



Captions-front cover: Above W. R. (Bill) Moran seated in his motorised wheelchair 25th April 2001. Bill is holding a cigar box full of photographs by famous singers. Note the brand name! Captions-Back cover: (Left) Your editor, trying to look as if he handles 14 inch Fonotipias every day of the week. (Right) A typical corner of one of the rooms which housed Bill's collection. The Dog machine is a working model. Note the Edison cygnet horn on the floor in the foreground. Signed pictures by Caruso, Lotte Lehmann and others bedeck the walls. Records are behind sliding panels on both walls.

THE FINAL SOLUTION

It's several months since I volunteered to see the Ray Hedges record collection removed from 124 Wallace Street and sold. In March I concluded the task by selling off the residue by splitting the remnants into two large groups, LPs and 78s. I found a buyer in Upper Hut who would match the seven cents an LP which Groovy records were offering, while I decided I would take the remaining shellacs for a similar amount of money and hopefully use them in the years to come to entice others to start up collecting 78s.

Looking back on the whole episode, there were distinct phases which in my mind stand out and need documenting for future reference, to benefit those of us regarding the disposal of our collections.

To begin with there was considerable speculation as to what Ray had amassed over the years. We all knew he had a very large collection but I think we had no real concept of its depth. This uncertainty was brought about mainly by the fact that very few of us had ever got very close enough to see the true make-up of his collection. This lack of knowledge concerning his shellacs for instance, was because he used LPs and tapes for his presentations in his latter years. I estimate he must have given up using 78s at our meetings sometime in the 1960s by the look and appearance of his playing equipment. I can remember him proudly proclaiming to all and sundry that he'd finally finished putting all his 78s onto tape. Hence his reluctance to play 78s at our meetings which in turn led to our lack of knowledge of what he actually had.

Then there was the sheer physical task of removing them to my garage, where they could be put on display. Some help was afforded me in this direction by Don Cameron. Between us, we managed to roughly keep them in the order to which they were stored at Wallace Street.

During this shift, I entered a period of complete wonderment. For instance, I was amazed to see he had a library of standard reference books which would belittle quite a few of us in our group. This was a complete surprise to me as he never seemed to flaunt this knowledge or talk down to us whenever we involved in a discussion on some of the finer points of collecting records.

As the various layers of his collecting habits and preferences became apparent, I became entranced on how he seemed reluctant to get rid of a recording that he'd taken into his collection. For instance, how many of us would retain eight different LP versions of Rigoletto as well as two 78 sets.

On top of this there were some very chilling disclosures. When I first saw the havoc wrought by the weight of his 78s on that portion of his

house where the foundations had succumbed to the ravages of time, I began to quaver in my boots on what I'd undertaken. To my great relief, the old 78 rpm albums which contained his shellacs were stuffed to overflowing and so compacted by their own physical weight as to survive the collapsed shelving and uncirculating air.

Then came the day when I invited collecting fraternity from all over New Zealand to come and buy 78s as you may remember were priced at \$1 each while LPs were marked down to \$3 for singles and \$2 each if in sets. Initially, sales were copious. Over a period of time with a corresponding reduction of prices I estimate at least half of Ray's 12,000 records were sold realising several thousand dollars. However the residue now loomed larger than life. Attempts to interest Real Groovy Records held no attraction for me because they really had no empathy for the transaction and so I inserted advertisements in the *Evening Post* - Free Classifieds Column.

This put me in touch with Ross Wards, the Anglican Minister for Silverstream who expressed an interest in the LPs. A price was agreed upon which more or less equalled what Groovy had offered. This pleased me because Ross did like what he was getting and promised to pass on stuff he didn't want which I felt might make more members for our group. On top of this I came up with a bid for the remaining 78s. My offer for the final solution (apologies to our Jewish Brethren) was accepted by those managing Ray's estate and so on the 27th March 2001, Ross took away the bulk of the LPs. Those of our group who live in Upper Hut should make it a point to see him brought into our circle as a matter of priority for future development and expansion.

