

*Piano Technicians*  
**Journal**

*January 1987*



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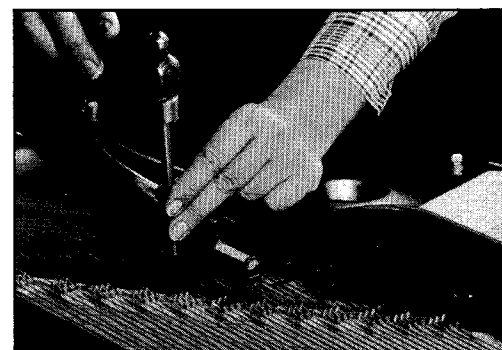
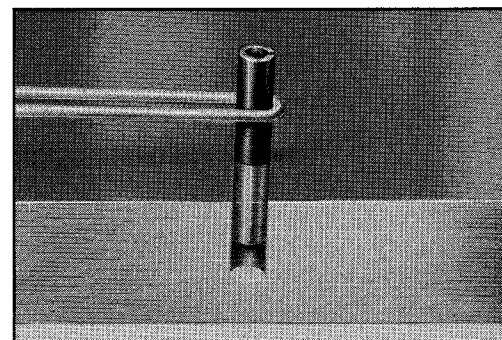
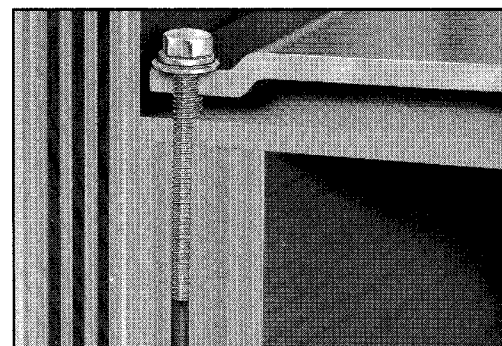
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**ACU-JUST™ HITCH PIN:** Because this pin is installed vertically instead of at an angle, it is possible to raise or lower each string individually for ideal bearing on the back side of the bridge (U.S. Pat No. 3,478,635).

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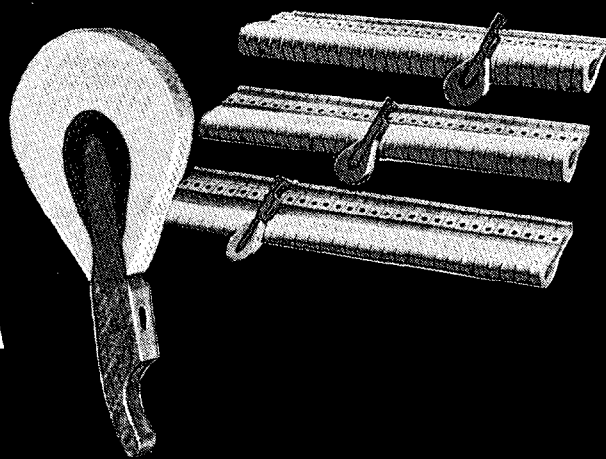
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**The Piano Technicians Journal**

**January 1987**

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*Volume 30  
Number 1*

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residence. Only two were made in  
this design, according to the  
owner. The case finish is origi-  
nal. The piano has been res-  
trung, with new hammers and  
some action work, and the repro-  
ducing player unit has been com-  
pletely restored by William N.  
Reid, Santa Clara Valley Chap-  
ter, who submitted this photo.*

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**M.B. Hawkins**  
**President**

We of the Piano Technicians Guild are indeed fortunate inasmuch as we have two fresh starts a year. Our association year begins during July when we have our convention and then we get an opportunity to start again at the beginning of the calendar year in January. What a good arrangement!

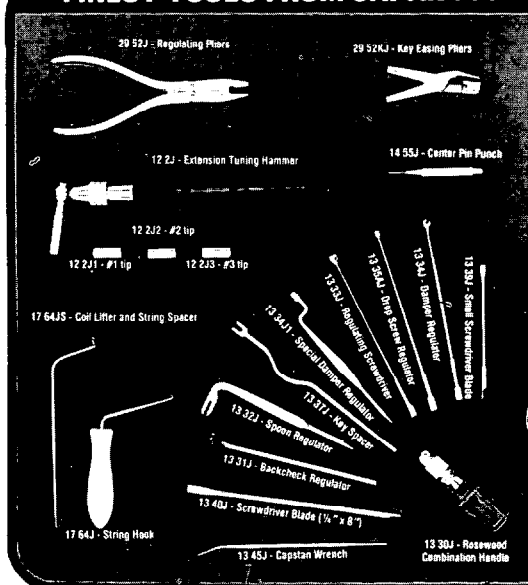
January is also the month the midyear Board of Directors meeting is held. This year your Regional Vice Presidents will have for you a firsthand report of the Constellation Hotel in Toronto, Canada. The site of our 30th anniversary Institute of Piano Technology and Convention. It promises to be fantastic, but I will let the RVPs give you their impressions when they report to the membership after having lived in the city of Toronto for a few days and actually experienced the hotel in which we will be housed this July.

and the beginning of a new year is a good time to become motivated. Also, if you want to be successful, you need to know where you are going. In other words, there needs to be a plan.

When a building contractor builds a house, he needs a set of blueprints. Plans are to one's personal life like blueprints are to the contractor. Without the blueprints the house has no shape and the contractor has no way of knowing what materials he will need...no schedule of work or any indication relative to the help required. So, lay out your plans for the year and if you have not yet set your goals, do not delay any longer.

Try to make your goals as specific as possible. This is done by clearly defining what you want to achieve as you plan. Arrange for course corrections every so often to help you stay on track and be sure to reward yourself as you reach certain heights of accomplishment.

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## FROM THE HOME OFFICE

Larry Goldsmith  
Executive Director Designate

### A Time Of Change

As President Hawkins says in his President's Message (page four), this is a time of change, a new beginning. Not only is it a new year, it is also a time when the Guild's Board of Directors meets, this time in Toronto, to consider our course for the next six months and beyond. January always brings with it a newness, a feeling that even though the snowdrifts outside are just the same as they were yesterday, something is going to happen soon.

It's a time of change in the Home Office, too. Barbara Parks, who has been Executive Director of the Piano Technicians Guild for three years, has moved down the hall to become the Executive Director of another association.

Other changes will become evident as well. Betty Summers, who has been Director of Membership during those same three years, retired effective Jan. 1. Many of her duties will be assumed by Miriam Patterson, who became Director of Member Services last summer. We will miss Betty a great deal and feel fortunate to have Barbara Parks near at hand for counsel in the coming months. In future issues, we'll be telling you more about the Home Office people who work with the Guild.

\* \* \*

From time to time, we here receive a letter which is so upbeat and so heartwarming that we must share it. Here's one from Mrs. Sady Levitt, of Tucson, AZ.

Gentlemen:

*I simply must write to you to compliment your organization for having one of your members, none other than Mr. Walter Brown.*

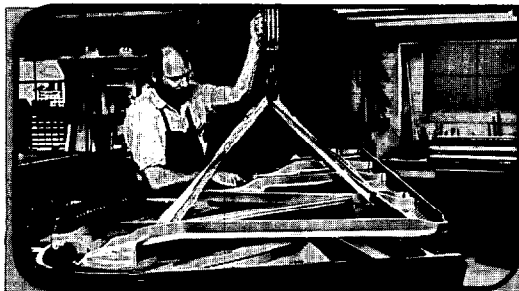
*To say that he is an extremely fine piano technician would be putting it mildly. Never, in all the years that I have dealt with piano tuners or repairmen, have I found one to be so conscientious, honest and sincerely dedicated to his work as Mr. Brown.*

*You did have one, Mr. Ed Holcomb, who served me for many years, but he has since retired.*

*I have certainly been most fortunate in now having Walt Brown to service my piano needs. He certainly is one of the finest young men I have had the pleasure of meeting.*

Sincerely,  
Mrs. Morris Levitt

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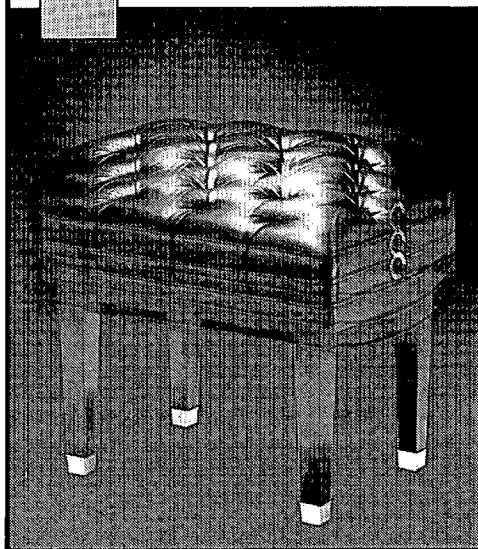
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## Economic Affairs

Janet Leary  
Economic Affairs  
Committee

## Taxing Matters

It seems as if every time we get comfortable with tax code the government decides it's time to change it again. Many of us prefer to leave all the taxing matters to our accountants. My philosophy is, regardless who does your taxes, you should have a general idea of the implications of the tax code. As a small business practitioner, without *regular* counsel from your accountant, or a general understanding of the tax code, you cannot strategically guide your business decision to your best advantage.

So there will be no confusion as to terminology, the following are basic formulas you should understand.

Gross Income - Deductions =  
Adjusted Gross.

Adjusted Gross Income -  
Deductions = Income To Be  
Taxed.

Tax - Credits = Tax Liability.

On October 21, 1986, President Reagan signed into law H.R. 3838, the Tax Reform Act of 1986. The Tax Reform Act has made a considerable number of changes in the tax code. What is especially confusing is the fact that much of the tax law will be phased in, creating a new set of rules for each specific year. An example of this is the tax rate structure. The tax structure will eventually consist of two tax rate brackets — 15% and 28% for individuals and a corporate income tax rate of 34%, to take effect in 1988. For tax year 1987 there will be a blend of old and new rates. The transitional rate structure for 1987 consists of the five-bracket rate schedule listed below:

For married individuals filing separate returns, the taxable income bracket amounts for 1987 begin at one-half the amounts for joint returns.

The *standard deduction* will also be phased in. In 1987 the standard deduction for all individual taxpayers other than elderly or blind individuals is \$3760 for married individuals filing jointly and surviving spouses; \$2540 for heads of

household and single individuals; and \$1880 for married individuals filing separately. This 1987 standard deduction is to be the same amount as the zero bracket amount that would have applied for 1987 under present law. The standard deduction will increase in 1988, and the zero bracket amount will be eliminated, creating a situation where the rates will begin at zero taxable income. The 1988 deduction is as follows: \$5000 married filing jointly; \$4400 heads of households; \$3000 single individuals.

The *personal exemption* for each individual will increase from the present \$1080.

(indexed) to:

\$1900 — 1987

\$1950 — 1988

\$2000 — 1989, (indexed thereafter and phased out for upper income taxpayers)

*Business Meal and Entertainment Expenses* — Under the new law, 80% of otherwise allowable business meal expenses and business entertainment expenses are deductible, subject to certain exceptions.

The present law regarding substantiation of meal expenses under \$25 is retained. The Treasury is instructed to adopt stricter substantiation requirements for expenses over \$25.

An expense for food or beverages is not deductible unless the taxpayer establishes the item was directly related to the active conduct of the taxpayer's trade or business and is substantiated as such.

The conference agreement includes the separate statutory rule disallowing lavish or extravagant expenditures for food or beverages, whether or not incurred while the taxpayer is on business travel. At this time no numbers are given determining extravagance. Determination and enforcement will be in the hands of the IRS and the courts.

