

## MMW Issue 10

### Meeting Report

As always with our meetings, members are asked to bring items of interest. There was a lot to share at our September 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. The contributions raised a number of questions that others may be able to resolve. Also there were some simple tips on restoration. Tony Waddell demonstrated a key-wind music box serial 22165, 1843. It is obviously a quality movement of the period with 90 teeth. The serial number and name stamped on the comb leave no doubt that it is a Nicole movement but the reason for such an unusual tune sheet design may never be explained. This blue on buff example was published for the first time in a 4th supplement to HAV Bulleid's book 'Musical Box Tune Sheets' bears no relation to the design of any other maker. The border design, common to many other makers' sheets of this period, is formed by a rectangle within rectangle between which is a pattern, often a foliate design. This one is quite simple, even somewhat crude compared with other examples of the period with a crude image of a lyre in each side border. The entire border was covered in a background of vertically hatched lines. The eight tunes are written in French in a good cursive hand. They are all waltzes or 'Quadrilles' with one exception, tune 7, a 'Tyrolienne' from the overture William Tell. Thus the movement may well have been purchased in order to accompany dance as well as to be played for entertainment. The top cartouche is used to announce the 8 tunes: 'HUIT AIRS' but the bottom cartouche is empty. Most simple border-type Nicole Frères tune sheets of the era had an additional box below the bottom border with their name boldly declaring: 'Fabrique de NICOLE FRÈRES' plus the heading of the tune list: MUSIQUE de GENÈVE. Obviously this tune sheet does not conform to others of this Nicole period .....



### A Pretty Novelty

The cover picture of this issue is of a bronzed spelter figure, 10 inches high, of an 18th century lady standing next to a Rococo style sewing box with a jewellery box on top. The detail is very fine. Lifting the lid of the sewing box starts the two-tune snuff box type movement (circa 1880) in the base. It plays "11 Bacio (the kiss) Waltz" and "La Grande Duchesse" (Offenbach). On the tune sheet on the base there is a monogram which is either HP or PH. There are no marks on the movement or signature on the figure or the base. Lifting the lid also reveals a pot which does not appear to be an inkwell but may have been for pins or small trinkets. Overall it appears very French in style. A nice touch for cat lovers is the cat rubbing itself against one of the legs of the sewing box. If anyone can help in identifying the monogram or knows of similar figurines with musical movements in the base we would like to hear from you.

### Cotton Industry on the Move

In 1983 Bob Finbow proudly opened the doors of his Music Museum" to the public for the first time. From the start the open days were Sundays only from June to September, with private parties being accommodated, as required, during the week. The venture took off, much to Bob's pleasure. David



Ivory was the tour guide for the first two years. For maybe the first ten years the Wurlitzer theatre organ was played automatically via a player David had made, for which he also arranged and cut an endless band of music. This gave two five-minute recitals, one during each tour. Later many different organists of all ages have short recitals as part of the tour. For the third year of opening Bob asked me if I would be willing to take over guide duty once a month. I did not take the job on

single-handed but asked if it would be OK if Ted Brown came up with me and we undertook a single tour each? Both Ted and Bob were happy with this and it worked out well. We would arrive on our appointed day, meeting Bob at "The Trowel and Hammer", the local pub in Cotton, and have a meal, as thanks from Bob. After a few years David decided to do fewer tours, so Ted and I started going singly. This carried on until Ted moved from Sidcup to Bucks Green and I got married. Since then it has been Toni and I who go up, with Toni on the door taking the entrance fee. In 1987 Bob started the "Organ Enthusiasts Day" on the first Sunday in October, to be a sort of final day for the museum each year. At that time I was helping Tom Atkinson, from Ingatestone in Essex, with his 20 keyless Gamage organ, which was then loaded into the back of the organ truck for the run up to Cotton. This also continued until Ted moved from Sidcup. I continued to take "Ceol" until Tom sold it to Jonny Ling, who by that time had become one of the museum trustees. Now after that run through of Ted's and my connections with Cotton, I come to the title at the top. "Cotton Museum on the

Move". After 35 years the doors of the present building are to close. The collection is to move eight miles north to join Jonny Ling's collection at Palgrave Grange Musical Collection" containing piano orchestrions, and organs, plus other smaller items, the two collections should more than complement each other. Again it will be Sunday opening only for the paying public, plus other times for private groups. However until the new set-up is settled in, and also to see what numbers of the public will visit, Jonny is only planning to open one Sunday a month, but over a longer period, from May to December. So make the effort to visit the 'new' collection to give it the support it deserves.

