..] with piano  
Ich liebe dich (Grieg)  
For you alonge (Geehl)  
Private acetates Recorded 1940.

**Martinelli/Pinza/Ponselle** - with orchestra  
*Forza del Destino* (Verdi) - Io muoio...Non imprcare  
Victor CVE 41625/6-1 (unpublished) Recorded 1928

ENCORES - IF TIME PERMITS

there is no reason for my not being ready by June of this year, at the present rate of progress, if I want to debut by then. Is my voice big enough for opera? 'Yes, it is that kind of voice'. Then he handed out a few bouquets: said I am certainly making great progress in getting the voice rounder and out of the nose; that I sang with a great deal of energy and intelligence and with beautiful quality. He says after these airs are finished we can work on a role, Valentin, for instance". After twenty-five lessons Bonelli ran out of funds and he returned to New York. *Reproduced from the Delos CD Richard Bonelli booklet.*

HEART 1998  
FRANCESCO TAMAGNO [1851-1905] <sup>CREATED</sup> OTELLO 1851.  
Probably one of the best known stories about the early days of the gramophone concerns the recordings which were made at his house 'Ospedaletti' near San Remo, where a room was set aside for sessions that yielded 38 takes of various arias. Tamagno was known to be in poor health and even though Gaisberg and others were aware of his condition, they were convinced he had a seizure at the end of the *Morte d'Otello*, and rushed around the screen which separated their equipment from the recording horn expecting to find him stretched out on the floor!

I first recall hearing this story from a Brian Salkeld radio programme. Unfortunately, I have been unable to trace its origin. Reading about these sessions recently in various publications proves that the Gramophone Company was very conscious of the costs they were outlaying in securing his voice and therefore promoted the use of 12 inch repeats on the original set of 10 inch items for higher profits from the larger discs!

MARIA BARRIENTOS [1883-1946]

A musical prodigy she began her training at the age of six in Barcelona. Kutsch and Reimens, who are not prone to making emotive statements called her 'one of the most beautiful coloratura voices preserved on records, unsurpassed both in her faultless singing techniques and in her great musicality'. New York critic Richard Aldrich was more guarded. 'It is a voice of light and fine spun texture and great delicacy; it showed little power. The quality is agreeable, frequently very charming, although it is not always, especially in the higher tones, of the finest purity and smoothness. Mme. Barrientos has... a free and spontaneous utterance in coloratura. There was occasionally a lack of pure *legato* in passages where pure *legato* is indispensable. Her *staccati* were marked by much precision. Her highest tones sung pianissimo had an exquisite quality. One of her most noteworthy accomplishments is... the 'messa voce', which used as she used it, is of striking effect. *Review dated 1st February 1916.* 1921

GIUSEPPE DI STEFANO [1909- ]

When searching for something to write about Di Stefano, I recall a radio interview made while touring New Zealand in 1963. When he decided he would come on this tour, he asked the ageing pianist Ivor Newton to accompany him. 'But I am too old', said Newton. 'What better than to die in Giuseppe's arms on stage', was the reply! While many will point to his complete operas in the early days of LPs there is a growing interest in his earlier lyrical 78's when his voice was not forced into roles that did not especially suit him. 9 WITH CALLAS.