These provisions are effective

*Continued on next page*

## Economic Affairs. . .

for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 1987.

**Depreciation** — The conference agreement modifies the Accelerated Cost Recovery System (ACRS) for property placed in service after December 31, 1986, (except for property covered under transition rules). The cost of property placed in service after July 31, 1986, and before January 1, 1987, may, at the election of the taxpayer on an asset-by-asset basis be covered under the modified rules.

The conference agreement provides more accelerated depreciation for the revised three-year, five-year and 10-year classes, reclassifies certain assets according to their present class life (ADR midpoints), creates a 7 year class, 20 year class, 27.5 year class and a 31.5 year class.

The depreciation method applicable to property included in the three year, five year, and 10 year classes is the double declining balance method, switching to the straight line method at a time to maximize the depreciation allowance. Double declining balance method is twice the straight line rate. An example on a \$10,000 purchase is as follows:

a.  $\$10,000 \times 50\%$  (twice the straight line rate) = \$5000 - first year depreciation.

b.  $(\$10,000 - \$5000) \times 50\% = \$2500$  - second year depreciation.

c.  $(\$10,000 - \$5000 - \$2500) \times 50\% = \$1250$  - third year depreciation, etc.

**Classes of property most applicable to our business uses:** Three year class — ADR midpoints of four years or less, except autos and light trucks.

Five year class — ADR midpoints of more than four years and less than 10 years, adding autos, light trucks, qualified technological equipment, etc.

Seven year class — ADR midpoints of more than 10 years and less than 16 years.

10 years class — ADR mid-

point of 16 years and less than 20 years. Autos are no longer three year property, they are now included in the five year class. Also the Treasury is charged with the authority to adjust class lives of most assets based on actual experience. Recovery periods were fixed in the past, so we may see some changes in this area with the exception of autos and light trucks. They may not be reclassified through the year January 1, 1992.

The *investment tax credit* has been repealed.

**Expensing** — The amount of personal property that may be expensed is increased to \$10,000 (from the present-law \$5000) in reference to property purchased and used in a trade or business. This provision allows the expensing of property that is ordinarily depreciated. In the past this was included on form 4562, Part I, Section A.

**Interest Deduction** — No deduction is allowed for personal interest (credit cards, etc.). Debt on a principal or secondary residence is still allowed as long as the debt does not exceed the purchase price of the residence, plus the cost of improvements.

The deduction for investment interest is generally limited to the net investment income. The provision is effective for taxable years beginning after December 31, 1986, but is phased in. The amounts disallowed are as follows:

35% in taxable years beginning in 1987

60% in taxable years beginning in 1988

80% in taxable years beginning in 1989

90% in taxable years beginning in 1990

100% in taxable years beginning in 1991, and thereafter.

**Dividend Exclusion for Individuals** — The \$100 dividend exclusion for individuals (\$200 joint filing) is repealed, effective for

taxable years beginning after December 31, 1986.

**Taxable Years of Partnerships, S Corporations, and Personal Service Corporations** — The conference agreement requires that partnerships, S corporations, etc. use a taxable year that generally conforms to the taxable year of their owners.

**IRAs** — Deductible IRA contributions are permitted as under present law (1) if an individual has adjusted gross income (AGI) under a phase out level, or (2) if the individual is not an active participant in an employer-maintained retirement plan for any part of the plan year ending with or within the individual's taxable year. So, the IRA exclusion does not pertain to most of us self-employed people.

**Health Insurance Costs of Self Employed Individuals** — The conference agreement provides a deduction for 25% of the amounts for health insurance for a taxable year on behalf of a self-employed individual and the individual's spouse and dependents. The provision is effective for taxable years beginning after December 31, 1986, and before January 1, 1990.

The information provided in this article is based on personal research from the following sources: Summary of Conference Agreement on H.R. 3838; and the Tax Reform Act of 1986, Conference Report to accompany H.R. 3838. The IRS will be issuing new regulations on many of the law's provisions. Detailed questions cannot as yet be answered on many points until the specifics are outlined by the IRS.

No liability is assumed for the use or misuse of this information. The intention of providing you with this information is to serve as a guide to the recently passed Tax Reform Act. If you have any specific questions refer them to your attorney or accountant. ■

## Toronto! — Discover The Feeling!

### Hey! What A Theme!

John Lillico, RTT  
Host Chapter Chairman

**I**n Toronto, you'll discover the feeling of Canadian hospitality — the feeling of your dollar going a lot further (a U.S. dollar will bring you about \$1.40 Canadian) — the feeling of attending a PTG convention, possibly for the first time — and the feeling of Toronto, that vibrant city, alive both day and night.

The fascinating, clean, safe, English-speaking city of Toronto, located in Canada's "heartland" and which once played second fiddle to its arch-rival, Montreal has, over the past decade, emerged to become Canada's largest and most exciting metropolis.

Situated on the north-westerly end of Lake Ontario, Toronto lies on the 43rd parallel, 215 miles east of Detroit with four-lane expressway all the

way. And it's only another 180 miles further distant from Chicago.

A network of modern, multi-lane highways feed into the city. The MacDonald-Cartier Freeway (Hwy. #401) approaches from the west (Detroit-Windsor) and from the east (Montreal, Kingston & upper New York state). The 90 miles of Queen Elizabeth Way will bring you to Toronto from Niagara Falls, Buffalo and points south, while Hwy. #400 reaches down from "cottage country."

By train, Toronto's Union Station is located in the heart of the city on Front St. W. It is served by Canada's VIA Rail and Amtrak.

Flying to the convention will be a cinch. Lester B. *Continued on next page*

## Toronto Institute '87

Dick Bittinger  
Institute Director '87

**T**he next few months leading up to the Annual Convention will be especially exiting for me. I hope in reading these articles you will find yourself discovering the feeling of excitement too.

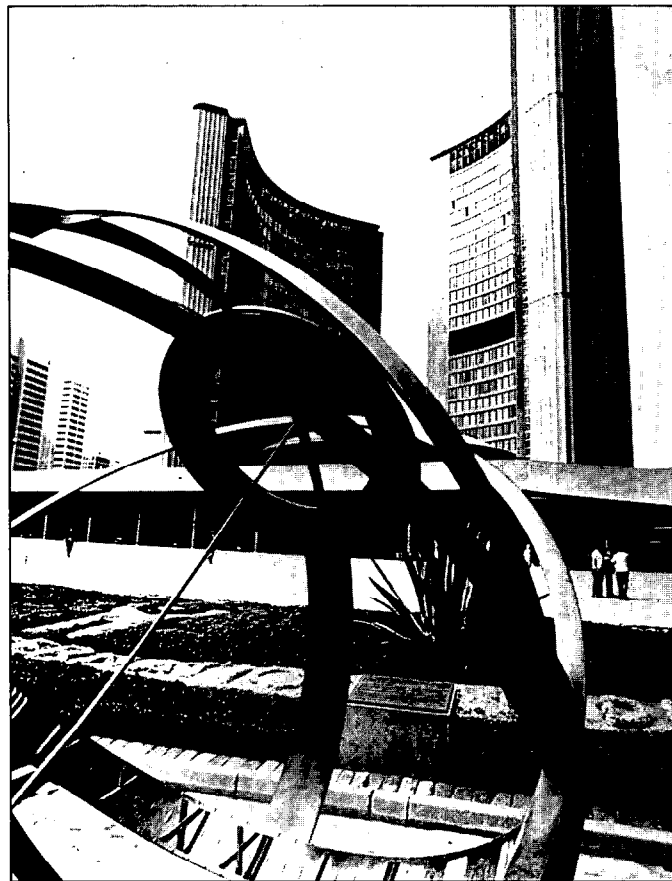
The International Association of Piano Builders and Technicians meeting, following our technical institute, will add an international flavor, especially since some of the institute instructors will be from other countries.

We will have new classes with new instructors, a few standard classes with new instructors, and some standard instructors with new classes. See, you really will have to attend to see what it is all about.

Back by popular demand will be hour-and-a-half tuning tutoring. Tutoring also will be offered on rebuilding and regulation.

Do you remember the "Tuning Concert" that used to follow the closing luncheon? Well, just come to the Toronto Convention and Institute and *Discover The Feeling* of a tuning concert that is not only educational but entertaining. Jack Sprinkle, Northern Virginia Chapter, with the assistance of John Lillico and his Toronto Chapter crew, will teach you how to cope with sounds and noises in the workplace.

Keep watching the *Journal* for more information on classes, instructors, schedules and pictures. Get involved and *Discover The Feeling* that comes only once a year. Resolve to attend the annual convention July 20-24 in Toronto, Canada at the Constellation Hotel. ■



Toronto's new city hall, viewed through Astrolabe, was designed by Finnish architect Viiho Revell. In the foreground, Nathan Phillips Square, complete with flower beds and reflecting pool, is popular with residents and tourists alike.

## Toronto . . .

Pearson International Airport's two terminals are served by over 50 carriers, 18 of which are recognized as having flights originating from points in the United States. Once you've landed, don't bother about any other form of ground transportation to The Constellation Hotel, other than the special shuttle bus provided exclusively for transportation to the hotel. Service is provided every 15 minutes and the small charge (\$2.00) is well worth it. Boarding posts at both terminals are well marked.

The Constellation Hotel, with its more than 850 guest rooms, bills itself as "Canada's Largest Deluxe Convention Hotel." Within minutes of your arrival at the airport, you will be relaxed in your well-appointed room in an area which boasts the second largest concentration of hotels in all of Canada, just a short 20-minute drive from the city's core.

Metropolitan Toronto with a population of 2.15 million consists of six individual municipalities. The capital of Ontario is the City of Toronto (population 606,250) located in the heart of Metro. To the north lies North York (pop. 556,300), with Scarborough

(461,950) lying easterly. Etobicoke (297,000) is on the western extremity of Metro and East York (97,650) and York (133,850) lie amongst the aforementioned. For the benefit of you "technicrats," the convention will be held in the City of Etobicoke.

Average maximum temperature in July is 79 degrees F., although the record high reached 105 degrees F. on July 9th, 1936. Average precipitation for the month is three inches, and that's in the form of rain! Although July is our wettest month of the year, all-day rains are seldom witnessed but, rather, it falls in the form of delightful showers — a cooling relief from the sometime humid, muggy conditions we have come to expect.

Plan now to "Discover The Feeling" in Toronto. July is only a few months away and we are planning a wonderful time for you.

Why not come a few days earlier, or stay a few days later, in order to take advantage of airfare discounts and afford yourself the time to enjoy our wonderful city.

Next month, I'll take you on a tour of Toronto. You WILL discover the feeling and you'll enjoy it immensely! ■

## Industry News

Steinway Musical Properties (SMP), Inc. announced the appointment of Robert Dove as director of corporate planning Nov. 12. The announcement was made by Bruce A. Stevens, president of Steinway Musical Properties, owner of four musical instrument companies.

"We are extremely pleased to welcome Bob Dove to SMP," stated Stevens. "We believe in the future of the musical instrument industry and know that he will help our companies to realize their full potential."

As director of corporate planning, a new position within SMP, Dove will work directly with Stevens and will oversee strategic planning for four musical instrument companies: Steinway & Sons, the piano manufacturer with plants in Astoria, New York and Hamburg, Germany; Gemeinhardt Company, Elkhart, Indiana, flute and piccolo manufacturers; Lyon & Healy Harps, Inc., Chicago, Illinois; and Rodgers Organ Company, Hillsboro, Oregon.

Dove most recently served as vice president for Young Chang America based in Cerritos, California and has more than 20 years experience in the music industry including previous executive tenure

with Steinway & Sons.

