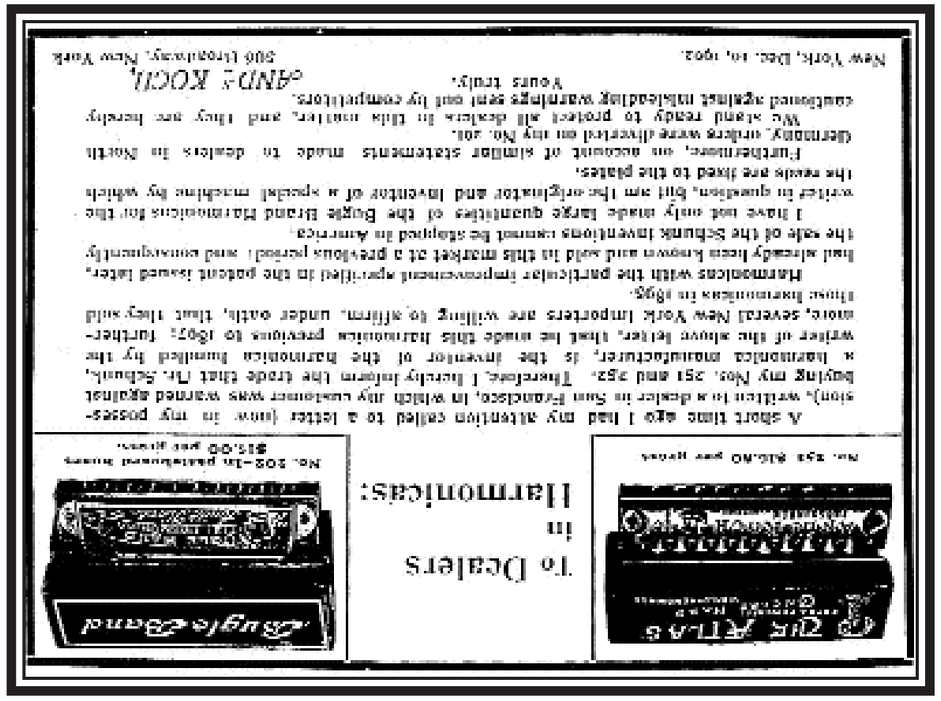


The Trumpet Call
Harmonica Collectors International
P.O. Box 6081
Chesterfield, MO 63006-6081

September 2003

The Trumpet Call

Vol 5. Issue 3

Dedicated to the collection, preservation and sharing of information for the Harmonica collector
A Publication of Harmonica Collectors International

The BRAVO
History

HISTORY OF THE HOHNER PYRAMID ROTATING DISPLAY

I thought that with the article on restoration of the display, a little history and associated data was in order.

The Hohner wooden rotating display was first introduced in 1911 (we think). I have seen models at the Hohner Museum, made of metal by both Hohner and Koch and believe theirs to be a much earlier vintage. The pyramid stands approx. 32" high, including the base, which is 11" x 10 1/2" and holds a large spring and a crank to wind it.

Cost of these great displays run the gambit from $300 to $1,000 depending on the following: Condition, operation, original crank handle, how much hardware is included and in one case, rarity. This is the 1926 Philly model. The display units in my collection include four different models. They are distinguished by the wording at the top and the prices on each side.

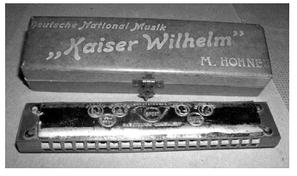
1. Top: "Over 54 Years", 8 million sold annually. Side prices start at 25 cents.
2. Top: "Over 54 Years", 10 million sold annually. Side prices start at 50 cents.
3. Top: "Over 68 Years", over 25 million sold annually. Side prices start at 50 cents.
4. Top: "Over 68 Years", 25 million sold annually. Side prices start at 50 cents, plus Grand Prix Philadelphia 1925 with two mediations. This is the most rare of the four.