JOHN FREESTONE

Those who are familiar with the name of John Freestone in the capacity of record reviewer in the *Gramophone*, will not automatically associate him as a singer of some stature. The realisation of this sets in when it is known he studied with Blanche Marchesi in 1938. When he returned from the war he auditioned for Walter Hyde who amongst other things taught him to use the exercise of trill to help him relax his vocal production! Realising he would never achieve a sufficient standard to make a career out of singing, he fell back on his teaching, rising to become a headmaster. His interest in recordings began in 1927 when as a schoolboy he roamed the second hand shops of Brighton where he secured many fine examples by singers of the past for a few pennies. Befriending P.G.Hurst and specializing in the recordings of Caruso laid a platform which was to bear fruit in two different ways. First he succeeded Hurst in writing *Collector's Corner* in the *Gramophone*. Then he combined with Canon Drummond to write the invaluable volume called *Enrico Caruso: His recorded Legacy*. His writings in *Collector's Corner*, were different in many ways from P.G.Hurst. For a start, he did not have the mind-set which Hurst had towards those who never performed at Covent Garden; and he gave the impression he was always prepared to listen to an artist without any prejudices. Michael Woolf and I can be thankful for this because he was very supportive of our efforts with the Premo Records release of *Voce di Primavera* by Marcella Sembrich. Nominating it as the best reissue for 1965 he said... 'This has been a comparatively poor year as far as historical reissues are concerned. It is amazing that such artists as Calvé, Amato and above all Destinn have been almost totally neglected so far as England is concerned. However, we must be thankful for such interesting records as the Sembrich re-recording from a Bettini cylinder, which is an outstanding historical document, despite the annoying 'wow' of the piano and the generally primitive quality of the sound. This is my first choice'. It won over LPs by Elizabeth Schumann, Edmond Clément, Frieda Hempel, Jussi Bjorling and Beniamino Gigli.

GIOVANNI MARTINELLI - EZIO PINZA - ROSA PONSELLE

It is a difficult task to come up with some fresh information on these singers. It was at the Metropolitan 1927 season they first came together in *Forza del Destino*. The only other item of information I can add is that it was the second take(s) of this trio which was released on DB1202. I have no idea why the version we are about to hear was rejected or why it should be selected for this particular compact disc other than it is a rousing item on which to end any programme.

The G&T Gazette is published as time permits and distributed gratis to friends and associates who attend the monthly meetings of a group which is known as 'The Scratchy Record Group'. Opinions expressed in the Gazette are those of the authors and do not represent the collective thoughts of the group. Unsolicited material is welcome. Care with submissions for publication will be exercised but no responsibility for loss or damage in transit will be accepted. The G&T Gazette is produced on a Macintosh and Agfa studio scanner. All material is copyrighted. Permission to use anything appearing in the Gazette must be sought in the first place from the editor. The editorial offices are located at 93 Burma Road, Wellington.4. New Zealand. Telephone (04)479-7644 email w.main@clear.net.nz [This issue proof read by Michael Woolf].

## WHERE TO FROM HERE ?

One of the many joys I get from putting together the G&T Gazette has been including the odd statement or article that brings to bear some thought-provoking issues which I hope have got people thinking about who we are and what we stand for.

This time around I would like to dwell on a statement made by Dennis Brew when he presented his programme in March. He said, 'There is nothing better for a collector than to play your records to others' - or words to that effect.

That this is what keeps our organisation going by getting us out of an evening will not be disputed. But I do question some of the logistics with which well attended sessions are beginning to burden those who make themselves available as hosts.

Eighteen souls turned up for Dennis's superb presentation. While it is wonderful to see such numbers, it does stretch the resources of the individual who has the turn of putting on a programme. What if our numbers swell beyond this figure. Will we have to resort to hiring a hall? Where is the structure in our group to cater for this eventuality. Conversely, are we so dyed-in-the-wool that we are irrevocably against any expansion, or should we be openly seen to be bringing in novices, guiding them gently into the thrills and delights of collecting old records!

Then there is the financial liability of entertaining large groups. Food and drink does not come free and there are some in our midst who are on reduced income. Others in our group don't host a programme because they haven't a collection or facilities. Does this signal something to you or do you want the 'scratchy record group' to bury its head in the sand and put off instituting a subscription on members to take our organisation into the new century. Grasping the nettle, I would like to go further and suggest that \$20 a year be levied and administered by an executive drawn from our membership. If this meets with approval, then they will need direction to see how this money is disbursed.

Any grant that is levied to help a host (the choice to accept or decline could be optional) would not allow any great sum of money to accrue, but any surplus might be directed towards long term projects that might see the 'scratchy record group' leaving its mark on society, such as a CD made up by items we feel are deserving to highlight the achievements of former New Zealand musicians and artists.

There are many other ideas that could come forward, like offering to pay expenses in bringing people to Wellington to give us a special programme.

Allow me to put it to music on my violin!