



THE GALPIN SOCIETY

FOR THE STUDY OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

NEWSLETTER NO. 73
AUTUMN 2025



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THE GALPIN SOCIETY

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The Galpin Society Newsletter is currently edited and typeset by Christopher Goodwin. Opinions expressed by authors in this newsletter are not specifically endorsed by The Galpin Society.

EDITORIAL AND GALPIN SOCIETY NEWS

Save the date! Galpin Society Conference, 17th–19th June 2026

The Galpin Society Conference will be hosted by Northumbria University in Newcastle Upon Tyne. This is the first time the conference has been held in north-east England, and will be marking the donation of Jeremy Montagu's collection to Northumbria University in 2022. The conference will take place 17th–19th June 2026. Details and the call for papers will be circulated later this year.



**Northumbria
University**
NEWCASTLE



... and come and visit our stall at the Blackheath International Early Music Exhibition, 13th–15th November 2025

Every second year we take a stall at the International Early Music Exhibition at Blackheath, and that means this year. Come and visit us for a chat and perhaps fill a gap in your collection of back issues of the *Journal*—though please email the administrator if you want to be assured of picking up a particular copy; at admin@galpinsociety.org. The Exhibition takes place 13th–15th November 2025, Blackheath Concert Halls, 23 Lee Rd, Blackheath, London SE3 9RQ.

Annual General Meeting, 8th September 2025

This year's AGM was held as a 'hybrid' meeting, the way of the future, without doubt, with 8 members in the room, at the Royal College of Music, and 25 others online on a large screen, with the technical side of things handled by recently appointed Editorial Assistant Arianna Rigamonti.

The full minutes will of course be circulated before next year's AGM, which will take place during the Galpin Society Conference next June but it is worth briefly reporting the salient points.

The Chair, Gabriele Rossi Rognoni thanked the officers for their hard work and recounted the constitutional changes and ideas for further participation and the possibility for new formats for the *Journal*. The Administrator reported a modest deficit and a fall in membership numbers in the previous year—though the work of editing being carried out pro bono by an editorial committee will for the time being remedy the deficit, the priority must be to recruit new members.

An editorial committee for the Journal was formed with impressive speed following the sudden retirement of Lance Whitehead and is working steadily on next year's Journal.

Rewritten rules 7 and 8 of our constitution were voted on and accepted, as follows:

Article 7

The Members of the Committee, namely the Chair and Vice-Chair, and between five and seven Members shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting for a period of three years and shall be eligible for re-election for one further term of three years upon retirement, after which they will not be re-eligible for at least one term.

In exceptional cases of misbehaviour or behaviour incompatible with their office, they may be removed from office by a three-quarter majority of those present and voting in favour of such removal at any General Meeting.

In the event of a vacancy due to the minimum number of members of the Committee not having been elected or due to the resignation of a member, the Committee may co-opt voting members until the next Annual General Meeting. No individual shall be co-opted in two successive years.

Article 8

The Committee shall assign its members and/or appoint qualified externals to the roles it deems appropriate to conduct the business of the Society. These roles can be assigned to Members of the Committee or to qualified externals. Appointed externals may be invited to attend Committee meetings. However, they have no voting rights. Some of these roles can be paid, or undertaken pro-bono, as decided by the Committee. If a remunerated role is assigned to a member of the Committee, they shall renounce their Committee membership and may attend Committee meetings by invitation only.

The Committee shall determine which roles are remunerated and shall review appointments of externals and their remuneration annually.

These have been incorporated into the rules which are on our website at https://www.galpinsociety.org/index_html_files/Rules%20of%20the%20Galpin%20Society%202025.pdf

For the first time voting in the elections for the Chair and Committee members was done using 'ElectionRunner' software with the poll closing a few hours before the AGM. Voting in the meeting can be done with numbered paper ballots—and by the improvised solution of texting late votes to the Administrator's mobile phone.

Gabriele Rossi Rognoni was elected as Chair, and Heike Fricke as an ordinary Committee member. Alice Little and Rachael Durkin were offered thanks for their service on the close of their current terms of office.