Item #2 has some unusual make up of harmonicas and also a higher price structure than the other 54-year pyramid, the prices are at the 68-year level. Here are a few of the models listed on the pyramid that you can research. If you can find data and report back to me, I will put the information in the next Newsletter. (It is sort of a research project). Models to look for: 132, 346, 1896, 605, 3CND, 152, 153, 146, 254 and 453. Have Fun!
The Editor

The UP TO DATE
Latest Finds

LATEST FINDS

M Hohner Kaiser Wilhelm, Deutsche National Musik, 20-hole tremolo with 4-tab cover plate and a sport logo. Comes with a hinged box, 6" x 1 1/8".



M. Hohner Capathnkam, 16-double hole tremolo, star in logo, 5 1/2" x 1". Made for the Greek(?) market. Has a zinc reed plate and comes with a box

C.H. Weiss, Model 24 (9), The Worlds Triumph, 10-hole diatonic, 4" x 1" with box.

Gretsch, Playboy, 10-hole diatonic, 4" x 1", made in Germany. A very rare Gretsch model with box.

Harmonica As Toys

The United States Board of General Appraisers, in a decision on May 25, sustained the protest of Geo. Borgfeldt & Co., the "Wholesale Dept. Store," that harmonicas costing less than 1 mark (24¢) were dutiable as toys. The authorities cited B.A. 1003 and 4679 to fortify their opinion.

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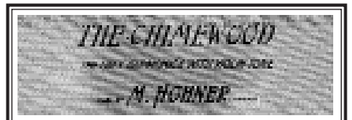
- The ECHO - Letters to the Editor
- The CHIMEWOOD - Submitted Articles
- WORLD RENOWN - People, Places & Things
- The BRAVO - History
- OLD STANDBY - Repairs, Restoration, Inventory
- UP-TO-DATE - Latest Finds
- The WARBLER - Special Announcements
- The TUCKAWAY - Buy, Sell, Trade
- ATTA BOY - Member Information

* For a complete set of past issues send $20 + $2.50 S/H for each year, 1998-1999, 1999-2000, 2000-2001, and 2001-2002 available. Overseas shipping cost will vary.



The CHIMEWOOD
Submitted Articles

The "Basch" PIPEOLION
(Article submitted by Don Basch)

Excitement arrived at the Basch household recently when a package was delivered from eBay auctioneer Shirley in Janesville, Wisconsin. Don is a Charter Member of HCI and continues to expand his personal harmonica collection. Inside the package was a wonderful PIPEOLION harmonica manufactured around 1907 by Ch. Weiss in Trossingen, Germany.

Don had won the piece over several other excited bidders in a recent eBay auction. Shirley later revealed that she had acquired the piece at an estate auction a few months earlier in the Janesville area. She had paid a mere $155 for it (or about ten percent of Don's final cost) and unbelievably, she had only one other person bidding against her. Goes to show you there still are opportunities out there for finding rare harmonicas at bargain prices. Don only wishes he had been at that earlier auction to bid against her.

The Pipeolion is an unusual early piece with a blow reed plus a draw reed assembled inside each of ten brass trumpet tubes or horns extending out the curved back of its rosewood base. This is the first known attempt at such a design. Don's find is slightly different from the example on display in the wonderful Alan Bates Collection at the National Music Museum. The "Basch" Pipeolion has a two-piece horn construction with each trumpet horn formed with a rolled collar attaching it onto the tube. The Bates piece has a one-piece style with each trumpet tube formed as a single piece.

Communication with HCI experts Alan Bates and Harland Crain have not determined why or when the construction difference was introduced. Functionally both

work the same. If anyone out there can shed some light on this question please do give me an email. The mouth side of the wood base is covered in nickel plated metal. Lettering is impressed with gold paint into the wood base proclaiming: "Full organ tone; Patent applied for; Pipeolion Trade Mark; and Made by Ch. Weiss." The seldom-photographed underside of this piece has the full music score with notes for "Home Sweet Home" nicely imprinted in gold. This supposedly provided the player with his/her music score readily at hand.

