

The Buckeye Backcheck

Newsletter of the Columbus Chapter of the Piano Technicians Guild

Volume 32 Issue 1 January/February 2007

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We enjoyed a wonderful meal and fellowship at our chapter's holiday dinner meeting in January. Buca di Beppo did a bang up job of catering to our needs throughout the evening through the courteous service of our waitress. I doubt that anyone left the restaurant hungry or wanting for anything. Those in attendance included (in no particular order):

Ron & Beth Kenreich, Mike & Mae Hill, Bill & Cindy Golden, Dwight Hansen, Matt Scavo, Dean Nedveck, Mike Varrone, Kim Hoessly, Bob & Lou Grubb (aka, The Grubbs), Vic & Ramona Wolfe, Chris & Barbara Altenburg.



Much business, both piano related and otherwise, was discussed, and we moved the world forward toward universal piano ownership and lifetime employment for each of us.

I will be unable to attend February's meeting as Barbara and I will be in New York City visiting my mother around that time.

Please peruse your PTG Magazine for upcoming seminars. They are very good resources for continuing education in our careers, not to mention enjoyable to attend for other reasons. Having said that, I will probably not be able to attend our national convention this year.

Technical topics that could be discussed at February's, and future, meetings include:

1. Hammershank replacement - discussion and demonstration of the three methods generally understood.
2. Wire replacement, wire splicing.
3. Identifying beats and their use in tuning, especially in determining a good temperament.
4. Lost motion - identifying and adjusting - and when to leave it alone.
5. Pedal lyre repair for grands.
6. The difference between a concert level tuning and an acceptable commercial level tuning.
7. How long should it take to tune a piano?

The list could be expanded to include a great many topics. The above are just beginning suggestions.

These could be of value to newer technicians and would be a way for experienced techs to strut their stuff.

Chris

Thanks to Matt Scavo for the picture

PTG MARC

Don't forget about the PTG Mid-Atlantic conference, April 19 - 22 at the Valley Forge Hilton in King of Prussia PA. The Technical Institute will be one of the finest, including Franz Mohr, Rick Baldassin, and Anne Garee. The exhibit hall will feature more than 45 booths.

Visit at www.ptgmarc.org

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From Kim Hoessly ...

It was brought to my attention that everyone may not have seen the chapter by-laws since its last revision (if at all), so I sent a PDF to the membership last month. I believe I have everyone's email, but if I have missed someone, please let me know so I can get it to you.

We should probably revise these again to conform with some of the changes in the National By-Laws (see the Supplement to the September 2006 PTG Journal which you received in the fall).

Also, I received this letter (at right) from Ancott Associates. For those not familiar with this publication, this company out of Cincinnati publishes a Music Product Directory which lists Average National Retail prices for Acoustic and Electric pianos. Very useful when you are doing estimates and appraisals. Not sure who or what will fill this gap.

From Mark Ritchie: A Mystery Key

A set of keys came in to the shop from out of town, and I can't say that I remember seeing a key like this. I put a note in the returned set asking what this came from and the purpose of the second capstan. I never did get a response.

Tom Harr and I have at least a theory on this but don't have a definitive answer to the make or model or function exactly.

So, the Buckeye Backcheck is having a contest for the most clever, funny, or even correct answer, with a swell prize being offered from the workshop of Tom Harr. Email your response to Mark or the Editor, or come prepared with your answer at the next meeting.



ANCOTT ASSOCIATES

P.O. Box 46532 Cincinnati, OH 45246 (513) 772-2282

January 23, 2007

Dear ANCOTT Friend:

This is to notify you that I have made the decision to retire full time. Consequently, I will no longer be publishing the *Music Product Directory*. As a member of the music industry for more than forty years, the last twenty publishing the Directory, it has been a real pleasure working with and serving so many wonderful friends. Our publications have provided comprehensive product information to industry members throughout the world.

We have tried to find a buyer for our business but have not been successful in that effort. Therefore, the recent Fall/Winter Issue (Vol. 21 No. 2) shipped back in October will be the final MPD issue.