When it's analysed, Ray averaged a price of about 50 cents for every record in his collection which I estimate amounted to about 12-14 thousand recordings - a figure incidently which didn't include tapes. I mention this because some might like to take this as a sort of benchmark for all sitting on sizable collections! Of course things could change dramatically in the next 50 -100 years and these relics of the past might make a sudden comeback. However until our Universities set up chairs for the analysis of the impact that recorded music had on our society, there remains a question mark over the worth of retaining shellacs and vinyls.

For those of you who think I will continue to be a soft touch when it comes to bundling up recordings from deceased estates, you may have to rethink! While I am glad for Ray's sake that some financial respectability has accrued as a result of this operation, I will not be lulled into another clear-out unless I have a consensus and approval of our group to see certain onerous aspects of this task shared more evenly amongst members.

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A Kiwi Record Collector's exploits in California and London - a 25 day Odyssey-

In what can only be described as an add on to other business, I was able to indulge myself in record collecting matters on at least two different occasions during my recent OE in April and May.

The first of these was on the 24th and 25th of April when I spent a day and evening with Bill Moran in La Canada on the outskirts of Pasadena, California. This was my second visit to "La Chiripa", a house dating from the 1930s which set on the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains surrounded by well established trees at the top of a long curving driveway. The house itself is in the form of an three sided square, with a two story frontage giving way to two single story wings that box in a patio complete with swimming pool. One wing is devoted entirely to Bill's collection which is spread over three of four rooms. Approaching his 83 year, Bill is now confined to a wheelchair, the result of an operation on his hip which did not respond to treatment as expected. He is looked after by his sister Kathie whom I'd met on previous visit in 1985. Despite the sunny location, Bill had lit a fire in his music room which gave a very comforting glow and aura to proceedings. Every nook and cranny in this room is redolent in collecting memorabilia. Photographs dominate the walls, many of them signed with personal inscriptions. When these give way to other objects, they invariably reflect their Hispanic environment with rugs and artifacts, some of which I was told date back to pre-Colombian times. Prior to my prearranged arrival, I had sent Bill a number of questions which I thought would make the basis for an interesting article. During this question answer period I made notes. Unfortunately these were left in the glove box of a hire car! So using my memory of the occasion hear is what we discussed.

What started you collecting records.

I always had access to records and phonographs. My father acquired a lot of discs during the mid 1920s when single sided records were remaindered for as little as ten cents each. In time, I began to acquire the odd disc and so it grew.

During the war, Victor had a scheme for recycling 78 rpm shellacs. What was your participation in this project.

There was a depot in Hollywood which a collector more senior than I had already tapped. With his help, I was able to purchase many records for next to nothing. While this recycling gave a sense of satisfaction, there was lots of duplication amongst the Victor Red Seals. I can remember the most popular item I came across when sorting through these piles was the Caruso Scotti Forza duo followed by Tosti's Goodbye by Melba.

A lot of singers either lived or retired in California, who was the most co-operative when it came to sharing their musical experiences with you.

While I didn't exactly hob-nob with the likes of Amelita Galli-Curci, I did have a special affection for Dusolina Giannini - who was a great personal friend visited me for record evenings, Lawrence Tibbett, Richard Bonelli and Richard Crooks, whose personal record collections I've managed to steer the way of the Stanford Archives. A person I didn't take to because of his self opinionated stance on his abilities as an artist was Louis Graveure.

You have written a book on Melba and played a major role in the wonderful album on her Victor Recordings. What attracted you to her as an artist.

First and foremost I liked her voice. Then I discovered a stack of records in her gramophone at Coombe Cottage, Lillydale, including an unpublished version of *Songs My Mother Taught Me*. I later arranged for its re-issue with the consent of the family. I had long been a 'fan' of Melba and had devoted considerable research to her recording activities in the UK and US. After Caruso, she was one of the leading lights of the golden age and so with my access to the Victor Company archives, it just came naturally for me to concentrate on her in this fashion.