Fortunately, Don's Pipeolion came with its original box in remarkably good condition for its age. Examples with the original box are considered quite rare. The blue/gray box is hinged to reveal a bright red interior. The identical large colorful gold trimmed label is applied to both

The OLD STANDBY
Repairs - Restoration - Inventory

HOHNER PYRAMID DISPLAY HARDWARD MODIFICATION

The wooden rotating display stand is one of the most dramatic and dynamic displays ever designed for the retail trade. The display has a separate base with a windup spring and crank. The stand holds nine harps on each of its four sides. It utilizes two "L" shaped screws and a steel spring for each harmonica. Many of the pyramids have some of the hardware missing.

I have looked into having the steel springs made but the best deal I could find was for a minimum order of 500 at $1 - $1.25 each. If anyone has a source or if we can get a collective requirement of 500 springs, I will look into it further.

However, the "L" shaped screws can be replaced and will hold the harps without the springs. You can purchase #1534, 1 11/16" screw hooks at Walmart or a hardware store. It is a lot of work, but the result is excellent (the idea, by the way, is the brain child of Rick Nielsen).

Step #1: You must straighten out the hook end. I used a vise and hammer.Step #2: Once flattened, you must decide where to make the "L" curve. I used the vise again to bend and a hammer to flatten the ends a bit.

Step #3: You need to paint the screws. I use a spray can of brown enamel to match the wood color. You may have to drill new holds, since many times the old screws have broken off in the display. Putting a thin coat of clear varnish over the wood to preserve the lettering may be a good idea, although, at this time it is still under consideration. You do not want to alter the original too much.
Here is a picture of the hooks, before and after.

H. Crain

The ECHO
Letters to the Editor

NOTES OF A HARMONICA COLLECTOR IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
By Donald Kern

Harmonica Collecting in Southern California can be challenging. While in today's world more and more reliance on E-bay and the Internet is becoming the norm, it doesn't satisfy the feeling of the actual article held in my hand. To be able to test a harmonica before purchasing is important to me. I am a harmonica player as well as a collector and one of my criteria for selecting a harmonica is that it be in good working order.

My collection began as a means of surviving the boredom of following my wife in and out of collectible shops. To pique my interest I decided I was going to collect an item which would help me pass the time and focus my attention. The idea of harmonicas immediately came to mind.

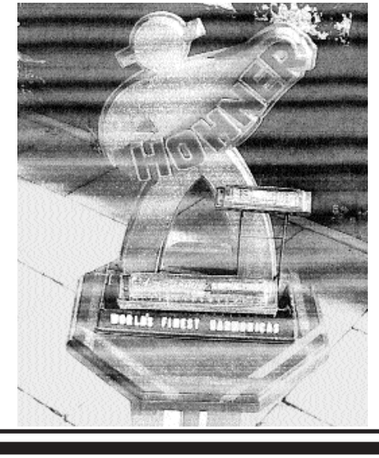
The sense of challenge is to find those in good repair. Going from store to store in Southern California, harmonicas are not in plentiful supply. I have had to practice patience, waiting for that special find to surface. Prices are also a limiting factor. Being in a large urban area, costs are high generally speaking. I have found that traveling out of the greater Los Angeles area to outlying small towns helps not only in finding that special harmonica but also involves lower prices.

My wife and I make a day of it, driving 50 to 100 miles away from Los Angeles to search for something new or different. We find it relaxing to get out of the city in hope of finding something. I also attend antique toy shows when I can.

Regardless of the outlet, its' the hunt that's important as much as the object itself. There's a sense of adventure, not knowing if that day I will be successful. And if I am, the rest of the day is elevated. I am caught up in continually turning over the prize in my hands, testing it for tone, waiting anxiously to get home where I can check my resources in dating the harmonica. Pouring over past issues of The Trumpet Call becomes my tireless pursuit.