### Muzio Clementi

"In 1752 there was born in the family of a skilled silversmith in Rome a boy, Muzio Clementi. His father, of musical turn of mind himself, proudly observed the unusual musical gifts of his son and persuaded Buroni, a choirmaster relation, to teach Muzio the rudiments of music." So is Muzio introduced into the story of the Collards, the English family who created a fine piano manufacturing business later in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Muzio went on to achieve an international reputation as musician, composer and teacher, welcomed by Kings and Court, moving with easy confidence within the times and circles of those mighty men of music, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and others. He was also to become a shrewd and courageous businessman. The chronology of Clementi is impressive: at the age of seven he was an efficient student of harmony, at nine a qualified organist and by fourteen had composed several contrapuntal works of considerable size, one of which, a Mass, was publicly performed and appears to have caused a sensation in Rome at the time. At the age of twenty-five he became conductor of the Italian Opera in London, a post he held for three years. Clementi had been 'discovered' by a remarkable British Member of Parliament, Mr Peter Beckford, who had been travelling around Europe seeking suitable candidates for further education in the arts in England. He brought the 15-year-old Clementi to his home in Dorset and made himself responsible for the completion of the boy's musical education. They lived in Mr Beckford's fine old Georgian house known as Steepleton House, Iwerne, which stood in a fine timbered park between Blandford and Cranborne Chase. Peter Beckford came from a famous county family and was a cousin of William Beckford, a well-known author. In 1773 Clementi reappeared at the age of 21 fully equipped, and the music critics of the time sought new superlatives for his performances. From 1777 until 1780 he was conductor at the Italian Opera in London, as mentioned above" .....



..... At that time, James Longman's successor, his brother John Longman formed a partnership with



Muzio Clementi, whose funding no doubt was of great benefit to the business. Broderip, meanwhile, had joined with Charles Wilkinson Junior as Broderip & Wilkinson at 13 Haymarket. Clementi too had a succession of partners after John Longman set up on his own in 1802. His firm became known as Clementi & Co, to provide continuity. His firm too prospered, such that in 1807, when the premises were destroyed by fire, the value placed on it was £40,000. One of Clementi's early partners was F W Collard, and by 1823 (by which time another Collard had also joined the firm) it was trading as Clementi, Collard & Collard. The firm had an extensive range of sheet music and instruments available for sale and also had its own of fine timbers, quietly seasoning at its own timber mill, for the construction of its instruments. Clementi often exhorted his partners to only use the best materials for sale to the best musicians. The Clementi & Co 17-key barrel organ has four speaking stops plus drum and triangle and probably dates from about 1830? It has three original barrels playing secular tunes. The stops are labelled Diapason, Principal, Twelfth and

Fifteenth together with Drum and Triangle. The name cartouche states 'Clementi & Comp' Cheapside, London' and is marked 'PATENT', though exactly what aspect of the instrument is patented is hard to work out, unless it is the tune change device. ....

### The Aeolian

David Evans reproduced details of the "Parlor Aeolian which resembles an upright piano. It's tone is orchestral in character and varied by stops" from .an unnamed advertising catalogue in 1897

### SELCOL by Juliet Fynes

In 1953 Musical and Plastics Industries was formed as a new public holding company for Selmer, the famous manufacturer of brass and woodwind instruments, and Selcol, which made plastic toys and garden furniture.

In the 1950s and 60s, in their Braintree factory, Selcol were making plastic toys and novelties, including Daleks, a doll with interchangeable clothes, salt and pepper pots, collapsible beakers and an ashtray with a drunk clinging to a lamppost, to name a few. Mostly, however, Selcol was by way of being the plastics arm of Selmer, making plastic musical instruments, especially guitars but also ukuleles, banjos and drums. Today they are mostly famed for their Beatles memorabilia, guitars and drums, which are highly sought after and command very high prices.