At the end the meeting Graham Wells was announced as the winner of the Baines Prize. The citation read as follows:

**The Anthony Baines
Memorial Prize 2025**

**The Galpin Society confers the twenty-seventh
Anthony Baines Memorial Prize on**

Graham Wells

Graham (born 1944) studied oboe and was an active participant in 'early music' performance, playing a variety of instruments. He established the musical instrument department at Sotheby's auction house, based in London but operating worldwide, and was its head until his retirement in 1999. He brought a great deal of wisdom and common sense into the historic instrument marketplace, acting in the interests of organology as well as of his clients. With his wife, Diana, he has subsequently provided a specialised appraisal and valuation service working for many of the most prominent museums and collections of musical instruments. He was an exemplary chairman of the Galpin Society for 27 years, not only leading the Society through one of its healthiest and most productive periods but also editing the Newsletter, organising meetings, supporting the other officers, and encouraging members in their organological efforts. One of his most conspicuous contributions was organising the 'Made for Music' loan exhibition in 1986. As a scholar he wrote the authoritative early history of the Northumbrian small-pipes as his University of Oxford D.Phil. thesis.

Graham could not be present in person, but gave this gracious acceptance speech.

It hardly needs to be said how honoured I am to find myself as the recipient of the Anthony Baines prize for organology. My interest in the field stems from when I went to a very musical school, King's School, Canterbury, where in my first term, aged 13, I was asked if I wanted to play a musical instrument. I said yes, not knowing what choices were being offered: I picked the oboe although it is possible at the time I did not know what it was! I had something of a revelation when James MacGillivray, a professional oboist and collector of historical woodwind instruments, came to give a lecture at King's. Like most children who learn an instrument I had little knowledge about the history of my chosen instrument and MacGillivray's lecture completely entranced me. I can say unequivocally that it was this moment that my interest in organology started.

Wanting to continue to study the oboe after leaving school, I was pleased to be accepted for lessons at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama only to find that the professor was Mac, as he was known in the profession. In addition to the oboe, he also taught me some bad habits such as how to play and hold a cigarette at the same time; Mac chain-smoked throughout my lessons.

I joined Sotheby's in 1969 and within my first year, because of my interest in the field, was asked to set up the musical instrument department. In 1979 Mac decided to part with his collection of historical instruments and sold them in our sale later that year. I would love to have been able to make a purchase in the sale but prices were way beyond me then, particularly

my favourite piece, his Heckelphone, which fetched the 3rd highest price of £2000, now probably nearer £20,000 plus. Mac had played this instrument as the top line (except two piccolos) in Gordon Jacob's Variations on Annie Laurie at a Hoffnung concert in 1956 in an ensemble which included many early Galpin members.

My mentors in organology were Cyril Jacklin at Sotheby's for the violins, in which at first I had little interest but nevertheless accounted for the major revenue of the department so I had to learn fast. For other instruments I was much beholden to Eric Halfpenny. Although I knew other Galpin Society members like Philip Bate and the Baines brothers, I knew they did not totally approve of Eric because instead of donating his collection to institutions he gradually sold them one by one and, as they probably rightly thought, was eating and drinking his way through the proceeds. I benefited both from the instruments he sold through Sotheby's and some splendid meals!

I got to know Tony Baines properly only late in his life and discovered that we had a common interest in geology and palaeontology as well as organology. I was also much beholden to Tony's widow Patricia who had moved back to Oxford after Tony's death and provided me with lodgings when I was studying for my DPhil there. I appreciated the support of my DPhil supervisor, Hélène La Rue, who sadly died of cancer before I completed my degree and whose own DPhil had been supervised by Tony Baines.

I have no recollection of the date when I joined the Society but it was undoubtedly at Eric Halfpenny's instigation. I found myself on the Committee on several occasions and then in 1998 during a family Sunday lunch I was called by Charles Mould saying the committee would like to ask if I was prepared to take over the role of Chairman. Twenty-seven years later I still found myself in that role. I am so glad that organology is a field in which it would seem one can contribute whatever one's age!

Once again may I please underline how honoured I am to have been awarded the Baines Prize. I am only sorry not to be present in person to accept it and grateful to my wife Diana for representing me.

Here Graham is being congratulated on receiving the prize by Arnold Myers.