Although I have been collecting for several years, my collection is small. Hearing about other collectors' experiences is interesting and educational. It's also a way of connecting with a memory of my father who played in a 30-man harmonica band for a short time in the 1920's. Every timeI find harmonicas pre WWII, I think of how my father might have played one just like it.

So for all harmonica collectors out there, I'm sending greetings from the West Coast. Happy hunting to you all and thanks for your thanks for your contributions to my knowledge.

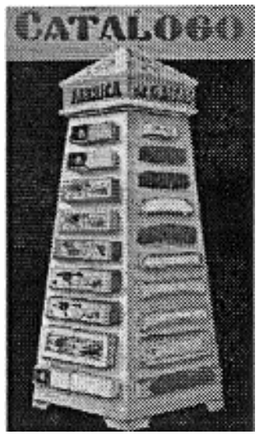


A great find for Harry Ridge

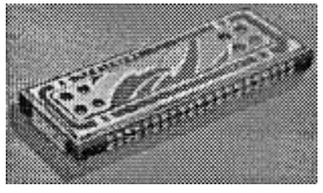
The BRAVO
History

The Hering History
(2000)

Hering Harmonicas of Brazil, is proud to announce the introduction of their complete line of harmonicas and related accessories to the U.S. and Canadian markets.

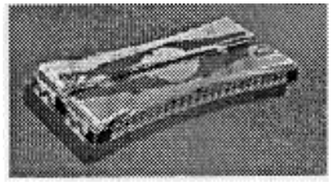


Founded by Mr. Alfred Hering in 1923 in the city of Blumenau, in the south of Brazil, the Hering company has long enjoyed a reputation as a world leader in the manufacture of fine harmonicas.

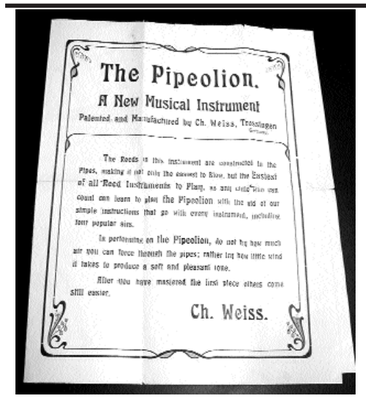


After the death of Mr. Hering, the company was sold in the middle of the 60's to the M. Hohner Company of Trossingen, Germany. At that time, Hering was also manufacturing accordions and a variety of musical toys. In 1979, a Brazilian group bought the Hering Company and Hohner left. Brazil.

After 16 years, in 1996, a group of investors, with Mr. Alberto Bertolazzi as a leader, purchased the corporation. Mr/ Bertolazzi and his management team, with a visin of producing prducts of the highest quality, returned the company to its origin, as a producer of harmonicas as its sole interest.
Many improvemnts have been incorporated into the already high quality product line, including



attractive packaging. The selection of harmonica models has been increased to cover all the market needs - both chromatic and diatonic, and sprecialty instruments including tremolo and octave tunings, student models and mini-harmonicas.



the inside and outside of the cover. It pictures the Pipeolion in all its glory and claims it to be "The new musical instrument" and "The grand Solo Instrument" with a cherub heralding that "Anyone can play it!" The manufacturer Mr. Ch Weiss is proudly pictured and described as "Always Harmonious," whatever that meant.

The slightly yellowed four page original instruction sheet that also came with the piece was prepared by Frank Scribner and is copyrighted 1907. It features a cover article by Ch Weiss claiming the Pipeolion to be "the easiest of all reed instruments to play." Inside, there are detailed instructions for how to play it, followed by two pages of blow/draw schematics for playing four songs.

The Pipeolion
...What a wonderful centerpiece for any harmonica collection.

By Don Basch
(Email: djbinmn@aol.com)

SOME CAUTIONS FOR REED CHANGING SUCCESS

Reed changing is not for the klutz-type repairperson. It takes a lot of patience, and finesse, and determination. Many repair technicians do not want to bother with the task you are about to begin; and there are certain tools, techniques, and accessories you should have available to use for this reed changing operation, in order to have good success and satisfaction.