Stevens also announced the promotion of Joseph Pramberger to president of the piano-making firm's new Service Center Division to be opened in Mineola, Long Island on January 1, 1987. "The establishment of the Steinway Service Center Division under Joe's guidance ensures that our total commitment to quality in servicing Steinway pianos will be effectively realized," Stevens said.

Pramberger currently serves as vice president of manufacturing and oversees production of all grand and vertical pianos made at the Astoria, N.Y. plant. He has been with Steinway for more than 25 years, starting as an assistant in the engineering department. In 1972, he was made head of engineering and in 1979 he was named director of manufacturing. He has served in his current capacity since 1981. ■

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## The International Scene

Fred Odenheimer  
Chairman, International  
Relations Committee

### Looking Forward To IAPBT In 1987

As we are looking forward to another international Guild Convention, this one in Toronto, Canada, it is perhaps not too early to think about the International Association of Piano Builders and Technicians meeting which follows the Technical Institute Friday afternoon, July 24, and Saturday, July 25, 1987. It is a chance to meet participants from a number of overseas countries who will be there for the biannual meeting. Naturally, there will be some programs on tap besides Board and Council meetings, and I am sure that they will be published in the *Journal* in due time.

So when making plans for the convention, give some thought to staying a bit longer in order to attend the IAPBT convention. You may also want to join "Friends of IAPBT." The yearly dues are just \$15.

In last month's article, I mentioned the European Convention in Gwatt, Switzerland April 21-25. Here are subjects that come up during the technical institute: "Voicing of a Steinway Grand Piano," "Scale Designs," "Bridge Repairs With Modern Tools," "Possibilities for Changes to Touch Playing of a Grand Piano," and "Estimates for Cost and Time for Grand and Upright

Pianos." There is limited space in Gwatt and I do not know if they could accommodate Guild members, but if you are interested, write a note to me at 15358 Wyandotte Street, Van Nuys, CA 91406, and I shall make inquiries.

Worldwide piano construction is always something that is fascinating to contemplate. We know that production of pianos in the US is somewhere near 50 percent of what it was not too long ago and we also know that production has declined in a number of other countries. However, we believe that Korea is coming close to 200,000 units per year and that China and Taiwan are also increasing their output.

Perhaps the overall decline in world production of pianos is only minimal, although our domestic manufacturing capacity has sharply declined.

As reported in European trade magazines, Mr. Klaus Fennner celebrated his 60th birthday Sept. 19 of this year. We know his accomplishments have been great and his contributions to the piano industry are outstanding. Belatedly we want to wish him the best continued success, health and happiness. ■

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# **T H E TECHNICAL F O R U M**

## ***More Dumb Sales Claims, Evaluating The Piano For Rebuilding, Room Humidifiers, Dead New Strings, Tech Tips and Reader Comments***

**Jack Krefting**  
Technical Editor

**V**ince Mrykalo, RTT, from Salt Lake City, has a wonderfully ridiculous sales claim for us, this one made by an unnamed salesman: "When selling spinets, this salesman says that they actually stay in tune longer because there is less string to be affected by changes in temperature. The longer the string, the greater the effect of temperature on it, so actually concert grands go out of tune fastest because they have the longest strings."

### **Piano Quality**

The 1911 edition of the above named book, to which we have referred before, has another interesting reference to piano service:

*Do not permit an itinerant tuner to touch your piano. Nearly every credential of the itinerant tuner is worthless. Get the piano tuned through the firm from which it was purchased, or by the accredited tuner of some other well-known house.*

*The warranty rights on a piano are lost by permitting strange and*

*incapable tuners to tune it.*

*Pay no attention when a tuner criticizes or condemns your piano when he is tuning it, but at once inform the dealer, telling him what the tuner said.*

*A tuner will often criticize or condemn the makes of pianos carried by a competitor, even though at some time in the past he has worked for the house whose piano he is talking about.*

*When in doubt, or when such talk has caused some question as to the grade or quality of a piano, always go to the head of the house from which it was purchased and give an opportunity for explanation. No house of any standing will allow the employees to attempt to make the purchaser of a piano dissatisfied after it has been bought and a payment made on it.*

And so Mr. Geppert, a dealer himself in spirit if not in fact, would have his readers believe that only dealer-employed technicians have valuable opinions, unless of course those opinions do not agree with those of the dealer himself, in which case the customer should

report the technician to the dealer to get him fired. Not only is there no mention whatever of seeking an independent third opinion, but Geppert obviously wants his readers to believe that any tuner or technician not under the direct control of a dealer is incompetent.

Our thanks to Ted Wadl for the loan of this fascinating booklet.

### **Room Humidifiers**

In the Northeast and Midwest areas particularly, the topic of wintertime humidification is one that has to be addressed by piano technicians and rebuilders. While the latter usually recommend a furnace installation that will add humidity to the whole house, many tuner-technicians find the piano-mounted humidifiers to be effective when properly installed and maintained. A third option is the room humidifier, which offers the advantage of humidifying the air all around the piano as well as inside or under it, in addition to protecting any paintings or furniture that might be in the room with the piano, at a lower cost than that of a furnace-

mounted humidifier. Daniel Dyer, RTT, 8 Locust Lane, Bronxville, New York 10708, believes that this is a preferable option for many customers and has negotiated a deal with a manufacturer so that any Piano Technicians Guild member may purchase these units wholesale, even if only one unit is ordered.

The company is Bemis Manufacturing Co., Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085, Telephone (414) 467-4621. According to Dyer, this company purchased West Bend's humidifier business in 1984 and he personally recommends their products. Obviously the Guild is not in a position to do so, not having testing facilities, so this is presented not as an endorsement but for information only.

## Dead New Strings

**Q:** *About a year and a half ago I started working on a small grand which I bought to rebuild and sell. I ordered new bass strings imme-*

*diately, as it was a (no-name) piano and therefore required a pattern or all old strings in order to be duplicated. The strings arrived within two weeks, but I just put them on last week because the job was delayed for various reasons, and the ones in the tenor are very tubby, almost dead-sounding. Did they go bad from age, or is there something else to look for?*

**A:** First of all, they could have gone dead just from lying around, especially if they weren't kept tightly wrapped to keep out dust. For some reason, possibly that a string under tension has its windings stretched slightly apart while those of a new (not installed) string are closer together, strings will last a lot longer on a piano than in storage.

Another possibility is that the copper windings were contaminated in handling. The least amount of oil from the hands can

cause a string to go dead, especially the smaller strings. We have seen documented evidence of this. Some technicians have even deliberately killed a new string to make it match its dead neighbors in tone, when a single replacement was required, with a dab of Vaseline.

Thirdly, we suggest trying to twist one or two of the dead strings before giving up on them. While it is true that a half twist counterclockwise is usually sufficient, the smaller strings can be twisted more than that; we would suggest as many as three or four complete twists be tried, radical as that may sound, because there is nothing to lose at this stage anyway.

Finally, don't overlook the possibility that the bridge is loose from the board, or that the cap is loose from the bridge. In either case, that entire area would be dead. If you are unsure about that, press down hard on the top of the bridge with some blunt tool while plucking the string. If the

# Grand Rebuilding

## Evaluating The Piano

**F**irst of all, we should clear up some loosely used terminology, because most rebuilding shops are not really rebuilding pianos. They are merely reconditioning them, or they are acting as contractors for rebuilding which is in part done by other shops. Not that there is anything wrong with reconditioning, or contracting either for that matter, so long as the client isn't deceived into thinking he is getting something else for his money.

For example, the most common fraudulent practice is to restring a piano without replacing the pinblock, and allow the customer to assume that, because everything looks new, it really is as good as new, when of course it isn't. The next most common maneuver among the less-reputable shops involves the artificial recrowning of soundboards by kerfing the bridge or installing springs. It is our feeling that such practices are questionable at best, and are defensible only when there is no other economically viable way to make the instrument usable,

and even then only when the client is made fully aware that the proposed procedure is really a makeshift one rather than a legitimate repair.

For the purposes of this discussion, let's assume that the instrument to be rebuilt is worth it on its own musical merit, not an antique or something with sentimental value as its prime reason for being rebuilt, because in the latter instances some other procedures might be considered valid which would confuse the issue at hand.

First, how about the soundboard? You can measure crown and bearing if you want, and if you are a beginner you should take all possible measurements because one never knows what information might prove vital after the piano has been torn down. After looking at enough pianos, however, you can actually see the crown without measuring; and that, plus a quick look at the bridge and checking the ring time of a string in the vicinity of C64, will tell you most of what you need

tone improves with the pressure, the problem is in the bridge.

## Tech Tip

Allen Wright, RTT, from Central Florida, sent a tip which had been published in his chapter's newsletter, *The Ivory Tower*. The author is Art Flashman:

*I recently got a call from one of my customers: "Mr. Flashman, something terrible has happened to my piano." After a little hysterical conversation on her part, I found that the "something terrible" was a series of scratches, or gouges, on every natural key on her nearly new Wurlitzer console. I told her I'd be over as soon as possible and see what I could do.*

*The next afternoon I had a look at the piano and found four marks*

*on every natural, right next to the sharps. And in the meantime she had discovered how those marks had gotten there. Seems her six-year-old son had seen Jerry Lewis on TV running the keyboard with his fingers and thought he'd try it himself. But it hurt his fingers, so he tried a screwdriver he found, twice with the blade, then twice with the handle. The resulting marks were visible from across the room.*

*I assured my customer the keys could be made to look as good as new, and brought them to my shop. I called Wurlitzer on their toll-free number and asked for advice. First 150, then 220 garnet paper to level the scratches, then 500 wet or dry paper. Finally, smokers tooth polish to restore the shine. After a couple of keys, finding that polishing with the toothpaste would take all day, I tried ivory bar polish on my buffing wheel on the tail of one key cover*

*where it wouldn't show. But that cut too fast.*

*I went to Ace Hardware to get a softer buffing wheel, and while there I found a plastic buffing composition for hard plastics. It is made for polishing plexiglass and made by Divine Bros. Co. of Utica, NY.*

*With a soft, single-row stitched linen buffing wheel, and a light application of the buffing compound to the wheel, it took less than an hour to get out the last trace of the scratches. And the keys had all the original luster and shine. One happy customer. And one relieved technician!*

*"Dico" plastic buffing composition #P.B.C. Plastic.*

*I called Wurlitzer back, and was thanked very much for the information. I hope this will help someone else.*

to know regarding the necessity of replacing the board.

For those who want measurable parameters, the following may be useful:

1. Check the crown by stretching a thread across the underside of the board, between the longest ribs. If the thread is touching the board at the ends but not in the middle, the board has crown. If it will not touch at both ends without touching in the middle first, the board has obviously bellied downward, or the bridge has rolled; in either case, the tone and the ring time will have suffered badly and the defect can be confirmed by checking the bearings.

2. Check the downbearing with a rocker gauge, or whatever other gauge you prefer to use, to confirm that at least some bearing exists everywhere, but do not expect much in the middle where the most compression has occurred. Do not expect to lower the plate to produce a given amount of bearing in the

middle if that will mean excessive bearing at the ends of the bridge, as this will surely stifle the tone. Taking into account the time of year and the moisture content of the wood in the piano, it is far more important to set the plate for maximum ring time — meaning not too much bearing — rather than trying to set it for some presumed ideal amount of bearing. Remember that, unless the job involves recapping or replacing the bridges, every plate setting represents a compromise rather than an ideal in terms of downbearing. If you intend to replace the bridge or the cap, then take notes before lowering tension. But we still cannot achieve the same amount of bearing everywhere, because a relatively flat board will sing with little or no bearing in the middle, but will choke with a taller bridge. If a thread is stretched under the capo and across the bridge at note 88, assuming the bridge hasn't rolled, we would expect to see a gap of between 1/32" and 1/16" between the thread and the

string rest. A similar or slightly greater amount would be expected at the other end of the treble bridge, with possibly 1/64" at the top of the bass tapering to zero at note 1. The bearing in the middle of the treble bridge is going to vary with the humidity anyway, so don't worry about that so long as there is good ring time.

