

MECHANICAL MUSIC WORLD ISSUE 29 SUMMER 2022

The World's First Combined Radio-Gramophone - Who made it? By David Evans

In Issue 20 of Mechanical Music World, Spring 2020, David wrote in an article on the race to be the first to play gramophone records electrically in a form suitable for the public, thus introducing the concept of the 'Radiogram' combined record player and radio receiver, and he concluded that Brunswick won the race by a short head from RCA in 1927. However he informs in this follow-up article that these machines, were not actually the first ones to have a record player with a radio built in. " ... In America, the Lyradion Manufacturing Company of Mishawaka, Indiana was one of the first to advertise combined radio-phonograph cabinets, reviewed in the trade only magazine 'Talking Machine World' of April 15th 1922, into which a 2-stage direct current Westinghouse battery receiver could be included together with a spring-driven acoustic record player. There was no indication of the type or make of the record player. (Presumably clients could make their own decision). The Jewett Radio and Phonograph Co of Detroit advertised a similar machine in Talking Machine World of August 1922 (Fig 3). The reference to patent No. 1,113, 149 of October 6th 1914 refers to a patent granted to Edwin H Armstrong for a receiver design with positive feedback so that the amplification was improved, known as Regeneration."

David continues to describe several other brands of 'Radiograms' highlighting features in advertising posters. Models include those from Jewett, Sonora, Brunswick and HMV.



Musical Box Operating Instructions from the Ted Brown collection

Ted shows photographs of some detailed operating instructions, some were found loose in the case or tucked away under the bedplate.

Canon Wintle and a Pasquale Barrel Piano Restoration by Paul Bellamy

Some years ago Paul was at a society auction that had a 40key, 10 air Pasquale barrel piano which nobody seemed to want. It was in need of restoration and just small enough to lift into the back of his car, aided by the willing support of the vendor who clearly was glad to see it off his hands. Paul's article continues:- "The basic wooden structure and mechanics were OK but it needed a complete re-string, the hammers reshaping and the wrest pins de-rusted and re-blackened to look as new. Damp had affected most of the veneers, side panels were split and some of the mahogany veneers had lifted or

were missing. The top and bottom front panels were broken or had been replaced and one of its legs was broken. After much head scratching, I decided to remove the case work and then to steam off most of the veneers, leaving the solid wood frame free of its carcass. I was surprised to find that the side panels were not a matching pair but had been made to fit a robust wooden frame that was slightly distorted the day it was made. There was no sign of 'woodworm,' those vegetarian little beetle larvae



that can wreak havoc; even so, a liberal coating of woodworm killer was applied.

The case work panels were quite thin and so the lines of warping were marked with a pencil and the panels clamped to a flat surface”.....

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Year by Edward Murray-Harvey

Edward is a founding member of AMBC and in this article, starting at the time of the coronation, he reflects on his many interests in music, including his collection of 'sheets of dots',

namely sheet music.

Excerpt:- “We have recently celebrated Her Majesty's Platinum jubilee. Elizabeth the second acceded to the throne in 1952. but, as Coronations take several months to organise, her Coronation didn't take place until 1953. I will tell you what I thought of it. At that time I was a pupil in a boarding-school near Oxford. When the date of the Coronation was announced, the school declared an Exeat. (“Latin: He [or She or It] May Go Out”). That meant that the school would be closed for three days, and all the pupils were sent home for that period. In those days (I was 16 years old) I was living with my parents at Hunstanton, and in those days Hunstanton was on the railway. Normally, to reach my school, I used to travel (by train) via London. And in London I used to change from Liverpool Street (reached directly from Hunstanton) to Paddington, from where trains ran to Oxford. But it was decided by my school that during the time of the Coronation, London would be crowded with visitors, perhaps dangerously so. And so I was given an appropriate ticket to travel from Oxford to Hunstanton, avoiding London altogether”.....

Geert Hautekiet's magnificent Automata Carousel by David Soulsby

David describes his visit to the Greenwich+Docklands International Festival in London to see the Automata Carousel and talk with its owner Geert Hautekiet from Belgium.

Geert designed the Carousel because he was looking for some way to present his automata in an attractive way. It is 8 metres in diameter and has eleven separate lodges 1.8 metres deep around the circumference. Groups or individuals can enter the lodges carrying a special token, provided free of charge from the Ticket Office. Once inserted a peep show window at the rear of the lodge slowly rises and reveals the automata inside. They are made from recycled wood and mounted on a continuously rotating wheel which slowly brings them into the view of the on-lookers. There are spokes with couplings connecting each individual model to handles that can be turned by the customers to bring the mechanisms to life