First, of course, is a tool kit. Tool kits are available from Bill Romel, and F & R Farrell Company. (John Infande has suspended making tool kits.) By ordering Richard I. Smith's instruction brochure you will have a good guide for procedure, and suggestions for making simple tools and jigs that will help you do this job.

Once you have removed the broken, disfunctioning reed (carefully), you may find that you can use the old rivet over again. A small reed wrench (that straddles the reed butt), homemade, or from a tool kit, is used for loosening the reed for freeing it from the plate. Much care must be taken so as not to bend the reed plate which will cause trouble when refitting to the comb. (A bent plate will allow air leakage.)
Next, assure that the reed does not interfere with the slot at the tip end. (Opposite end from the rivet, or bolt attachment.) Sight down the length of the reed plate to see if the new reed has the same arching above the plate as the other reeds. (See the Smith guide about how to re-arch a reed that sets too flat, or too close to the plate.)

You are at the stage for sounding the reed. The little tube gizmo (from the Smith instructions) will be useful depending on which side of the plate you select for test. At this point, because the new reed will be flat, a couple of scratches with a file at the tip will bring it up in pitch. Do not overdo with the file. To check the actual pitch quality of the replacement, a tuner will be needed, unless you can trust your ears. Tuners are available from F & R Farrell Co., or from Kevins Harps, and music stores.

Riveting might suffice, but if you are using a bolt and nut, the hole in the reed plate might not be quite large enough to accommodate the bolt shank. A drill with a .047" body will be needed. (About $1.15 at a good industrial supply outlet.) Another alternative is to tap the plate hole with a No. 90 tap.

At this point you realize that the reed change is possible, somewhat sophisticated, and not too formidable, yet not exactly for the person who is all thumbs. But if you are one of those harmonica players who have gathered a grocery bag full of old Marine Bands, Special 20"s, Golden Melodys or the likes . . . you can realize a bit of extra service out of your investment . . . simply by doing the reed replacements.

Video instruction – John Infande (904) 873-0303
8506 E. SW 93rd St.
Ocala, FL 34481-92212
Reed Replacement Brochure – Buckeye State Harmonica Club - $7.50
Jack Ely (614) 488-4629
1991 W. Third St.
Columbus, OH 43212-1704

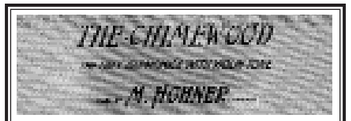
Tools-Reed Kits-Tuners – F & R Farrell Co. 1-800-438-3543
P.O. Box 133
Harrisburg, OH 43126

Tuners from Kevins Harps –
1-800-274-2776

Members Please Contact:
Zan Robinson
1300 N. French Rd.
Buffalo, NY. 14228 USA
Price of CD is
$15 Plus S/H

Zan is now a HCI member. You may recognize the name as Zan was amember of the Harmonica Rascals.

FROM THE FOUR WINDS…A RARE TRIPLE ÆOLINA AND A TYPOTONE BOTH ADDED TO THE ALAN BATES COLLECTION



The CHIMEWOOD

Submitted Articles

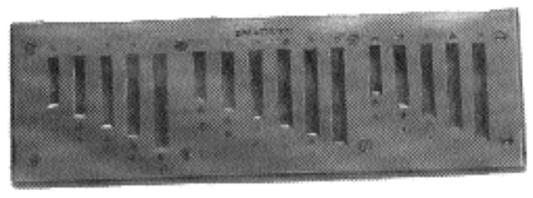
Sir Charles W. Wheatstone (1802-1875), the 19th century British accoustician and electrical engineer who is best remembered in scientific circles for his life-long research concerning the electric telegraph, also contributed substantively to the development of electro-magnetic clocks, typewriters, Morse code transmitters, stereoscopes, and an artificial voice device. However, it was his experimentation with freely vibrating "springs" (thin strips of metal) - first seen on the Continent with Friedrich Ludwig Buschmann's introduction of the *Mundœline*, a free-reed. chromatic tuning device developed in Germany in 1821 that forever linked Wheatstone's name with the history and development of free reed instruments in Great Britain.