ADVERTISEMENTS

For sale: Long run of Galpin Journals

For sale: Long run of Galpin Journals, volume xiii (1960) to volume lxxv (2022). Following the donation of selected back issues we can now offer a very good long run of journals—no doubt copies of the missing ones will come along sooner or later and you could complete your set then. These are now at the archivist's house in Teddington. Asking price is £200 (compared to the £300 recently paid for a full set). Please contact admin@galpinsociety.org if interested.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A cabinet by Joachim Tielke (junior)

Dear Sir,

Re-reading Renée Louwers' text in the *GS Newsletter* of Autumn 2023, pp. 6 and 7, on the cabinet attached to the name of Joachim Tielke, prompts me to make a few notes in order to prevent misunderstandings that might find their way into the organological writing.

The cabinet is indeed an extraordinary piece of handicraft. Its owner, the Dutch antique dealer Mischo van Kollenburg, was not familiar with early musical instruments and it had taken him some time to trace its origin (helpful hints had come from the Bavarian National Museum Munich). He finally contacted my wife and me at the end of June 2022 and gave permission for its examination which we undertook on the 6th of July 2022.

The cabinet is briefly described in Zacharias Conrad von Uffenbach, *Merkwürdige Reisen durch Niedersachsen, Holland und Engelland*, part 2, Ulm 1753, pp. 88 and 89, on the occasion of the travellers' visit to the 'berühmten Instrumentmacher Tielken' (famous instrument-maker Tielke) in 1711. After having acquired a lute for their sister Konrad von Uffenbach and his younger brother Johann Friedrich were shown a cabinet by Tielke 'so sein zweyter Sohn, welcher anjetzo Kammer-Diener bey dem Herzog von Mecklenburg-Strelitz ist, angeleget hat' (which his second son, who is at present valet to the Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, has designed).

There are two details to be clarified: Joachim Tielke's second-born son was Johann Christoffer who had died already in 1706 at the age of 36. Therefore the remark that his second son was the cabinet's creator refers to his second son alive and that is Joachim Jr. This should make it unmistakably clear that not the Joachim Tielke so well known to us for his lavishly decorated instruments is the man behind the cabinet, it is his son Joachim named after his father.

Next, what is young Joachim's role in the genesis of the cabinet? The source says that Joachim has 'angeleget' the cabinet. This term should be understood in analogy to the expression 'einen Garten angelegt' (a garden laid out), and should therefore best be translated to 'designed'. We have shown in our publication of 2011* that Tielke Sr., being the son of a judge, was an entrepreneur of exquisite connoisseurship, trained as an academic but not as a craftsman. Perhaps he designed, he drafted the flower ornaments on the instruments bearing his name, following printed

ornamental depictions unknown to us. Something of that kind must also apply to Joachim Jr. whose elderly brother Gottfried was a clergyman in East Prussia (maker of the 1662 double bass as a young man, also dealing with musical instruments, surely for financial reasons) and whose younger brother Martin Gabriel served as 'Oberalter' in the city administration and that of the churches.

To sum up, using one's skills for creating something useful and beautiful before starting one's career in what was considered a higher level is well known in the 18th and 19th centuries. Young Joachim obviously followed this tradition by designing the cabinet which was then realised by highly skilled craftsmen who had possibly already worked for Tielke Sr. It is easily understandable that the Junior used patterns and ornamental features he had seen in his father's manufactory.

Friedman Hellwig

* Friedemann and Barbara Hellwig, *Joachim Tielke. Kunstvolle Musikinstrumente des Barock*, (Berlin/Munich, 2011).

ANNOUNCEMENTS, EVENTS, CALLS FOR PAPERS & NOTICES

Curt Sachs Award

While we congratulate our own Graham Wells on his award, we also raise a toast to another major figure in our world, Friedemann Hellwig, who has received the 2025 Curt Sachs Award.

The Board of Governors of the American Musical Instrument Society has named Friedemann Hellwig as the 2025 Recipient of the Curt Sachs Award, honouring lifetime contributions toward the goals of the Society. The nominating committee unanimously recommended Professor Hellwig for his outstanding contributions in organology, connoisseurship, museology, education and, most significantly, musical instrument conservation. He has published widely in those areas. With his wife, art historian Dr. Barbara Hellwig, he has extended research begun by his father, luthier and scholar Günther Hellwig, on the late seventeenth-century luthier Joachim Tielke.