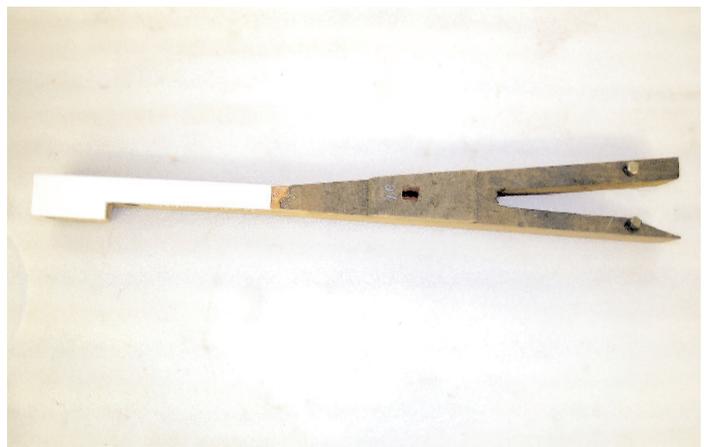
For those who have missed a renewal or need an extra book, we currently have a limited inventory of books available. Orders should be mailed to ANCOTT Associates, PO Box 46532, Cincinnati, OH 45246 and include payment by check made out to ANCOTT Associates. Orders will be filled on a *first come basis*. The prices below are for single issue books and include domestic shipping and handling fees:

Acoustic Piano Edition.....\$24.00
Electronic Keyboard Edition.....\$23.00
Discontinued Keyboard Edition.....\$50.00

I thank all of our loyal subscribers, many who have been with us from our very first issue back in 1986. Your support and kind words about our publications have truly been appreciated. I also thank the many contributors who have made the *Music Product Directory* possible. The participation and trust extended to me by so many valued colleagues provided the encouragement for me to serve our wonderful music community.

With Warm Regards,
ANCOTT Associates

Dan Kobida



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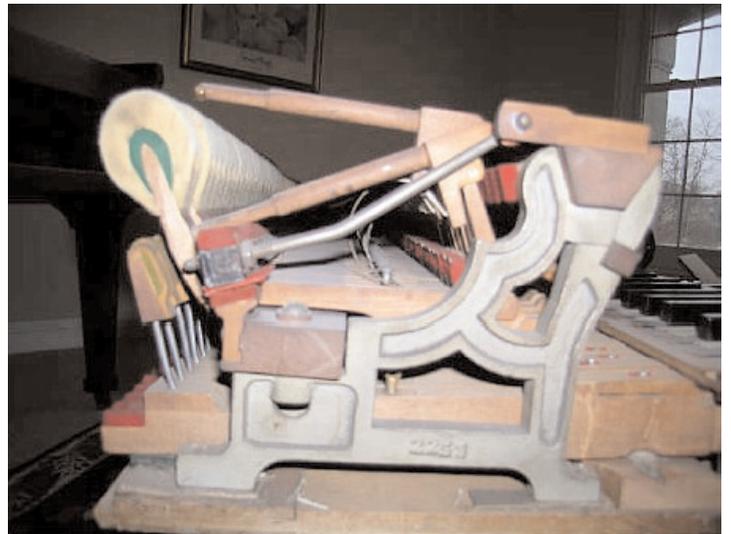
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The Staib-Abendschien Co., New York

The Grand Action

Mark Ritchie

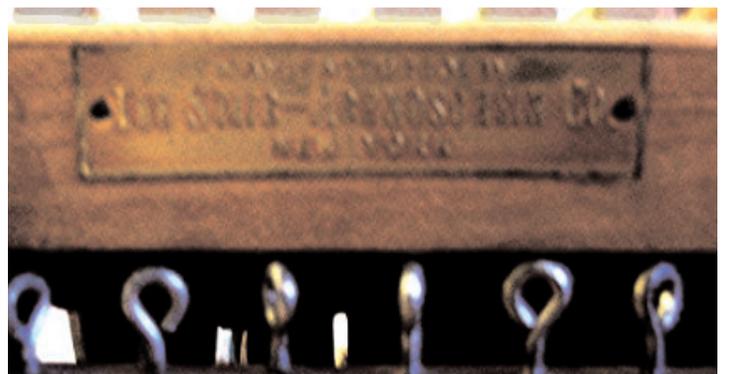
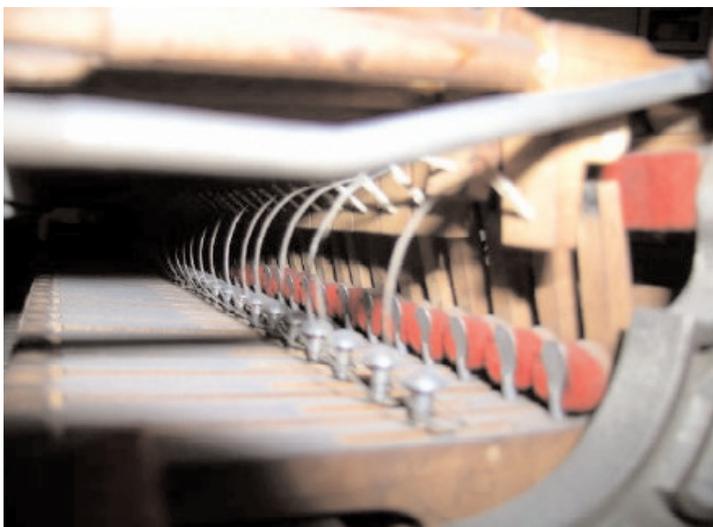
I finally made my way back to the 1922 Ludwig grand that contained the Staib-Abendschien action, this time with camera in hand. The instrument is in generally poor condition but tunable and playable. I guess the photos will show the simple concept of this action. It is not nearly as complex as the previously shown vertical “Mastertouch” action by the same maker. (June 2006)