Charles W Wheatstone

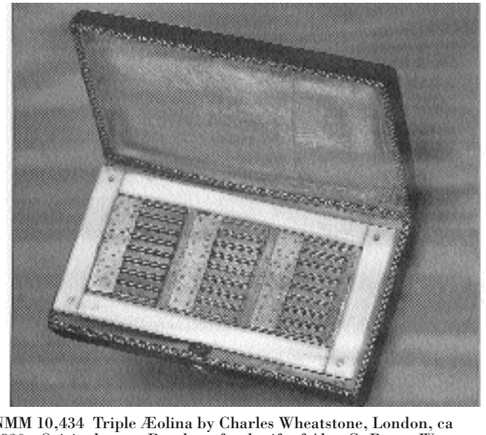
In 1828 while preparing his patent for the nascent concertina, Wheatstone introduced is own version of the German *Mundœline* - the Æolina, a thin, pocket-sized predecessor of the harmonica, measuring less than 4" x 2" x 1/4". Fittingly named in honor of Aiolos, the divine Greek administrator of the four winds, the Æolina consisted of a series of thin strips of a new alloy, argentum (nickel silver), fitted into parallel rows of rectangular opening in an agentum plate and set into vibration "by a gentle breath alone".

The earlier German-style Ælians. characterized by the English in 1829 as "universally popular on the Continent", were available in a variety of sizes, according to *The German Æolian Tutor* (London 1830). These included a tiny, four-note version; a curved "trumpet Æolian"; a two-octave chromatic model; a three-chord "Pandean Æolian", seemingly identical to the rare Pandean Æolian by Lewis Zwalen, New York, ca. 1831, that came to the Museum (NMM 9591) with the Alan G. Bates Collection in 2000; and, a large, "eight-chord Pandean Æolian mounted on a handle.

Wheatstone, however, produced only two- and three-chord Æolians, of which fewer than a half-dozen are known to survive. The Museum's rare,



NMM 9591 Pandean Æolina by Lewis Zwahlen, New York, ca. 1831. Like Wheatstone's triple Æolina Zwahlens' rare, sixteen-reed model is arranged in three chords: G, D, and C, and survives with its original box. Alan G. Bates Collection 2000.

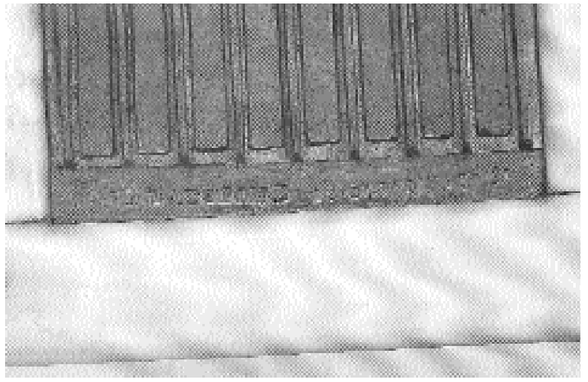


NMM 10,434 Triple Æolina by Charles Wheatstone, London, ca 1830. Original case. Purchase funds gift of Alan G. Bates, West Grove, Pennsylvania, 2003

recently acquired three-chord model features nickel-silver reed plates, each with eight exposed reeds of equal length, tuned to the chords of A, E, and D (tonic, dominant, and subdominant). The reed plates are held together by a frame made of four strips of ivory fastened together with delicate, nickel-silver rivets.

The instrument's original case, lined with cream-colored silk, survives almost as it looked when new, nearly 175 years ago, sporting a bright red, leather flip-top cover with a delicate acorn and oak-leaf design stamped in gold around the outside edge.