Hellwig was conservator of musical instruments at the German National Museum in Nuremberg, and he chaired CIMCIM (now ICOM-MUSIC) between 1977 and 1983, a period of significant growth for that committee. He was Professor of Wooden-objects Conservation at Cologne's University of Applied Sciences from 1988 until his retirement in 2003. After a collaboration beginning in 1993 between the university and the State Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau, Professor Hellwig and his wife continued to support preservation efforts there and research Jewish history in Hamburg. Together, they continue their work on Joachim Tielke through research and publications. Congratulations!



FoMRHI is 50!

And while we are in the mood for congratulations, we may wish a happy anniversary to FoMRHI, the Fellowship of Makers and Researchers of Historical Instruments, founded 50 years ago by Djilda Abbott, Ephraim Segerman and Jeremy Montagu. The number of ‘Comms’ or Communications published in their *Quarterly* approaches 2,250; behind a one-year rolling paywall you can read everything for free, listed at <https://www.fomrhi.org/pages/communications> with the contents at <https://www.fomrhi.org/pages/all-bulletins>. We are hoping for a slice of cake and a glass of prosecco at FoMRHI’s AGM, under the auspices of the International Early Music Exhibition, in the bar at 1 pm, Saturday 15th November 2025, Blackheath Concert Halls, 23 Lee Rd, Blackheath, London SE3 9RQ. As if in celebration, the bagpipe maker Julian Goodacre has made a nice film about FoMRHI on Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O_2M4SLgFbo.

Dr. Margaret (Peggy) Downie Banks, Ph.D., 1950–2025

The National Music Museum is sorry to have to relate the recent passing of Dr. Margaret (Peggy) Downie Banks, at the age of 75.

Dr. Banks was hired by then-NMM Director, Dr. Andre Larson, in 1978. Peggy’s commitment to the NMM extended 45 years until retirement in 2023, making her the longest-serving employee in the NMM’s now 52-year history. She served in virtually every role inside the NMM eventually becoming Senior Curator, Associate Director, and Interim Director. She was awarded Professor Emeritus by the University of South Dakota upon retirement in 2023. Even beyond full-time work, Peggy kept an office at the NMM, was working on a project for the Museum, and loved consulting with people in the discipline. The NMM garnered its worldwide reputation thanks to the lifelong work of Dr. Banks.

With the family’s approval, memorial gifts can be directed to the Peggy Banks Memorial Education Fund established at the NMM. Donations can be made online <https://www.nmmusd.org/support-us>; click on the Donate Now button and in the Comments box enter “Peggy Banks Fund”. Cheques can be sent to: National Music Museum, 414 E. Clark Street, Vermillion, SD 57069



A new funded project! Musical Instrument Empires: Japan's Musical Instrument Making Industry in its socio-political, cultural, and economic context, 1880s–1990s

Cassandre Balosso-Bardin, Assistant professor in Cultural Musicology at the University of Leuven, Belgium, and Jan Schmidt, Associate Professor of the Political History of Japan also at University of Leuven are delighted to share the news that their project *Musical Instrument Empires: Japan's Musical Instrument Making Industry in its socio-political, cultural, and economic context, 1880s-1990s* has been awarded just under 600,000€ for a 4-year project at the University of Leuven in Belgium.

This project is the first transdisciplinary study on the history of Japan's musical instrument making industry, bringing together musicologists, historians, and economists. By pooling knowledge and resources, this study will place individual artisans and global companies within a broader socio-economic, cultural, and political context. Anchored in archival research and oral histories, the researchers will analyse Japan's musical instrument making industry involvement and agency in forging industrial, educational and cultural policies from the late 19th and throughout the 20th centuries, as well as historical dependency patterns. This research promotes ground-breaking interdisciplinary partnerships combining (cultural) musicology and (economic/political) history, engaging with new research networks opening up between Belgium and Japan (including music industry members, musical instrument museums, and academics).

The research funding will fund two doctoral students in partnership with Japanese academic partners. As part of the outcomes we will be organising an exhibition, which will travel from the Musical Instrument Museum of Hamamatsu in Japan to the Musical Instrument Museum of Brussels in Belgium. We will also organise several events (and at least one conference) alongside the usual publications and, of course, the two new PhD theses. We look forward to seeing you at some of these events, and to developing further partnerships!