You have always worked in close contact with the Stanford Archive of Recorded Sound. Has this library any resources for funding scholarships.

My collection will be deposited with them. At the moment there are only two full time appointments in the Music Department. I doubt if there will ever be sufficient funds to launch scholarships for students to come and study the impact of recorded sound on society as a social-historical adjunct for a degree etc.

What is one of the most memorable experiences in all your years as a record collector and lover of vocal music.

When I was at Stanford University I became involved in the annual Student Concert Series in 1941, I suggested that Lawrence Tibbett give a concert in order to raise funds. He agreed and it was arranged. When he turned up with his pianist he asked me what songs would I like to nominate for the programme. I'd jotted down a list which I thought would be acceptable and he took this and performed them without question - much to my amazement!

All of this brief synopsis on Bill Moran doesn't touch on the great impression he has made on the scholarly approach we now expect to those who write or discuss knowledgeably to collecting scratchy records. It would take more pages than the slender publication can afford to set out how he led the cause to convince his old *alma mater* to take on the role of a sound archive. For those who have a desire for such fascinating details, I urge them to read Andrew Farkas in *The Record Collector* Vol. 35 Nos. 8-10 October 1990. (I can supply photocopies

and postage costs if requested).

The rest of the afternoon, evening and following morning was taken up playing records from his collection. After showing me where his card index system he explained where the coding he gave each record would assist me in finding the various recordings we'd selected.

I began with a captivating song by Blanche Arral 'El Bolero Grande' (Vasseur) Victor Red Seal 64107 - recorded in 1909. I followed this up with a David Bispham Columbia 'Danny Deever' (Damrosch) 30016 - representing one of the earliest 12 inch Columbians to come on the market. Gradually working our way through the alphabet.

As I began to get the hang of his collections physical layout, spreading as it did into several rooms and annexes, I was struck by the domination of Victor Red Seals over all other labels in his collection. I would estimate that there would have been something in the vicinity of about 60,000 items in his 78 rpm collection. Of these I would say 99% would have been Victors! When I made a comment about this factor he guided me to a cabinet which held something I'd read about but never seen. 14 inch Fonotipias. These afforded us great enjoyment as they contained selections by Bonci and a host of others.

For me a first playing of Michael Bohnen's 'Erl King' by Loewe represented as it was in his collection by an American Decca, was a complete revelation! When I discovered this as an item on a Priser CD in Tower Records San Francisco a couple of weeks later, I immediately obtained it for my collection. On another personal note it was good to re-familiarise myself with John Prouse's 'There are no more like thee' (Temple), a test pressing which I exchanged with him many years ago.

Then I got sidetracked on boxes of photographs and cuttings by famous singers from a large mahogany wardrobe. Breaks for phone calls from Michael Henstock, 15 minutes on Fonotopia matters and meals saw this activity flow over into the following day. I might add at this point his gramophone and amplifier which consisted of a 16 inch transcription unit was mounted in a large cabinet, the configuration of which precluded him using it while seated in his wheel chair. Further I might add that all his books and reference tools while still accessible to a normal person, are a tremendous strain for a person seated in a wheelchair. I say this because I gained the impression that there are some collectors out there who don't appreciate the difficulty he has in filling in their requests for information. If they only knew the problems they create in pursuing him for data, then I'm sure they would not be so impatient and ill mannered when he doesn't reply or immediately come forward with the informa-

An interesting advertisement found on the back of a Carl Rosa Opera company performance - Ray Hedges collection.

BY APPOINTMENT  TO H.M. THE QUEEN.