Another very early free-reed instrument, contemporary with Wheatstone's Æolina, has also been added to the Alan G. Bates Collection. The Typotone, patented by Pinsonnat of Amiens, France, January 17, 1829, and approved for use by the Conservatoire de Musique in Paris, is a tuning device built to sound "A". A freely



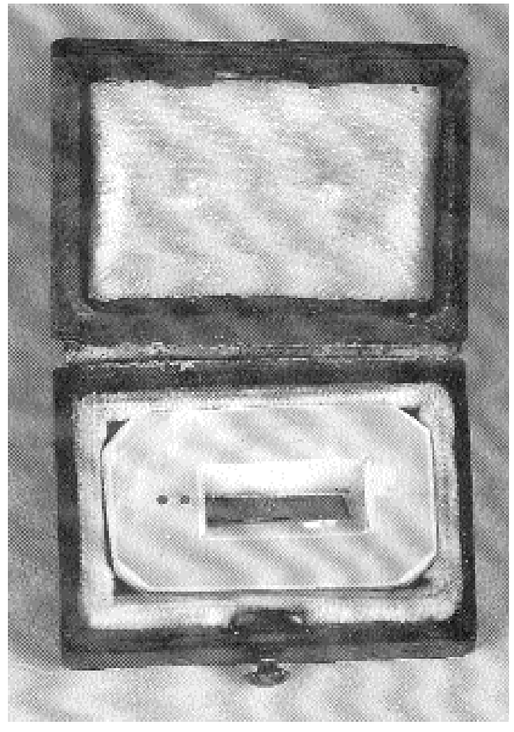
Wheatstone stamped his name on each reed plate in the Museum's triple Æolina. Wheatstone & Co., a business association among Wheatstone, his father, and his younger brother, was located at 20 Conduit Street (between New Bond Street and Regent Street by 1829 and remained there until 1897

vibrating reed, made of hallmarked gold, is attached to an opening in the center of the tiny, mother-of-pearl plate, about the size of a postage stamp.

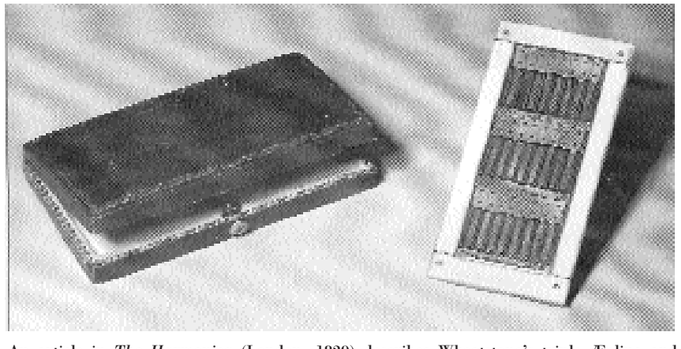
Deep grooves cut into the long sides of the mother-of-pearl enable the player to hold the device securely between his teeth. Merely breathing over the free reed sets it into vibration, freeing the player's hands t tune his violin or viola. The original, leather covered box also survives, with TYPOTONE stamped in gold across its red cover.

These tree rare instruments - Wheatstones's triple Æolina, Zwahlen's Pandean Æolina, and Pinsonnat's Typotone - are among the earliest surviving examples of the European development of free-reed instruments. As such, they provide a critical historical foundation for the other 2,500 harmonicas in the Alan G. Bates Collection.

All three will be shown together in public for the first time, when the Museum's exhibition, *Beethoven & Berlioz, Paris & Vienna: Musical Treasures from the Age of Revolution & Romance 1789-1848*, opens at the Washington Pavilion in Sioux Falls on September 12.



NMM 8206. Typotone (tuning device) by Pinsonnat, Amiens, ca. 1830. The maker's name and serial number (64) are inscribed on the front; the gold reed is hallmarked with the letter P, inside a diamond.



An article in *The Harmonica* (London, 1829) describes Wheatstone's triple Æolina and documents the maker's use of argentum (German silver). a "new metallic alloy" of nickel, copper, and zinc, several years before the first commercial production of nickel silver in England in 1833