Thomas Zach (Austrian, 1812–1892). Violino Harpa Forma Maxima, 1874.
Collections Musée de la musique / Cliché Claude Germain, 2020. Cité de la musique-Philharmonie de Paris.

Musical Bodies at the Met: Exhibition, 8 June–27 September 2026.

The Musical Instruments Department of the Metropolitan Museum of Art are excited to announce Musical Bodies, a major temporary exhibition that will run from 8 June–27 September 2026.

Musical Bodies explores the overlapping worlds and blurred boundaries between our bodies and our instruments. Whether we're tapping, clapping, vocalizing or whistling, our bodies are musical instruments. In turn, many instruments derive their form and decoration from the human body. These instruments are powerful vehicles of our identity and often represent us and our actions. In effect, they are beings. We find this around the world and across time not only in music but also in how instruments are deployed in the visual arts, literature, religion, pop culture and mythology.

With over 125 works from The Met's collection and institutions and collectors around the world, the exhibition explores 3,000 years of music and art history, from ancient Egyptian rattles, Cycladic figures, Renaissance string instruments, musical masterpieces by Titian and Degas, and instrument-inspired apparel, to one of Prince's most notable guitars and a Ghanaian fantasy coffin. This interdisciplinary exhibition stands to become a defining moment in the field of musicology and will be accompanied by a book by Bradley Strauchen-Scherer.

Previews of Musical Bodies are planned during the week of 1 June 2026. This dovetails well with the American Musical Instrument Society 2026 meeting, which will be held 27–31 May at the National Music Museum in Vermillion, SD so mark your diaries for a US visit! If you would like to attend Musical Bodies during the week of 1 June, please RSVP to Bradley.strauchen-scherer@metmuseum.org

Call for papers; The British Institute of Organ Studies Conference: The Global British Organ, April 2026, Wadham College, Oxford

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of its founding in 1976 the British Institute of Organ Studies (BIOS) is holding a three-day residential conference amongst the dreaming spires of Oxford from Thursday 9th to Saturday 11th of April 2026. The focus of the conference will be the global impact of the British organ over the centuries, the influence of foreign organs imported into the UK on the British organ, and the influence of British organ music around the world.

We invite proposals for individual papers and themed round-table discussions, as well as other types of presentation (including 30-minute lecture-recitals) on any relevant topic including (but not limited to) the following:

- British organs and organ builders;
- British organ music and its influence around the world;
- The influence of imported organs and organ building on British organs;
- The influence of British organ building on organs of other countries;
- Exported British organs and the market for them;
- British organists, performers, and teachers in the wider world.

Some financial support for young researchers and full-time students is possible. Proposals of 250 words in the following formats are invited:

Presentation/conference paper (20 minutes + 10 minutes for questions);

Themed round-table discussion of 60 – 90 minutes, please include the details of the main participants - maximum 4. (The proposal can be up to 1,000 words in length). Other formats, including a brief lecture-recital (depending on venue availability). Proposals should be sent to Dr Katharine Pardee at 50@bios.org.uk and include your name, the title and type of presentation, as defined above, a 100-word biography and any technical requirements beyond normal AV presentation facilities.

The deadline for proposals is 10 January 2026. For updated information about the conference visit <http://www.bios.org.uk>. For enquiries, please email 50@bios.org.uk.

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John Nicholson, organ builder—an appeal for help!

I am researching a maker named John Nicholson, listed in *FoMRHI*-type bulletins in the 1970s as ‘Organ Builder and Instrument Maker, Bream House, Hungershall Park, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 8NE’, maker of small positifs/regals. Does anyone have any information about him—obituary, or contact details for him or any colleague who might have known him? I can send photos of an instrument currently for sale that is signed ‘John Nicholson 1975’. Note that he does not seem to be one of the famous family of Nicholson organ builders who come up if you Google ‘Nicholson organ builder’. Many thanks in advance for any help.—
Antoine Tharreau antoine.tharreau@yahoo.fr

Call for Papers: Early Music & Standard Pitch in the 19th Century 25–27 September 2026, Leipzig, GRASSI Museum of Musical Instruments

To mark the Paul de Wit anniversary year, an exhibition and a conference are being organized in Leipzig.