THERE ARE MANY KINDS OF TALKING-MACHINES
THERE IS ONLY ONE

 **GRAMOPHONE**
The Instrument PATTI, MELBA,
and CARUSO sing for.

THE GRAMOPHONE OF TO-DAY IS HUMAN

It is astonishing how human the Gramophone of to-day has become, when compared with the talking-machine of the past. One can instantly recognise the voice of the greatest artist through the medium of the record. Music lovers have long ceased to wonder at the accurate reproduction of the art of the singer when listening to the Gramophone. Every note, every point of phrasing, the singer's art, in fact the individuality of their rendering, that is what rouses admiration and enthusiasm among the listeners of a record made by Patti, Melba, or Caruso. The greatest singers have chosen the Gramophone as the medium to enable thousands who could not possibly hear them sing in person to enjoy their glorious vocal gifts. The voice that emanates from the trumpet before us is the true human effort. It is undistinguishable from the living voice of the singer. It is the living voice. Owing to the vast improvements made in this instrument, and new methods of recording, the voice and the record of it are one and the same thing. But be sure you hear a Gramophone.

By means of the Gramophone you can hear in your own home the greatest Artists and most famous Musicians render the following numbers from "LOHENGRIN" (Wagner).

FRL. EMMY DESTINN. 10-inch records ... 5/- each G.C. 43730. Elsa's Gesang an die Lüste.	HERR CARL NEBE (Bass). 10-inch records ... 5/- each G.C. 2-42543. Prayer (with orchestra).
HERR W. HEROLD (Tenor). 10-inch records ... 7/6 each 042139. Lohengrin's Narration (with orchestral accompaniment) 042137. Lohengrin's Entrance (with chorus of the German Opera Company).	COMM. FERNANDO DE LUCIA (Tenor). 10-inch records ... 10/- each 62050. Cigno Genil. 2-52472. Di non l'incantain. 2-52473. S'ei torna alfin.
HERR CARL JORN (Tenor). 10-inch records ... 7/6 each 042116. Graiersabbing (with orchestra). 042119. Attribed (with orchestra).	

Genuine Gramophone Needles are sold only in metal boxes bearing our Trade Mark "His Master's Voice." It is most important that Gramophone Records should only be played with genuine Gramophone Needles.

On receipt of Postcard we will send Catalogue and Lists, also our Brochures "Opera at Home," and "The Living Voice," together with Name and Address of the nearest Dealer in our Goods.

The GRAMOPHONE and TYPEWRITER, Ltd., 21, City Road, London, E.C.

 **GRAMOPHONE** 

tion they require.

As a footnote to these discussions he disclosed he'd been visited by a record dealer who asked somewhat crudely, 'When are you going to pass on the baton', alluding to the fact that when he felt he'd like to sell his collection of records, there was someone in Texas ready to make the journey!

Then it was off to Birmingham for a convention of Magic Lantern enthusiasts where I delivered 'Red Riding Hood - the maiden good!' With a script that parodied the late Steve Allen. This was read by an American friend to the playing of a 78 rpm disc of Errol Garner playing Bob Carleton's JA-DA.

I then filled in a week visiting friends in Rugby, Knowl Hill and Copenhagen before staying four days in London where the highlight was an evening at the Swedenborg Institute Hall where the Recorded Vocal Art Society had invited Roger Beardsley to give a talk on Tuesday evening the 8th May called 'Plastic Surgery. Unfortunately, he was unable to attend and a substitute programme was hastily arranged. This took the form of a panel of three consisting Paul Steinson, Tom Peel and Paul Lewis who were asked to identify and comment on fourteen different recordings which had been selected by John Hughes who chaired the evening.

About 38 people were present when proceedings got underway. All items to be played had been taped and while I did my best to write down the necessary details for each item, I apologise if I've got some of the titles and artists names spelt incorrectly. The items were...