*The action frame is screwed to the keybed.
Soft pedal function raises hammer rail.*



*The basic wippen. Note coil spring on the jack;
leaf spring attached to hammer butt.*



The brass plate identifies the action maker

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FROM THE ARTS JOURNAL ...

What's our problem with the piano? Keyboard virtuosi now focus careers on Europe

By William Littler, The Toronto Star

LUCERNE, SWITZERLAND—Like many another North American city, Toronto used to play host to piano recitals almost the way a dog plays host to fleas. But many artists are focusing more attention these days on their European than their North American careers.

Lang Lang recently acquired an apartment in Berlin, where Canada's Louie Lortie also resides. Ottawa's Angela Hewitt has made London her headquarters for years. And Lucerne has become home to one of the most controversial of émigré pianists from the former Soviet Union, Andrei Gavrilov.

Lucerne isn't exactly a metropolis, but for a solid week each November, it crowns the piano king, not just in the world-class concert hall of its Culture and Congress Centre but in restaurants and bars across town.

The piano is actually the focus of one of three annual Lucerne festivals, the first of them an Easter Festival devoted primarily to sacred music and early music, the second a comprehensive Summer Festival attracting some of the world's greatest orchestras.

So why is there a piano problem on the other side of the Atlantic?

"There are so few recital series now," admitted Lang Lang, "that I usually have to ask the local symphony orchestra to sponsor me."

"I agree with Lang Lang," said Hélène Grimaud. We don't cultivate the public the way we used to in the past."

"The culprit today is the recording industry," she says. "People listen for the wrong things. In a concert it has

to feel as if the music is being written as you hear it. It has to be transcendent. It isn't just about hitting all the right notes."

Breathtaking virtuosity is clearly not dead, as Evgeny Kissin also demonstrated in his performance of a *Fantasia on Themes from Bizet's Carmen*, as did Lang Lang in his performance of the souped-up Vladimir Horowitz version of Liszt's *Second Hungarian Rhapsody*. Piano playing doesn't get much more spectacular than this.

But as Grimaud argues, for their less spectacular colleagues, sustaining a career has become more challenging in a culture accustomed to "discarding things to try something else."

Like other observers, Grimaud feels the piano needs a nourishing environment. That is where events such as the Lucerne festival come in, putting a spotlight on the instrument and its leading interpreters.

But to Andrei Gavrilov, "Music and industry are words that do not go with each other. Making music is like having a conversation with God. It should be life-changing."

Hopelessly idealistic? Not to anyone who heard the wildly original way Gavrilov played Chopin Nocturnes. Recitals able to offer this kind of music making are surely not going to die.

Read the complete article at:

http://www.thestar.com/NASApp/cs/ContentServer?page-name=thestar/Layout/Article_Type1&c=Article&cid=1164884348894&call_pageid=968867495754&col=969483191630



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www.ptgcolumbus.org

Upcoming Events

Chapter Meeting

Tuesday February 20, 7:30 pm
Location TBA

Organ Recital by Matt Scavo

Tuesday, March 13, 12:15 pm
First Congregational Church, 444 E. Broad
(Part of their lunchtime "Tuesdays at First" series)

Chapter Meeting

Tuesday March 20, 7:30 pm
Hosted by Ben Wiant, 3299 Dublin Rd.

Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference

April 19-22, 2007 King-of-Prussia, PA
www.ptgmarc.org



PTG 50th Anniversary Convention

June 20-24 2007, Kansas City

From Kathy Maxwell ...

Here's two ways you can save money on your trip to Kansas City this summer:

Receive a PTGF Scholarship. Anyone who has successfully completed two of the three RPT exams is eligible to apply. Download an application from www.ptg.org/conv/2007. The deadline is April 1.

Become an RPT. Anyone who has become an RPT since last year's convention automatically receives a complimentary free registration. Check the new RPT box on your registration form or type in "comp" on your online form.



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Comments, articles, and advertising requests may be sent to the editor.

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