3. Check sidebearing visually to ascertain an equal amount of deflection front and rear, which will keep the bridge from rolling. If the bridge has rolled toward the tuning pins, make a note to move the plate toward the treble, and vice versa. Of course, any such move will necessitate moving the damper guide rails, damper action, piano action, and, in extreme cases, modification of the keyblocks.

4. Take note of any changes that will be made in the plate position before lowering tension, and the less experience you have, the more notes you should take. ■

## Reader Comment

I hear and read a lot of negative comments about using plastic tackle boxes to carry our equipment on the job. While I agree we should make a good first impression by carrying our basic tuning kit in a professional looking case (however we care to define "professional"), I have found a number of uses for the tackle box. Plano's Magnum, model 1162, double-sided tackle box, priced under \$12 at most discount stores, serves me quite nicely as a storage box for key punchings. Front rail punchings go on one side of the box, balance rail punchings on the other. There are enough compartments in the case to allow separation of the punchings by size, and to carrying most of the tools needed for leveling keys. Thus, everything I need to do a key leveling job can be brought to the side of the piano in a neat, compact package.

— Harry Landis  
Copperas Cove, TX

Please send all technical articles, questions, comments and tips to me:

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## Book Review

# Tone Deaf And All Thumbs

Lorelle Nelson  
Las Vegas Chapter

**T**one Deaf and all Thumbs is about how and why we can make music, every one of us. Neurologist Dr. Frank Wilson, idly wondering one day how his daughter could play the piano so fast, found himself a rich and fascinating field of research. The result is this lively and entertaining study of music, hearing, and movement. Wilson leads us through the seemingly daunting labyrinth of musical perception, neural activity, and muscular responses to a better understanding of what is involved in music-making.

"Pumping Ivory," the chapter dealing with the special interest of piano tuners followed "What's the Pitch?" and "High Altitude Tuning." Then he deals with the non-prodigies in music, "If at First You Don't Succeed, Be Grateful."

Dr. Wilson's approach, as those of us know who heard him speak at the opening ceremonies of the Las Vegas Convention in July, provides encouragement for the fledgling music-maker. He is convinced that not only do all of us have a biologic guarantee of musicianship, but also that we can get the music out that is inside of us. He found that "we are natural musicians because of the special nature of the human brain and the phenomenal muscular system to which it is attached."

His research also indicates that adults who enjoy producing music can heighten their physical and mental acuity, and it may even slow the aging process. That's not a bad side benefit for something as pleasurable as music!

In an interview given to the *New York Times*, Dr. Wilson stressed that beginning students must set realistic goals. "I'm not saying everyone can expect to be Horowitz, or end up on the stage,"

he writes, "but the most important thing is to stop worrying about impressing others." He began his own practical research by starting piano lessons at the age of 40. He describes himself as being solidly in the "non-prodigy" group. As recreational musicians, he stresses that we can approach musical training at our leisure and without the pressures faced by professionals. In short, we can enjoy it.

If there is one book that we could recommend to beginning adult music students and gifted musicians alike, it is this one. Read it yourself as well. *Tone Deaf and All Thumbs: An Invitation to Music-Making for Late Bloomers and Non-Prodigies*, Viking Press, 1986, 210 pages, \$15.95 hardback. ■

He is convinced that not only do all of us have a biologic guarantee of musicianship, but also that we can get the music out that is inside of us. He found that 'we are natural musicians because of the special nature of the human brain and the phenomenal muscular system to which it is attached.'

# G O O D VIBRATIONS

## *Part 1 — The Theoretical Soundboard*

Nick Gravagne  
New Mexico Chapter

**A**s inauspicious as the title of this series of articles may appear, rest assured that the principle of good vibrations is so to the point that its use as a heading seemed inescapable. In fact, everything about a well-designed and constructed piano begins and ends with good vibrations. Although there is a long and complicated chain of events from the first lines of scale drawing to lines of musically satisfied people exiting a piano recital, the concept of good vibrations, both scientific and artistic, is the salient point.

It is the intent of these articles to discuss the vibratory action, wanted and unwanted, in the superstructure of the piano. As the soundboard is of considerable importance, and seems to have an almost mystical aura about it, a good deal of scrutiny will be applied to its intent of these articles to address the physics, acoustics and mathematics of string scale design. The theory and practical applications of such can be found in a few good books (Klaus Fenner & Thomma's *TF 65/2*

*Duplex Slide Rule* and Fenner's, *On the Calculation of the Tension of Wound Strings*. Really booklets, these must be ordered from Germany and are translated by Jim Englehardt).

In the February 1984 edition of

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... everything about a well-designed and constructed piano begins and ends with good vibrations ... the concept of good vibrations, both scientific and artistic, is the salient point.

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the *Journal*, an article appeared containing some intriguing questions about soundboards. Indeed, Bob Hohf, the writer, entitled the article, "Are we getting what we want from our soundboards?"

Although the body of the text dealt with circle geometry relative to soundboard crown, the questions were there, for example, "what shape do we want them (boards)," and, in the final paragraph, "what shape do we have?" (Incidentally, Mr. Hohf's treatment of his topic was excellent and the measurements, formulas and tabulated data very useful).

The implications of such questions are many and, as is usual with such technical and often subjective matters, some answers are simple and some are not. For example it is easier to know "what shape we have" because it is measurable, whereas "what shape we want" is not. However, given enough facts and guiding principles, answers do at least begin to emerge if not appear full-blown.

Perhaps the best place to begin

is not with the soundboard at all but with the string. The scale design (tensions, lengths, mass, frequencies, gauges, etc.) is the starting point from which every subsequent design feature "gets its cue," the sole purpose being to manifest in the actual piano the tone quality "built" into that scale design. If it "sounds" good on paper, the piano should be a good instrument if other features are properly designed and built. As an over-simplification it can be said that pianos are practical applications of the theory of scale design. The degree of success of that application becomes primarily a matter of mechanics and workmanship.

It follows, then, that the soundboard as a component is in a secondary position to that of the strings. The reason for this is evident once it is understood that soundboards only exist because a string under tension exists first. Put another way, the board has a very definite function which, apart from the tensioned string connected to it (via the bridge), has no function at all — the cart

before the horse idea. This function must have something to do with the information the soundboard receives from the strings in the form of good (or not so good) vibrations.

What is the primary function of a soundboard? Simply put, the function is to expand the complex vibration forms of the strings. It is well to remember that the board can give out nothing which is not first supplied to it. Soundboards are not tone producers but rather tone amplifiers. Strings are tone generators. These tones, fundamentals and partials, are produced by the vibrating strings, and the function of the soundboard is to faithfully reproduce these frequencies and amplify them.

It is assumed that the reader is aware that a vibrating string without the aid of a soundboard is too small in diameter to cause movements of air large enough to be distinctly audible. The concept of amplification is one of enlargement. The principle is identical to that employed in electronic sound amplification. A typical cone speaker has attached to it small electric wires which deliver tiny electric signals causing the speaker to vibrate. The vibrating speaker, like the piano soundboard, then sets the air into motion producing sound.

The theoretical soundboard will amplify the vibrations of the string without loss. As the string vibrates, the board vibrates; as the string segments and manifest partials, the board should do likewise. Considering a piano performance in progress, it is astounding to think of the incalculable number of vibrations set

up in the soundboard when the sustain pedal is depressed. What careful piano builders strive for is a board which perfectly responds to the energy conducted to it, a board which is able to express the same frequencies that are given to it by the wire. It must be recognized that there is no real increase in force; it is only more effectively used. (More on the concept of force and energy in a later article.) In addition, a board must not only be responsive, but respond uniformly over as much of the frequency range as possible.

Since knowing what is wanted is the first part of finding any answer, it follows that "what we want from our soundboards" are qualities that best enable it to reproduce and amplify over the entire range of frequencies the vibrations imparted to it by the string. A poor scale design coupled with an ideal soundboard will yield a poor tone quality since the board will faithfully reproduce and amplify the deficiencies of the design. On the other hand, a good scale design can go unrealized in coupling with a poor soundboard. In fact, the difference between a good and bad piano may be simply the difference in soundboard construction and good vibrations. ■




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# S O U N D **BACKGROUND**

## *Slow Acceptance of Early Piano*

Jack Greenfield  
Chicago Chapter

### **Continuing Popularity of the Clavichord**

During the first 35 years after the introduction of the piano in Germany in the 1730s, the numbers built were not large. Instruments made during this period still surviving include two Silbermann grand pianos, four or five upright pianos, and several square pianos, some of unknown origin. The references to the piano in the 1753 writings of C. P. E. Bach indicate that although not plentiful, pianos were available to most keyboard instrumentalists. Bach himself had access to the Silbermann pianos owned by Frederick the Great.

The clavichord remained the favorite domestic keyboard instrument in northern Germany until the 1780s. It had been improved considerably since the beginning of the century. By the 1750s most of the clavichords built were unfretted with a range of five octaves, F1-F6. The use of copper-wound strings for the extended bass was begun in 1733.

### **Effects of Seven Years of War**

Besides the continuing demand for clavichords, the Seven Years War, 1756-1763, and its aftereffects also slowed the growth of piano building. In Europe, the main issue of the war was the struggle between Frederick the Great of Prussia and Empress Maria Theresa of the Austrian empire for control of Germany. Frederick's allies were England and Hanover. Maria Theresa's allies were France, Russia, Sweden, and Saxony. Relations

between the two ambitious rulers had been bad ever since Maria Theresa came into power in 1740. Frederick then grabbed control of Silesia, the historically disputed region between southeast Germany, Poland, and what was then the Bohemian province of Austria.

After the empress began building up the Austrian army and forming alliances, Frederick, anticipating attack, decided to strike first and invaded Saxony in 1756. At the outbreak of the war, Augustus II of Saxony fled to Poland where he also ruled, taking as

many of his opera and ballet company as possible. Soon after the start of the war Dresden was bombarded and occupied by the Prussians. The Dresden opera house was destroyed in the fire that occurred during the bombardment. An Austrian army sent to fight the Prussians was defeated and the Saxon army surrendered unconditionally. Saxony was then occupied by Frederick's troops until the end of the war.

As the war continued, victories alternated from one side to the other. At one stage of the fighting, C. P. E. Bach and his family had to move out to a safer area to avoid the Russian army which entered and occupied Berlin for several months. After Frederick drove the Russians out and won other victories, a treaty of peace ending the war was signed in 1763. Prussia retained Silesia. Its ally, England, victorious over France in the fighting in North America and India, took control of most of the French colonies there. The Prussian army left and Saxony was restored to its former boundaries. Augustus III, grandson of Augustus II, became ruler of Saxony after his grandfather and father died within less than one year after the war ended.

Saxony, now heavily in debt and faced with the burden of repairing the destruction of battles and occupation, could not afford to support much musical activity. The musicians of the orchestra of the court of Dresden, one of the best in Europe, had left. Also gone were piano makers, trained in the Silbermann shop and others concentrated in Saxony whose work had

---

Also gone were piano makers, trained in the Silbermann shop and others concentrated in Saxony whose work had been interrupted by the war. About a dozen men emigrated to London...and enabled England to become leader of the new piano industry later in the century.