Topics:

The early stages of the Early Music movement and the role of musical instrument collections

The introduction of standard pitch in the 19th century

Key Questions

Early Music Movement

- Which sources and instruments were available?
- Which aims were pursued, and what challenges were faced?
- Who were the pioneers of historical performance and instrument building /restoration?
- How were these figures connected?

Standard Pitch

- Which archival materials document the debate?
- Who were the key advocates?
- What obstacles and conflicting interests arose?

Practical Details

Abstract submission deadline: 31 December 2025

Abstract length: max. 400 words

Submit to: Eszter Fontana e.fontana@gmx.de

About the Conference

This international meeting brings together scholars to explore:

- The pioneering role of Paul de Wit (1852–1925) and the connection between early instrument collections and the Early Music movement.
- The international discussions around the *Diapason Normal* (1859) and the challenges of introducing a unified pitch standard across Europe and beyond.

Contributions from diverse countries will provide a broad perspective on these interrelated aspects of 19th-century musical life.

We warmly invite your proposals!—*Eszter Fontana*

Hélène La Rue Scholarship in Music

St Cross College is pleased to offer the Hélène La Rue Scholarship in Music, in partnership with the Clarendon Scholarship funding scheme, to research students who will begin studying for a DPhil course in Music at the University of Oxford in October 2026. Preference may be given to a research topic related to the musical collections at the University, including those at the Ashmolean Museum, those at the Pitt Rivers Museum, the Bate Collection in the Faculty of Music and those held in any of the colleges.

The Scholarship covers the annual cost of the course fee and the standard UKRI stipend for annual living costs for the three years of full fee liability, and also carries a grant of up to £500 per annum for travel and research expenses.

Application Criteria

All applicants who have submitted their DPhil course application by the relevant 2025-2026 admissions deadline will be considered automatically. For more information click on <https://www.stx.ox.ac.uk/helene-la-rue-scholarship-in-music>

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Berlin Musical Instrument Museum catalogue of lost instruments

In 2023 the museum published the *Verlustkatalog des Berliner Musikinstrumenten-Museums*, the catalogue of war losses. Available in three volumes edited by former MIM Director Connie Restle, in addition to the detailed documentation of the lost objects and their provenances, also traces the history of the collection from 1888 to 1945.

It is with great pleasure that they announce that a free digital edition (as well as additional High-Res content) is now available alongside the paper edition (that you can purchase below), as part of the Open-Science policy of the Institute.

They wish us an enjoyable reading experience, and hope that the free online access will support and encourage research as well as the dissemination of knowledge on the history of museum collections. Here is the website

https://spktrum.spk-berlin.de/receive/spktrum_mods_00000114

The earliest source for the S-shaped trumpet

Trevor Herbert is delighted to share with us the link of his study *The earliest source for the S-shaped trumpet—its provenance, material context, and relevance*. Historic Brass Society Journal, 36 pp. 1-22. ISSN 1045-4616 (print) 1943-5215 (online). An abstract is at <https://researchonline.rcm.ac.uk/id/eprint/2531/>. The article is now at <https://researchonline.rcm.ac.uk/id/eprint/2531/7/Herbert-FoldedTrumpet.pdf>.

Bibliografia Organaria Ligure (BOL) 1816-1824 comprendente Corsica, Principato di Monaco, Nizza e località limitrofe, Discografia

[Ligurian Organ Bibliography (BOL) 1816-2024 including Corsica, the Principality of Monaco, Nice and surrounding areas, Discography], a cura di / edited by Maurizio Tarrini, Savona, Associazione Musicale Antichi Organi Italiani, 2025, pp. 111. ISBN 978-88-905775-4-3; € 20 + postage; associazione.amaoi@gmail.com

This includes 672 bibliographic records from 1816 to 2024 with an index of names and places.