They also manufactured records under the Gala label. These included the Gala Nursery Records and Selcol Nursery Records series which could be played on their Kid-e-Phone toy record player. They ventured into the mechanical music area with a do-it-yourself programmable toy musical instrument. This instrument, called the Goldentone Carillon, has eight plastic discs mounted side by side to form a barrel. The rim of each disc has holes into which pegs can be inserted and when handle is turned the barrel rotates causing the peg to activate hammers which strike the chime bars. This seemed like a good idea as, using the booklet containing instructions for setting up a number of tunes, or inventing ones own, a limitless supply of music was possible. However, fitting the pegs is a laborious business and the small pegs are all too prone to get lost. Perhaps these instruments were not successful and not many were made – or frustration caused them to be discarded. Either way there are very few survivors .....



### **A Tired little Teddy Bear** by Paul Bellamy

How many of us have treasured a Teddy bear? Asks Paul in his interesting article on these ubiquitous toys. "I can remember my bedtime companion, often found tucked in with my bedclothes. That is until Mother deemed that, at the age of 6, he was too worn out and I was too old. I miss him to this day.

There is something compelling about these children's toys. Thousands were made. It was inevitable that both our children and then our grand children had Teddy bears of all shapes and sizes. Unashamedly, in my mature years, I now have three. They are all musical, not the growler type. The most common tune was 'The Teddy Bear's Picnic'.

The song was written in 1932 by Irishman Jimmy Kennedy (1902-1984) of Omagh who was a lyricist. He wrote the music for so many famous works such as 'Red sails in the sunset', 'South of the border down Mexico way', 'Isle of Capri', 'April in Portugal' and many more. The words were by American composer JK Bratton. The original title was called 'The Teddy Bear Two-Step'. Altogether, Kennedy wrote over 2,000 songs! But who knows much about him today?

He went to Trinity College Dublin before moving to England to become a teacher and later a civil servant. The University of Ulster awarded him the honour of D. Litt (Doctor of Literature). He was also awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1984 and he was posthumously inducted into the USA Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1996.

It was inevitable that Teddys had to talk or make some noise in one way or another. Many were fitted with 'growlers', a little reed instrument that operated either when Teddy was squeezed, often to excess, or by mean of a weight-operated bellows when turned upside-down. Inevitably, debris from the wood-wool stuffing would eventually silence the creature. Others had simple key wind cylinder musical movements. The story of this little Teddy bear is different because its cylinder movement was a pump-action device that has never been recorded before.

The subject of this article is a very odd Teddy whose inner workings came to my attention by a most tortuous rout via a company called Bear It In Mind." .....



### **Recalled to Life** by John Anderson

As Charles Dickens observes at the start of the first chapter of 'A Tale of Two Cities' 'it was the best of times, it was the worst of times...' 'That's exactly the feeling you sometimes get when attempting to realign bent or squashed projections on a Polyphon disc. Carefully applied pressure using long-nosed pliers gives an early flush of success as the projection moves slowly from its squashed-over position to upright; but sometimes it's then followed by a progressively limp feeling of 'too easy' as the projection breaks away from the disc and the carefully arranged note that it once played is unfortunately gone forever. A method for restoring broken or missing projections to steel discs is described and illustrated by the late Graham Webb in his "Musical Box Handbook" (Volume 2 - Disc Boxes). Graham suggests using a 3/64" cotter pin, (split pin), one end of which is bent to exact projection shape and then soldered directly on to the cleaned under-surface of the disc itself. The pin is then cut off and filed flush to the upper surface of the disc. He emphasises the importance of replacing projections where they form a critical part of the tune, or where they occur in the middle of a musical run. However, he also acknowledges the fact that some disfiguring of the disc can occur as a result of the soldered repair. My own alternative method of missing projection reinstatement makes the finished disc look as though it has been fitted with a very beautiful and very expensive gold filling or gold false tooth.