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## Haydn and Others Begin to Compose For Piano

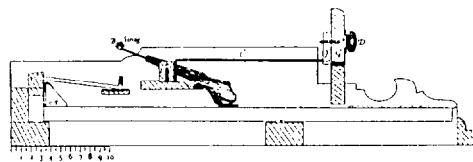
Haydn, who became one of the leading directors and composers of his time, was born into a poor peasant family in a small Austrian village. Since he had an exceptional voice and showed extraordinary musical talent at an early age, his parents went to great pains for him to obtain a musical education. His early keyboard study was on the clavichord. He also learned to play the violin and became familiar with other instruments of the orchestra. He first came to Vienna to sing as a choirboy in St. Stephens Cathedral. After his voice changed, he supported himself by teaching and working in single engagements as a clavierist, organist, violinist, or vocalist. He also took violin lessons and studied composition. He became familiar with the piano in the late 1750s in his first important position, as music director and composer for the Bohemian Count Maximilian von Morzin. One of his duties was to

Haydn achieved fame after 1761 when he became a musical director for the Esterhazy family of prominent wealthy Hungarian nobles. The family palace in Eisenstadt near Vienna was a showplace. The palace musical establishment included one of the finest small orchestras in Europe, a choir, and vocal soloists for service in the chapel, theater, and concert room of the palace. During his first 10 years at Eisenstadt, Haydn wrote about 20 keyboard sonatas. Haydn generally used the term "Cembalo," "Clavicembalo," or "Clavier." While the earlier ones are in a harpsichord style, Sonata 20, in C minor, published in 1781 about 10 years after composition, has the character and dynamic markings that indicate piano performance. Scholars believe all subsequent Haydn sonatas were for piano although only Sonata 49, in E<sup>b</sup>, composed around 1790, was called "Sonata per il Forte-piano." There is no documentation on what type of piano was available to Haydn during his first 20 years at Eisenstadt. Surviving Esterhazy family records for keyboard instrument maintenance

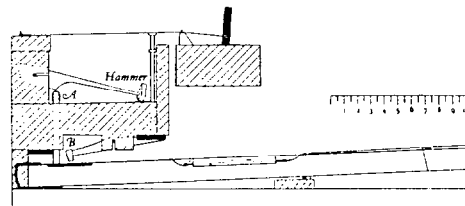
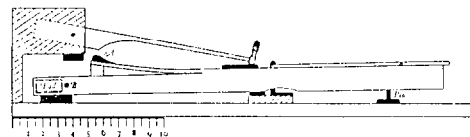
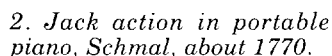
A composer who began writing in a style for piano before Haydn was Johann Gottfried Muthel, well known as a performer in his time, although obscure today. Muthel, the last student of J. S. Bach, continued with C. P. E. Bach. Several Muthel sonatas written as early as 1756, although designated for harpsichord, show dynamic markings more suitable for piano or clavi-chord. Muthel's *Duetto fur 2 Claviere, 2 Flugel oder 2 Forte- piano* published in 1771 appears to be the first composition in Germany with a specific designation naming the piano.

## Types of Actions In Early Square Pianos

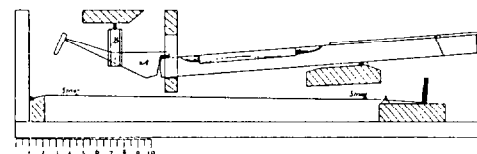
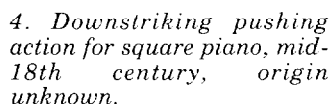
While the Silbermanns had improved some details of Cristofori's design, there were no advances in the basic principles of piano actions before the 1770s. The simplified designs that had



1. Jack action, Socher square piano 1742.



3. *Jack action in square piano, Schmal, about 1770.*



Drawings from Harding,  
*The Pianoforte*

appeared lacked some of the desirable features of Cristofori's actions. Surviving early examples of pianos with jack actions, *Stossmechanik* or pushing actions include vertical pianos of Friederici and others (*Journal*, November 1986, page 13) and square pianos built by Socher, Schmal and others. The action with a sticker or jack permanently attached to the hammer butt in the 1739 vertical piano of the Italian builder Don Domenico is placed in "The Linked Action" (*Gelenkmechanik*) category by Pfeiffer (*The Piano Hammer*).

Johann Socher and Johann Matthes Schmal were piano builders in small towns in southwestern Germany. The discovery of Socher's surviving 1742 square piano earlier in the 20th century came as a surprise to music historians who did not expect to find piano building had started so early so far from Saxony in northeastern Germany. Schmal was active later. One of his pianos built around 1770, now in a museum collection, is a small portable designed for travelers. Harding also shows a museum drawing of a Schmal action used in larger pianos. There are several similarities in the Socher and Schmal actions. They have no intermediate

levers or hammer rails. The hammer assemblies are turned around so that the hammer heads are toward the front as in the German-Viennese actions. The hammer butts pivot from center pins located at the back of the case. In Socher's piano the jack is a triangular block at the back end of the key lever. In Schmal's portable piano, the top of the back half of the key is split horizontally and a small block is wedged into the split. The top back edge of the key lever serves as a jack. Schmal's larger action has an unattached jack like a harpsichord resting on the back end of the key. The jacks press up against the undersides of the elongated hammer butts or hammer shanks close to the hammer pivot center. The portable piano has no dampers. The others have damper lever systems containing weights for return. Socher's action has a pivoted damper lift rail moved by a hand stop.

Little more was done with the jack action in Germany. Further development was continued by the group of piano makers who took the Cristofori principles from Saxony to England during the Seven Years War.

Besides jack actions and bumping actions, another used in early square pianos is a type Pfeiffer classifies as a "downward-striking pushing action." This is a simple arrangement with hammer heads pointing downward on the back ends of center pivoting levers hanging in flanges below a hammer rail. The opposite sides of the levers, however, heavier for gravity return, are lifted by the back ends of the keys. According to Adlung (1758) and Marpurg (1763) such actions were widely used. The origin of this design is unknown. It differs from the earlier downstriking designs of Marius and Schroter. Schroter did not give many details or publish a drawing but he did state that his downstriking model of 1721 had had springs for return.

The early downstriking pushing actions had inefficient damping systems or none at all. The weak tone they produced sounded like the tone of a dulcimer. Increasing the number of strings to five or six per note did not help. There are no pianos with such actions now in existence. Harding and Pfeiffer show drawings of museum action models. ■

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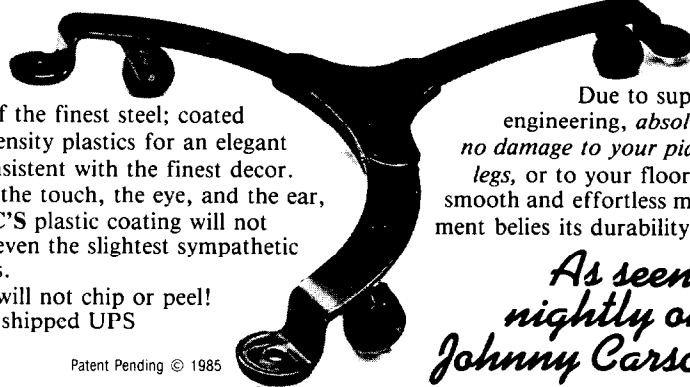
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# 1986 TECHNICAL INDEX

Here is an index for all technical articles that appeared in the *Journal* through December 1986. Index entries have been divided into the nine categories used in the *Classified Index to Published Piano Technology*: "Piano -- Musical Instrument," "Manufacturing," "Tools and Equipment," "Reconditioning (Main Body and Fixed Parts)," "Reconditioning (Moving and Related Parts: Action)," "Regulating," "Tuning," "Voicing," and

"Organization, Literature, People." In some cases, articles may be listed under more than one heading.

"The Technical Forum," a monthly column edited by Technical Editor Jack Krefting, has been treated separately. It is listed by month with subjects listed in order of appearance. Names of those who contributed either questions or technical information are listed in parenthesis.

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## PIANO -- MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

- Greenfield, Jack -- "Cristofori Piano Use -- Dropped in Italy, Continued in Iberian Region;" *Sound Background*; January 1986, pp. 24-26.
- Greenfield, Jack -- "Cristofori Pianos That Survived;" *Sound Background*; February 1986, pp. 15-17.
- Greenfield, Jack -- "Cristofori Actions And Other Design Details;" *Sound Background*; March 1986, pp. 15-18.
- Greenfield, Jack -- "Cristofori's Pianos: Case Design and Scaling;" *Sound Background*; April 1986, pp. 22.
- Greenfield, Jack -- "Early Piano Designs in France;" *Sound Background*; May 1986, pp. 18-20.
- Greenfield, Jack -- "Christoph Gottlieb Schroter: Germany's First Piano Designer;" *Sound Background*; June 1986, p. 21.
- Greenfield, Jack -- "Germany's 18th-Century Keyboard Builders; Gottfried Silbermann -- Germany's First Piano Maker;" *Sound Background*; July 1986, pp. 23-25.
- Greenfield, Jack -- "German Clavichords Before The Piano Was Introduced;" *Sound Background*; August 1986, pp. 20-23.
- Greenfield, Jack -- "Bach and Silbermann Pianos;" *Sound Background*; September 1986, pp. 26-28.
- Greenfield, Jack -- "Later History of the Silbermann Pianos; Schroter's Piano Action;" *Sound Background*; October 1986, pp. 16-19.
- Greenfield, Jack -- "The Friederici Family; the First Upright Pianos;" *Sound Background*; pp. 13-16.
- Greenfield, Jack -- "The Introduction of Square Pianos;" *Sound Background*; December 1986, pp. 19-21.
- Lowell, Tom -- "The Geometry and Mechanics of Downbearing Made Easy;" *At Large*; January 1986, pp. 18-23.

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- Editor -- "Dampp-Chaser Sold, Sohmer & Co. Brings Knabe Pianos Back;" *Industry News*; November 1986, p. 9.
- Foye, Gerald -- "Kimball Players;" *It's the Little Things That Count!* June 1986, p. 24.
- Krefting, Jack -- "What's New at NAMM;" *The Technical Forum*; August 1986, pp. 11-15.
- Rose, Algernon -- "How I Found Myself -- The Autobiography of a Piano;" *At Large*; December 1986, pp. 22-24.

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- Fandrich, Del -- "Abrasives, Part II: Sandpaper;" *About the Craft*, April 1986, pp. 14-18.
- Foye, Gerald -- "Problem-solving Tools;" *It's the Little Things That Count!* December 1986, p. 18.
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- Hassig, Richard -- "Concerts: Rock to Symphony;" *Tools of the Trade*; March 1986, pp. 26-27.
- Hassig, Richard -- "Wearing Gloves;" *Tools of the Trade*; July 1986, pp. 21-22.
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- Hunt, Newton -- "Using the Sanderson Accu-Tuner;" *The Computerized Technician*; June 1986, pp. 17-19.
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- Foye, Gerald -- "Hammer Return Springs;" *It's the Little Things That Count!* March 1986, pp. 22-25.  
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# The Technical Forum

Jack Krefting  
Technical Editor

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<b>Feb. 1986</b>	Piano Hardware Specific Squeaks (Dennis Johnston)	<b>Sept. 1986</b>	More on Plate Welding (Wilford Young) Grand Rebuilding Hammers Caught Below Centerline, Again (Bill Bremmer) Tips for Apprentices: Starrett Cutnipper and Bridge Repair Agraffes The Dumb Sales Claim Contest (Jack Caskey) Termination Buzz (Blais Wight and William Quinn) Regulating Assistance Needed (Walt Thatcher)
<b>Mar. 1986</b>	Fallboard Decals Butt Spring Strength Fuzzy, False Tone Showroom Hype	<b>Oct. 1986</b>	Damper Wire Plating Grand Rebuilding Hammer Hanging Jig (Joe Sciortino) Tech Tips: Iron-on Veneer (Peter Briant) Tips for Apprentices: Action Cradle and Flange Guards The Dumb Sales Claim Contest (Dan Squire)
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## Correction

In the November *Journal*, Louis Cheung was shown as an Associate. He should have been shown as a Registered Technician.