- 1 Martin Lawrence and Erna Berger: Duet from *Don Pasquale* from an 1948 acetate.
- 2 Ugo Uguro: Santa Lucia Lontano from a 1960 Dana LP (ex Pacific label).
- 3 Karl Oestwig: Wintersturme - *Walkure* (no details of disc were noted).
- 4 Lili Marie Oestwig: Swan - Greig (no details of disc were noted).
- 5 Alain Vanzo: *Land of Smiles* Lehar (no details of disc were noted).
- 6 Robert Radford: Bach aria recorded 1925/6.
- 7 Ninon Vallin: Aria from a Chabrier Operetta recorded 1941.
- 8 Sergi ? : The trumpets shall sound - *Messiah* Handel (sung in German) recorded 1982.

Interval

- 9 Chorus from a Mascagni Mass (no details of disc were noted).
- 10 Tagliabue/Almaro: duet *Rigoletto* recorded 1946.
- 11 Blanch Thebom: Homing (del Reigo) recorded 1950s.
- 12 Bruce Dargavel: Captain Morgan (no details of disc were noted)
- 13 Tom Williams: Raging flames - *Joshua* - Handel recorded 1947.
- 14 Rise Stevens/Denis Chardeliu: Duet *Carmen* recorded 1960.

I was most impressed by the very careful analysis which ensued amongst the panel at the end of each recording. At least two of the panel spoke knowledgeably from the position of those who have studied singing. Then there was a good understanding of the music and roles which were being portrayed. In this area Robert Radford came in for criticism with his stodgy interpretation of how not to sing Bach.

Very few members of the audience, whose average age must have been about 60, dared to venture an opinion from the floor of the meeting. The exception being a Welshman, who rose to the challenge when a countryman's talents were being aired by one of the panel. As for yours truly, I managed to identify both Robert Radford and Ninon Vallin, but was well out of my depth with the rest of whom I had little or no knowledge of at all. John Hughes chairmanship was the cream on the cake. His timely interjections and careful preamble up to each item being played was a joy to behold.

At the end of the evening, in the best tradition of English hospitality, a small group of us adjourned to a pub across the road where I gleaned all sorts of information about the background of various people at the meeting. For the £2 admission fee which I had to pay, it was one of the best evenings I have ever had in London.

My final indulgence was quite unexpected.

Filling in four hours before catching a shuttle to the airport, I wandered down to Fisherman's Wharf. After making notes on what to avoid with Wellington's Waterfront Development, I made my way back to my hotel. Suddenly I was on an intersection which was completely dominated by TOWER RECORDS. On diagonal corners there were two buildings with large signage. Tower Classical and Tower Pops. Turning my attention on the first of these I went inside.

The floor area would have easily accommodated a tennis court. Asking for vintage vocal recordings I was directed to an aisle which I think would have been 10-15 meters long. At one end the letter 'A' began a sequence which ended with 'Z' at the other. Putting it to the test, I immediately sought out Michael Bohnen to see if they had a CD which incorporated his version of Loewe's Erl King. Yes, sure enough they had a Preiser which listed it as item no. 6. Then I put their stock to a more severe test. I'd looked for a CD of Giuseppe Danise. Imagine my surprise when the system produced an Italian CD, complete with all his major solos from the 1917 acoustic set of *Rigoletto*.

My cup overflowed beyond all expectations when in the composer section I found several Loewe CDs which I'd been chasing for some time including his Oratorio 'The Rising of Lazarus'. \$150 dollars later I emerged in the bright

Californian sunlight and looked across the intersection to a poster which I'd missed as I made my way to the classic building. There in large letters on the Pop window/wall was a message which stopped me in my tracks. **Miss Centrefold Playboy for May would be signing CDs between the hours of 5 - 7pm!** This did not deter me one bit! Its all in the luck of the draw as I counselled myself by reflecting that during my next trip to San Francisco I might strike a Cecilia Bartoli signing session. Who knows!

Bill Main

Remaining Scratchy Record Group Meetings for 2001

23 JULY	Geo. Boraman	63 Palliser Road ROSENEATH	385 1557
20 AUGUST	Jill & Bill Main	93 Burma Road KHANDALLAH	9713535
17 SEPT.	Mel Walker	17 Eagle Street KARORI	4767625
15 OCT.	David Morriss (at Des' place)	37 Fox Street NGAIO	4798135
18 NOV,	Neil & Betty McDonald (Sunday)	24 Makarini St. PARAPARAUMIU	049024900
10 DEC.	Des Wilson	3/10 Box Hill KHANDALLAH	4796665

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If there are those who seek yet another alternative method of disposing their collection, then I'd advise taking a leaf out of my own book and begin by giving away that what you don't want or never play. Remember the absolute Zen of collecting records means that eventually you diminish the size of your collection until you eventually end up with one or none. During this discipline you gradually acquire the supreme experience of playing them in your mind!

Now that's a tidy solution!

GLEANINGS FROM HERE & THERE

FAIRS

For those who intend a trip to Britain in the not too distant future, should get on the internet and find out what 78rpm Fairs might be on during their stay. The web site for this information is <jabw_vintge/78rpmUKfairs>

REPORT FROM DENNIS BREW

My 2001 pilgrimage began on March 26th flying to New York. I was met by Larry Holdridge where I stayed two nights. There I enjoyed a session of rare 78s and watched two silent films, one with Caruso, the other Geraldine Farrar in Carmen. Then several hours in the basement going through the \$2 piles, from which I extracted several 9 inch Pathers, lightly flawed Fonotipias and new voices. I also purchased at normal prices records by SMirnov, Hasslo, Jadlowker and a missing Fleta.

Larry then drove me to Ward Marston near Philadelphia, where we met up with Don Hodgman. Ward produces his own CDs and I obtained Cazette, Urtus, Edison Tests and Renaud. More listening to rarities, discussion and a wonderful curry in the local Indian restaurant.

Then Don Hodgman drove me to Riverside, north of New York, via Princeton Record Exchange. I only found LPs and a CD of Le Pre aux Clercs by Herold. From Riverside Don drove to Cape Cod, where Neil Foster had recently freighted the Testas collection from Paris, some 8000 choice 78s of all types, I saw two complete Caruso Zonophone sets, Fugere Zonophones, Melchisedec, Litvinne G&Ts etc. Prices ranged from \$10 - 4000, I concentrated towards the lower end, but watched as others paid \$1800 for Litvinne! I admired the Zonophones, and I can at least say "Oh yes, I've handled such records". In the end, I came away with 43 wonderful 78s mainly records which will never be encountered outside of France. A wonderful, intense stay in New York, or rather USA ended on the 2nd of April when I flew to Prague.

(to be continued)

ANOTHER EMG

Before jumping on a plane to Los Angeles, I called in on Rod Cornelius to hear his Violino playing. A fascinating instrument, lovingly repaired and I'm sure would win any international award for restoration. Then I was taken into his record room where lo and behold he had a strait horn EMG gramophone. The demonstration record he played, Caruso's *A Granada* nearly blasted me out of the room at such close quarters. The reproducer must weigh at least 2-3 pounds. I believe this makes the third EMG in captivity in NZ.

The G&T Gazette is published as time permits and distributed gratis to friends and associates who attend or share in the interests of a group known as "The Scratchy Record Group". Opinions expressed in the Gazette are those of the authors and do not represent the philosophies and beliefs of the SRG. Unsolicited material is welcome. Care with submissions for publication will be exercised, but no responsibility for loss or damage in transit will be accepted. **Advertising rates are negotiable.** The G&T Gazette is produced on a Macintosh G3 and Agfa studio scanner. All material is copyrighted. Permission to use anything appearing in the Gazette must be cleared in the first instance with the editor William (Bill) Main at 93 Burma Road, Wellington. 6004 New Zealand, telephone (04)971-3535, email wmain@paradise.net.nz