# The Auxiliary Exchange

## President's Message

With the New Year ahead, it is time to examine the past and look into the future. The Auxiliary has been in existence since 1945 — 42 years. We have had some powerful and creative leaders to have survived this long!

But now it is time to look into the future of the Auxiliary. We value our members and must do everything in our power to maintain their membership. However, we must also find ways to reach new members and that means perhaps a change in our structure.

I just read a letter from **Peter Briant**, president of the Montana Chapter, who reported on the October meeting of that remarkable little chapter. They recorded 15 members attending, four of whom were spouses! That's enough to form an Auxiliary Chapter! If we could form a Montana Chapter, where members live hundreds of miles apart, why couldn't we form many more chapters?

There is nothing in our Bylaws that requires PTGA Chapters to go "hand in hand" with PTG Chapters. The spouses of many strong PTG Chapters simply don't want a connected Auxiliary Chapter. This is true of the Sacramento Chapter and is probably true of many others. We do have six Members-at-large in Northern California (three in Sacramento and three in Fresno). I know of several other potential members who would consider joining a Northern California Chapter. Although we have six Members-at-large in the New England area, there is not a single chapter. Why not a New England Chapter? This might encourage more of these members to participate.

Several people have come up to me at conventions and said "I wish we had a chapter so I could join." Of course I pointed out that they could join as a Member-at-large, knowing the chances were very good they would never quite get around to it. But they would join a chapter, even if the perimeters of that chapter were the state or even two or three states. There is only one chapter in the Pacific Northwest (Portland) and that chapter is inactive. However, from 20 to 30 persons registered for the Auxiliary Program at the Pacific Northwest Conference! Why couldn't there be a Pacific Northwest Auxiliary Chapter?

It only takes three individuals to form an Auxiliary chapter. Even if the chapter meets once a year at the state or regional conference, it will be to the members' benefit. Members could have input in the Auxiliary Programs. The result might be a better and more varied international convention. We, through you, can encourage a reduced registration fee for Auxiliary members at the state and regional level...just as we do at the national level. Most important of all, members might be able to raise a little money toward our scholarship fund! You never know what you can do until you try.

Let's start the New Year with dedication and thanks to the past and our goals focused on the future. Let's face the New Year with an open mind...ready for change...preserving our past but ready to exceed our highest expectations, an increase in membership that will double by the end of 1987.

— **Ginger Bryant, President**

## Heerre's Rebecca!

I grew up with pianos. My grandfather, Phil Kaufman, had been one of the technicians actively involved in creating PTG and remained an active RTT until his death. It was only natural to introduce my musician fiancé to Phil and encourage him to enroll in Phil's "introduction to piano tuning and maintenance" course which Phil taught at Chautauqua Institute every summer for many, many years...

An eight-week course isn't enough to learn the trade! But it was enough for Alan Heneberry to decide that he had found his calling. We were married a year later in Virginia, where we were both music students at Madison College in the Shenandoah Valley.

In 1976 we moved to Northern Virginia. I found employment with a small civil engineering firm as their secretary/receptionist/payroll clerk/accountant/Gal Friday/all rolled into one — and Alan attended his first Guild meeting (and stayed out 'till 1 talking pianos in a parking lot with Northern Virginia PTG RTTs!)

Rachel Anne was born in 1980 and I left the engineering firm for long baby buggy walks to the piano shop where new daddy Alan was shop foreman, pediatrician visits, car seats, and new friends — people with children! Cecilia Joy arrived 20 months later — and joy she is! I became pregnant again, but in February of 1983, when I miscarried we discovered that I had a rare but curable uterine cancer. After a year of cancer therapy I was given a clean bill of health and told there would be no more babies.

Alan started his own business in 1983, and I went back to work. After a stint as an assistant to an administrative assistant at a computer firm (which I hated!) I was offered a position as a project secretary for a construction management firm — on a construction site!

I work on the construction site for a high-rise office building. My dress code is jeans, work boots, hard hat, and a shortwave radio strapped to my hip. I enforce (OSHA) safety regulations; bandage cuts; direct street traffic, chase pedestrians out of the way of heavy equipment; climb *lots* of ladders...besides answering telephones, typing, data entry, filing, and other office functions. Does it sound as though I like my job? I love it! I recently earned my Red Cross Multi-Media First Aid Certificate — gotta know how to bandage those guys up! With my husband's moral support and a little incentive from my company I have gone back to school nights. I am working on a degree in Construction Management. My high-rise will be done by February — my next assignment will be as an office engineer on another construction site — but someone else will do the typing!

— **Rebecca Heneberry,**  
Corresponding Secretary

## New York, NY

Last October 16-19 the New York State Institute of the Piano Technicians Guild was held in New York City and an unusual program of interest was offered to the spouses and those not attending classes. A comprehensive bus tour of the island of Manhattan was given on Friday and the 14 aboard were given a glimpse of Chinatown, the financial district, fashionable Park Avenue, Central Park, the United Nations and Dag Hammarskjöld Square. This was combined with a high light ferry ride to Liberty Island and the Statue of Liberty. For luncheon the group was driven to South Street Seaport where they viewed the restored 19th-century port of New York. They welcomed the chance to rest their bones after trekking about Liberty Island, viewing the museum there with its extensive pictures, certificates and memorabilia about the early immigrants.

The following day's tour had a special impact for the 14 individuals who attended Saturday's backstage tour of the Metropolitan Opera House. Our guide, Connie, a volunteer member of the Metropolitan Opera Guild, provided a general introduction and background about the opera house completed in 1966, the largest in the world, the cost to construct, the noted stars who perform and have performed at the Met, and the heavy security which is enforced.

It was some moments before we got the "go-ahead" signal to proceed through the backstage door. We 14 were subsequently joined by three other tourists, two from Australia and one from Atlanta, GA. Connie was pleased to have visitors from distant places, and having noticed this writer's badge, had presumed that all our group were from New Jersey. We announced that none were from New Jersey. As our eyes scanned **Evelyn Morgan, Kathryn Snyder, Ginny Russell, Marge Moonan**...we quickly informed Connie that we had visitors from Seattle, Robeson, Cleveland and Rome, Quebec City and Detroit....This made our guide quite happy. We did not mention that **Eleanor Ford** lived a few miles north of Lincoln Center!

Since our guide seemed to be much impressed with celebrities and enjoyed telling us about having on occasion met, talked with or mingled with Henry Kissinger, Plácido Domingo, Jacqueline Onassis, etc., it seemed necessary to tell her how important our group of technicians or spouses of technicians was to the music world. While

### Exchange Editor:

AGNES HUETHER  
34 Jacklin Court  
Clifton, New Jersey 07012

an Itzak Perlman gets his A from the oboeist whereupon he tunes his instrument as do all the other musicians in an orchestra, a Vladimir Horowitz has a piano technician to keep his instrument in tune! Now Connie was impressed!

As our tour cleared security and we were on our way, we had a most interesting time. We saw the "Green Room" where visitors by special arrangement may have a five or ten minute visit with an opera star, obtain an autograph and/or have their picture taken with the celebrity. The room is of modest size with three arm chairs set about a small round table and a Baldwin grand piano. The floor is carpeted with a green rug and the walls are painted a pale green color.

In another area we were shown the dressing rooms as well as costume and wig rooms. All the rooms are numbered and these facilities are in two wings just as in European opera houses...all the male singers are in one side and all the female singers' rooms are located in the opposite wing. The stars' dressing rooms are closest to the stage entry. We were told about the weight of wigs — rather light, the cost of 8 ounces of human hair. We were shown some of the impressive-looking helmets to be worn by ancient Roman soldiers or Wagnerian women. They too were surprisingly light. It appeared that one might almost flick one off another's head. To ensure against that happening, a band of velcro is glued about the rim. The magnificent-appearing gowns and robes with colored glass stones made to look like precious gems were pretty tacky close up, but with the expert attention of the wardrobe mistress and the flattering light from the stage electrician, the wearer could be an Anna Bolena or a Mary Stuarti.

The fifth floor prop making room made several in our group remark that it smelled like the piano factory they had just visited on Thursday in Astoria! The trompe d'oeil panels, papier-mache boulders, half and three-quarter round Corinthian columns which

appear so massive and imposing to the audience were mere partial cylinders and amusing to note. All the effects that the stage artist can achieve were in turn startling, awesome and incredible. One could not help but admire these stage effects.

The crowning point of our tour was the opera stage itself. We were led to a vast area that appeared larger than a football field. Connie provided data on its actual size and we were surprised to learn there are actually five stages which can be moved about on cables and quasi-trolley tracks. The main stage was all set for the afternoon performance of "Madame Butterfly." Behind that stage but out of view was the set for the evening performance of "The Marriage of Figaro."

While we were standing about imagining a performance, craning our necks to look up in to the flies, observing the floor effects made to resemble gravel or flagstone or Belgium block (they looked so real!) one of the stage hands opened the great gold curtain with a swish that surprised all. We were told that the curtain can be opened in seven seconds or, for dramatic effect, in two minutes. All of the lighting in the opera house is managed from a console at stage right. Our fantasies and imaginations took over as we surveyed the view of the house and its multi-tiered balconies from center stage!

Quite reluctantly we were led down to the auditorium where we were informed about the acoustics and the great care that was exercised to afford maximum sound. The magnificent crystal chandeliers are a gift from the Austrian nation and every opera-goer looks forward to see the beautiful chandeliers rise to the ceiling - a signal that the opera is about to begin. Every one of our fourteen tourists thoroughly enjoyed going backstage, even our three add-on tourists. For any additional information about our tour, just ask any of the four Auxiliary members mentioned earlier in this article.

— Agnes Huether, Editor

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## Calendar Of Coming Events

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
<b>Jan. 9-10, 1987</b>	<b>Arizona State Seminar</b> Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ Wirt Harvey; 5901 Calle del Norte; Phoenix, AZ 85018; (602) 945-8515
<b>Feb. 13-16, 1987</b>	<b>California State Conference</b> San Francisco Sheraton Palace Sid Stone; 16875 East 14th St.; San Leandro, CA 94578; (415) 481-1903
<b>Mar. 6-8, 1987</b>	<b>1987 South Central Regional Seminar</b> Hilton Inn Northwest, Oklahoma City, OK Keith McGavern; P.O. Box 2547; Shawnee, OK 74802-2547; (405) 275-8600
<b>Mar. 19-21, 1987</b>	<b>1987 Memphis Mid-South Seminar</b> Memphis, TN Ken Tapp; 4131 Old Brownsville Rd.; Memphis, TN 38134 (901) 386-1515.
<b>Mar. 20-22, 1987</b>	<b>1987 Central West Regional Seminar</b> University of Minnesota Paul Olsen; 3501 Adair Ave. N.; Crystal, MN 55422 (612) 533-5253.
<b>April 2-4, 1987</b>	<b>Pacific Northwest Conference</b> Thunderbird Motor Inn, Yakima, WA Kathleen Hodge; 4401 Henning; Yakima, WA 98901; (502) 453-4314
<b>April 2-5, 1987</b>	<b>1987 Pennsylvania State Conference</b> Scranton, PA Howard A. Yepson; 94 Brook Street; Carbondale, PA 18407; (717) 282-5151
<b>April 10-12, 1987</b>	<b>Michigan State Conference</b> Holiday Inn, Kalamazoo, MI Dave Postma; 3430 Oak St.; Hudsonville, MI 49426; (616) 669-0407
<b>April 24-26, 1987</b>	<b>New England Regional Seminar</b> Merrimack Hilton, Merrimack, NH Douglas Kirkwood; 9 Woodbine Lane; Amherst, NH 03031; (603) 424-7996
<b>* July 20-24, 1987</b>	<b>30th Annual Piano Technicians Guild Convention &amp; Institute</b> Constellation Hotel, Toronto, Ontario, Canada Home Office; 9140 Ward Parkway; Kansas City, MO 64114; (816) 444-3500
<b>July 24-26, 1987</b>	<b>International Association of Piano Builders and Technicians Biannual Conference</b> Constellation Hotel, Toronto, Ontario, Canada Home Office; 9140 Ward Parkway; Kansas City, MO 64114; (816) 444-3500

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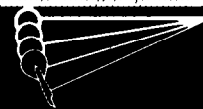
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100/\$4.00; 200/\$6.00; 500/\$12.00 .....
- \*Teacher Recital Program covers — 100/\$8.00 .....
- \*Pamphlets — 100/\$11.00, 500/\$50; must be ordered  
in lots of 100 each.
- "A-440 And Your Piano" .....
- "Care Of Your Piano" .....
- "Piano Pointers" .....
- "How Often Should My Piano Be Tuned?" .....
- "The Tuner To Turn To" .....
- "The Unseen Artist" .....
- "Should I Have My Piano Tuned In Summer?" .....
- Reminder Cards .....

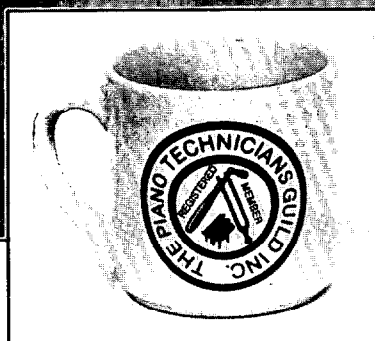
Quantity

Total

\$ .....

## Billing Pads

Business Aids Total ... \$ .....



## Coffee Mug

## Display The Guild Logo Proudly\*

Quantity

Total

- \*Coffee Mug — White/blue logo; 1/\$4.00,  
4/\$12.00, 6/\$16.50 .....
- \*Deluxe Briefcase, Portfolio/Clipboard — brown,  
gold logo, 11" x 14"; 1/\$12.50 .....
- \*Meeting/sales Portfolio — navy blue,  
12" x 16"; \$1.75 each .....
- \*PTG Notepad — 5-1/2" x 9"; \$1.00 each .....
- \*Pocket Protector — white vinyl, blue logo;  
1/\$1.25, 3/\$2.50 .....
- \*Sew-on Logo Patches — 3" diameter; 1/\$1.25,  
4/\$3.00; Indicate colors: blue/white,  
blue/gold, black/gold .....
- \*Logo Stickers — blue/gold/white, peel-off back;  
8" diameter logo: 1/\$3.00, 2/\$5.00,  
6/\$10.00 .....
- 3-1/2" logo: 1/\$1.50, 2/\$2.50, 6/\$5.50  
    (3-1/2" logo also available for inside glass  
    — please specify) .....
- 1-1/2" logo — 1/\$.10 (minimum 10) .....
- \*Metal Cut — 1-1/4" piano and logo, on wooden  
block; 1/\$15.00 .....
- \*Logo Rubber Stamp — wooden handle; 1/\$5.00,  
2/\$8.00. Indicate style: 1-1/4" round, 5/8"  
round, 1/2" round, 1-1/4" with piano or  
7/8" with piano .....

Logo Total .....

\$ .....

## Free Items

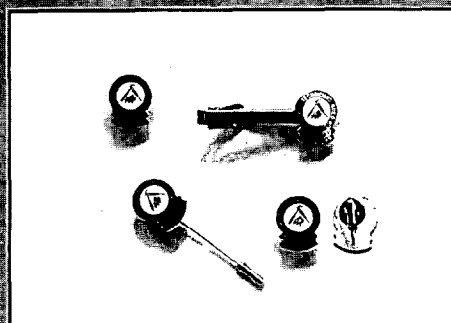
Indicate quantity needed by each item.

- Lending Library List .....
- List Of Manufacturers And  
Suppliers .....
- List Of Piano Technology  
Schools .....
- Magic Kingdom Club  
Application .....
- Member Benefit List .....
- Readers Digest Reprint — "The  
Other Masters Of The  
Keyboard" (limit 10 per  
order) .....
- "The Piano Tuner —  
Technician" brochure .....
- "What Is The Piano  
Technicians Guild?"  
brochure .....
- Guide To Application  
Procedures And  
Member Classification .....



## Publications

	Quantity	Total
"Piano Parts And Their Functions" By Merle Mason (Revised edition) Member: \$10.50 (hard), \$8.00 (soft).....	_____	\$ _____
Non-member: \$15.50 (hard), \$13.00 (soft) .....	_____	_____
"5-Year Supplement to Classified Index" compiled by Merle Mason; Member: \$12.50, Non-member: \$15.00 .....	_____	_____
"Piano Action Handbook" 1971 Edition; Member: \$3.20; Non-member: \$4.00 .....	_____	_____
Journal Binders — brown, fits 9" x 12" 1/\$6.50, 2/\$12.00 .....	_____	_____
<b>Publications Total</b> .....	_____	\$ _____



## Jewelry, Etc.\*

	Quantity	Total
*Membership Pin — lapel-type, gold with blue and white logo: 1/\$5.00 .....	_____	\$ _____
*Logo Stickpin — 1/\$5.50 .....	_____	_____
*Logo Tie Tack — with chain back: 1/\$5.00 .....	_____	_____
*Logo Earrings		
Clip: \$7.50/pair .....	_____	_____
Pierced: \$7.50/pair .....	_____	_____
*Logo Tie Bar — 1/\$5.50 .....	_____	_____
*Logo Keyring — 1/\$2.00 .....	_____	_____
*Ballpoint pens — blue/silver: 1/\$2.00, 4/\$5.00 .....	_____	_____
*6' Metal Tape Measure — white with blue logo 1/\$3.00 .....	_____	_____
*Dash Cash — emergency coin dispenser, white plastic/blue logo, with adhesive to mount on dashboard 1/\$5.50 .....	_____	_____
*Bumper Stickers — "Love Thy Neighbor, Tune Thy Piano"; yellow, white on blue; 1/\$.50 .....	_____	_____
<b>Jewelry Total</b> .....	_____	\$ _____

## Here's How To Order . . .

Mark quantities and totals in appropriate spaces and total at right. Enclose payment and mail to address below. This form may be photocopied as necessary. Please note that logo items are sold only to Registered Technician Members of the Piano Technicians Guild.

**Piano Technicians Guild, Inc.**  
**9140 Ward Parkway**  
**Kansas City, MO 64114**

**Registered Technician** YES ☐ NO ☐

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State or Province \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zip/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Chapter \_\_\_\_\_ Non-member \_\_\_\_\_  
 Member's Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Business Aids Total ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Logo Total ..... \_\_\_\_\_  
 Publications Total ..... \_\_\_\_\_  
 Jewelry Total ..... \_\_\_\_\_  
 Subtotal ..... \_\_\_\_\_  
 Shipping & handling (see table at left) ..... \_\_\_\_\_  
 Missouri residents only add 6.125% state sales tax ..... \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total enclosed ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping And Handling Charges If

Order Totals:	Below \$5.00	\$5 to \$9.99	\$10 to \$14.99	\$15 to \$24.99	\$25 or more
Add:	\$2.00	\$2.50	\$3.00	\$3.50	\$4.00

**\*Sold only to Registered Technicians**

# "Wurlitzer really stands behind their products."

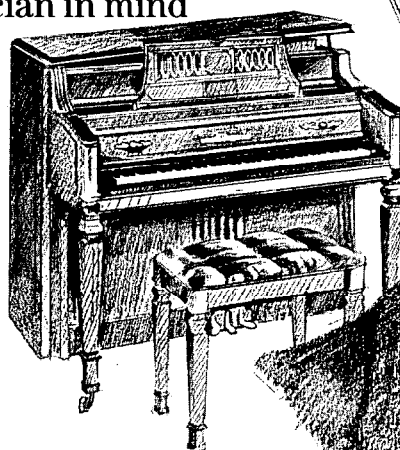
**Rick Sletten—piano technician,  
performing musician.**

As an independent piano technician, Rick Sletten works on a lot of different brands. He prefers to service ours... because Wurlitzer keeps the technician in mind when establishing service programs and policies.

"Wurlitzer has gone the whole nine yards. I never have any problems... with technical information or parts. If you're working in a customer's home, you can call Wurlitzer toll free and get technical help. With a lot of pianos, you're on your own."

But Rick Sletten likes more than our service. He likes our pianos as well. "I've been to the factory. You can see the precision work. You can see the quality."

By building pianos with consistently high quality and by providing service hot lines, we make a piano technician's life a little easier.



J. MARTIN  
-1985-

## WURLITZER®

DeKalb, Illinois 60115

Jan.

# UPDATE

1987

*Published Monthly For Members of The Piano Technicians Guild, Inc.*

## New Officers

### Phoenix, AZ

Gary Miles, *President*  
Jeff Turner, *Vice President*  
Fred Smith, *Secretary*  
Gary Gracey, *Treasurer*

### Richmond, VA

Tom Cobble, *President*  
Jesse Williams, *Vice President*  
Alan Hallmark, *Secretary*  
Dale Whitehead, *Treasurer*  
Doug Wurz, *Board Member*

### Sacramento Valley, CA

Mark Mestman, *President*  
Bill Spurlock, *Vice President*  
Yvonne Ashmore, *Treasurer*  
Mark Stivers, *Secretary*

### Vermont

Richard C. Giroux, *President*  
Emily Goya Hilbert, *Vice President*  
Jack F. Phillips, *Secretary*  
Richard W. Johnson, *Treasurer*

### Rogue Valley, OR

Tom Lowell, *President*  
David Hanger, *Vice President*  
Nate Bridges, *Secretary*  
Frank Byers, *Treasurer*

### Tucson, AZ

Walt Brown, *President*  
Kathy Kattija-Ari, *Vice President*  
Bob Anderson, *Secretary*  
Lila Joiner, *Newsletter Editor, Treasurer*

## March Is 'Music In Our Schools' Month

### M. B. Hawkins President

In an effort to help return the piano to its rightful position within the spectrum of music, March was chosen as the month of focus. The reason for this choice is that March has been designated as "Music in Our Schools" Month by its sponsor, the Music Educators National Conference. This year's theme for Music in Our Schools is "America the Musical."

Members of the Piano Technicians Guild have an excellent opportunity to complement this program and contribute to the overall promotion of music and the use of the piano specifically. To do this, I am

requesting our membership to arrange to present programs in schools during March which will emphasize the piano, its playing and its care. There are thousands of schools across the United States which will be more than happy to have you in to present a program to their student. All it will require is a little initiative on your part. Members of the Teacher Relations Committee and many others will be glad to assist you with preparations. We have film available from the Home Office and chapters are encouraged to become involved in this project.

The Music Teachers National Association and the National Guild of Piano  
*Continued on next page*

## Newsletter Committee Stresses Cooperation

### Richard Beaton Chairman, Chapter Newsletter Committee

Greetings from your new Chapter Newsletter Committee! You will be hearing from the others in the Update from time to time. They are Vivian Brooks, coordinating liaison, Richard West and Kathleen Voss.

I've been advised by President Marshall Hawkins that we are charged with promoting chapter newsletters and sending newsletters to small chapters outside their immediate area, possibly intra-regional, thereby stimulating interest in chapter activity.

Let's take first things

first. Gracie Wagoner, Central West RVP, recently took a survey of her region to find out how many chapters were putting out newsletters. Only five of 19 chapters answered yes. There were 10 nos. If the same holds true for all regions, there is a lot of room for improvement here.

What makes a good newsletter? Just about anything you can think of that is of interest to chapter membership. If your chapter is small, a good idea is to assign the job to the secretary. He or she sends out the meeting notices. This is a good time to add a few more comments. It can even become your newsletter!

*Continued on page 4*

## Schools...

Teachers have been requested to encourage their membership to emphasize to their students during the early months of this leading up to March, how the history of various cultures virtually unfolds through published piano literature.

I have positive responses from each of these organizations. As a matter of fact, the January issue of *the American Music Teacher* officially indicates MTNA's support of our promotional program to bring the piano center stage once again.

The piano manufacturers have been requested to assist in this effort, and although I do not know yet how they will involve themselves, I have positive responses from most manufacturers.

Fellow members, the ball is in our court; let's not muff it. I frequently hear about not enough public focus. Well, here it is all over again. *You get by giving.* We give by presenting programs during Music in Our Schools Month to help promote music and specifically the piano and its care. We have the support, now let's do our thing. It will not all come from the outside. So far, I have four schools scheduled already for presentations during March. If we multiply the average class size of 25 to 35 by four, that is approximately 140 households

that will potentially get the message. Let's multiply that by just 1,000 of our members and we are looking at the possibility of reaching 140,000 households. We may not do this good, but on the other hand, we may do much better. Add to that the emphasis which will be received from the

MTNA and National Guild of Piano Teachers input along with manufacturer input and we have a win-win situation. But for sure this will not happen if we as individual members sit back and expect "George" to do it. Let's go for it. What we *get* will surely be worthwhile!

## Ad To Appear In MTNA Magazine

The advertisement at right will appear in the January issue of *The American Music Teacher*, a publication of the Music Teachers National Association. In conjunction with "Music in Our Schools Month" (see story at left), the advertisement offers the expert services of Piano Technicians Guild members as a classroom resource.

The January advertisement will be followed by a February/March insertion promoting activities of the Teacher Relations Committee at MTNA's March convention in New York City. The committee will operate a booth in MTNA's exhibit hall, and also present a showcase on "Professional Piano Care."

A future advertisement in *The American Music Teacher* will honor the winner of the PTG Foundation/MTNA Scholarship.

## We Can Help!

We can help your students get to know their pianos better and appreciate them more! Registered Piano Technicians Guild members in your area can conduct classroom presentations and provide informative brochures to help students understand how their piano works and how to take care of it.

*Learn more about  
"Professional Piano Care"  
-visit Booth #63 in New York  
and see our showcase at  
8:30 a.m. Monday, Mar. 23!*

For the name of the nearest  
Registered Tuner-Technician,  
look for this logo, or contact:



Piano Technicians Guild, Inc.  
9140 Ward Parkway  
Kansas City, MO 64114

## Let's Use The Logo!

### Willem Blees, RTT

This past summer at the convention, we passed new Bylaws that limited the use of the logo to only RTTs. In the *Update* of the November issue of the *Journal*, there was an article explaining that the logo could only be used in advertising, and

that on Guild stationery and brochures, the logo is to be identified as a symbol of a Registered Tuner-Technician. As the article states, "...it...also puts more pressure on the individual craftsman to use the logo in their advertisement. If the logo is to have any meaning to the public and to the rest of the music industry, it must be promoted."

About two years ago, I wrote an article in the *Update*

promoting the use of Yellow Pages advertising. Now more than ever has this listing become even more important. If you have not changed your listing in the Yellow Pages to show that you are a Registered Tuner-Technician of the Piano Technicians Guild and include the logo, you would be defeating the purpose of the Bylaw change. You have earned the title and the logo. Use and display them proudly.

## Chapter News And Notes

### Dale Heikkinen Chairman, Chapter Management And Achievement Committee

#### Northwest Arkansas

"Does anyone have any ideas about the value and/or rareness of this strange beast?" writes Denele Campbell. She was in the home of a customer who had two old uprights and was trying to decide which one to keep and which one to restore. The piano in question was made by the Ithaca Piano Co., Ithaca, NY, with a "duplex" patent issued in 1880 under the serial number 1227. "It looked normal at first glance," she wrote. But it had two complete sets of strings! The second set is mounted on the backside of the soundboard and evidently exerts counterpressure on the plate, since there are no support posts on the back of the frame. One would have to pluck the second set of strings in order to tune them since there aren't any dampers. The chapter might be interested in some outside input on this one.

#### Oklahoma

According to Chapter President Ben Bailey, Oklahoma is on the map and busily making preparations for the upcoming South Central Regional Seminar to be held in Oklahoma City March 6-8. Michael Yeager is seminar chairman.

#### Dallas

According to *The Piano Wire*, the Texas State Association Convention hosted by the Houston Chapter was a big success.

Dr. Rick Brown was unanimously voted in as a new member of the Dallas Chapter. He practices medicine and is a good amateur musician who has a serious interest in piano technology as a hobby. His

unpublished treatise on piano scaling has been sent to chapter members for scrutiny and he has offered his services on scaling free to those who are interested in grand piano scale design.

In August, the Dallas Chapter had a night out at the Texas Rangers baseball game. The Dallas Piano Technicians Guild was mentioned in attendance on the teams display board in centerfield. The chapter didn't mention who the opposing team was or who won.

#### El Paso

Guy Nichols bought a fire-damaged Kimball baby grand for \$25.00. He donated the piano to the El Paso Chapter for a chapter rebuilding project. Viewing and restoration plans will begin in November.

#### Twin Cities

Thanks at Thanks-giving for...

...customers who have become friends over the years.

...cities that print up-to-date city maps, and all the polite people who have given correct direction when I've been lost.

...people who pay their bills on time.

...dogs that bark when you drive in, but then walk over to have their ears scratched.

...cats that don't shed.

...PTG members who will listen to your piano problems, answer questions and give the moral support that one sometimes needs.

From *The Temperament Strip* by Chuck White.

#### Denver

Since the Ivory cement wafers are difficult to obtain, some members of the chapter are using Duco Cement, with a touch-up white powder. If the ivory was put on with a wafer before, white

paper can be used with Duco on each side. One would still use a brass ivory clamp. Also, one can file the head 45 degrees underneath where it contracts the tail to allow for more whiting and Duco.

#### South Bay

Through the use of slides, Claudia Ellison gave a fascinating tour-guide through the piano factories of Europe. Did you know that Schimmel uses many of its scraps of wood; for instance, the strips of wood in the grand rib are aligned within a core before veneering. That Grotrian-Steinweg has uprights with diagonal "back-posts" that are really cut out of the back of one piece of laminated wood, the triangular cut-outs allowing for the escapement of sound. That Roslau wire is polished as it is drawn through long boxes of sand with continuously rotate. That Bluthner was taken over by the state of East Germany after the war and each of its pianos is virtually made by hand. That Renner throws away 80 percent of its production for not meeting factory specs. That Steinway and Sons of Hamburg makes each rim from over a dozen continuous laminations, each saved off a giant log. The rims are then stored for six months. Three different voicers work on each piano to achieve the "Steinway Sound." Each piano that is made has already been ordered and sold. That Feurich uses one-piece ivories on request, but plastic otherwise. Each trichord note is independent of the next. There are no shared strings, but one loop and one tie.

#### San Diego

After more than five years, the chapter has fully rebuilt a Steinway studio piano.

*Continued on next page*



## Chapter News ...

They are hoping to sell the piano for \$2,700.00 to supplement the chapter treasury.

### Monterey Bay

This chapter remains at the forefront of chapter activity. And in its latest venture, it is sending the first of many newsletters to piano teachers in the area. By opening up this channel, the chapter hopes to serve several purposes. They realize there may be many pianists who might be interested in the activ-

ities and technical sessions the Guild offers every month.

The newsletter prints articles regarding piano technology which can be informative for all pianists.

The chapter hopes that this communication will become a two-way street. As president of the chapter, Russ Brown says, "As piano technicians, we always need to know what pianists need from their piano, and we would like to know what pianists in our area want from piano technicians in terms of service or information.

Their newsletter is being delivered to 325 homes and offices throughout Santa Cruz, San Benito and Monterey counties. The people chosen to receive the newsletter are individuals known to have an active interest in music (especially piano music). They include private piano teachers, members and staff of local symphonies and orchestras, church music ministers, college music faculties and performers.

### Seattle

"Doing the impossible...or at least the highly unlikely," was the title of a topic on one of those precious pianos that must be saved. The instrument was a 1903 Conover upright with four detachable legs, a removable soundboard, and an action that was mostly dust. Such a situation was worth documenting with slides and a speech by Michael Reiter of Tacoma. The piano received a new pinblock, a new action using only the original brackets and rails, and a year's worth of time.

In *The Tuner's Beat*, an alternative to the key dip tools now on the market was illustrated by Mitch Kiel. It is a tapered sharp key dip tool with reference marks made at 1/8", 1/16" or as needed, and can be slid in and out until flush with a dipped sharp.

### Eastern Washington

Members of the Eastern Washington Chapter manned a table at the June statewide convention of the Music Teachers Association held at Eastern Washington University in Cheney, WA where they distributed information about the Guild and piano maintenance. Listings of PTG member in the entire state of Washington made a popular exhibit where many teachers checked to see if their technicians were named. A drawing for three items (a padded, adjustable piano stool, a Frana metronome and a book for pianists on pedaling technique) was held. The chapter considered this a very successful endeavor as a means of informing music teachers about qualified piano technicians and proper care of their instruments.

Members of the chapter continue donating piano maintenance to the public radio station, KPBX, for which they receive on-air recognition.

### Chapter Programs

*New Hampshire* -- "Time/cost analysis in rebuilding," William Ballard.

*Maine* -- "Factory tour of the Falcone Piano Factory in Haverhill, MA

*Connecticut* -- "Key frame fitting," Paul Monachino.

*LI Cristofori* -- "Troublesome problems related to regulating Acrosonic piano," William Traxler.

*Syracuse* -- "Bass-tenor-treble bridge recapping," Dan Fusco.

*Pittsburgh* -- "Refinishing," Rob Marshall.

*Lehigh Valley* -- "Demonstration of effects of regulation on performance," Pauline Fox.

*Philadelphia* -- "Troubleshooting the common spinet problems," James Chadwick.

*Roanoke* -- "History of the Roanoke, VA, Chapter," Stan Robertson.

*Memphis* -- "Tuning tips and tests," Asa Wilkerson.

## Newsletters...

Encourage your membership to send in ideas. If they don't, a few phone calls will give you subject matter. Invite one of your specialists to write a technical article. Got something to be proud of? Tell it in the newsletter. Did you figure out a new and better way to fix that sticky key? Got a beef you'd like to share? Get it off your chest in the newsletter! Maybe you will generate a healthy exchange of ideas.

There are members in thinly populated areas where piano tuners are working in isolation from other tuners. Some never see another tuner except at meetings or seminars! These people are starving for mail and will read your newsletter from cover to cover.

I've started receiving newsletters from a number of chapters. They are all great. Some have super names and come out of a computer with graphics, etc. Others are more plain, but they all do one thing - communicate! Let's all get into the act. Don't keep those good ideas to yourself. Share them in a chapter newsletter! And please send a copy to the members of your newsletter committee.



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