BIBLIOGRAFIA ORGANARIA LIGURE
(BOL)
1816-2024

Comprendente Corsica, Principato di Monaco,
Nizza e località limitrofe
Discografia

a cura di
Maurizio Tarrini



Savona
Associazione Musicale Antichi Organi Italiani
2025

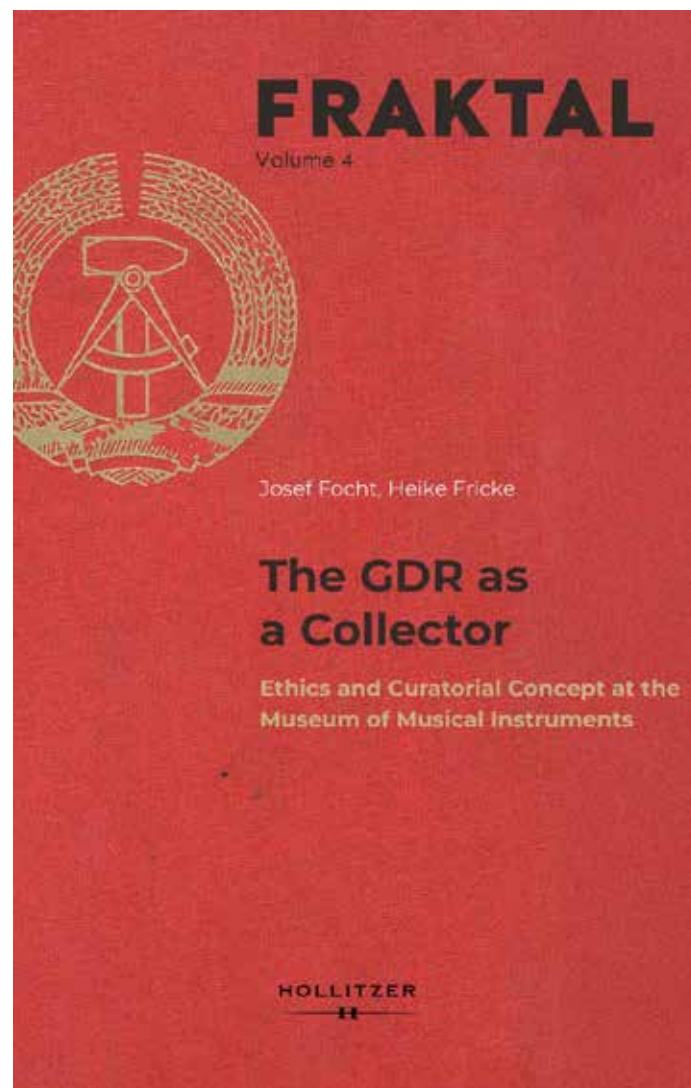
***Die DDR als Sammlerin
Ethik und Konzept im Musikinstrumentenmuseum***

This is volume 4 of FRAKTAL, by Josef Focht, Heike Fricke, published by Hollitzer Verlag, (Wien, 2025)

There is an English version as an e-book:

***Josef Focht, Heike Fricke: The GDR as a Collector.
Ethics and Curatorial Concept at the Museum of Musical Instruments***
(FRAKTAL 4)
Hollitzer Verlag, Vienna 2025

This fourth volume in the FRAKTAL series examines the collecting practices of the German Democratic Republic and their lasting impact on the Musikinstrumentenmuseum der Universität Leipzig. The book also revisits the formative roles of earlier collectors such as Paul de Wit and Wilhelm Heyer, whose holdings laid the foundations for the museum. With a critical focus on provenance research, ethics, and curatorial strategies, it provides new perspectives on twentieth-century organology. See <https://www.hollitzer.at/buch/die-ddr-als-sammlerin>.



‘...and serve the music faithfully’

Paul de Wit—Musician, Collector, Publisher

Eszter Fontana, Michael Märker, (eds.)

Illustrated publication, (210 x 280 mm) with approx. 500 pages on the 100th anniversary of his death. Published by Janos Stekovics, 49,90 €



Paul de Wit (1852-1925), a trained musician and successful music publisher in Leipzig, founded the internationally renowned *Zeitschrift für Instrumentenbau* in 1880. The collections of musical instruments he amassed are an incomparable treasure and form the basis of the famous museums in Leipzig and Berlin. He was the first musician in the German-speaking world to take up the viola da gamba in 1882 and pioneered the early music movement. He gave concerts in Germany, the Netherlands, Brussels and Paris and researched viola da gamba literature in archives and libraries.

He ran a restoration workshop and an instrument rental service, making it possible to perform early music on historical instruments. In 1906, he designed a harpsichord for the historical concerts that took place in Halle, Berlin and Leipzig, among other places. His expertise was valued interna-

tionally and his books and catalogs can be found in specialist libraries worldwide.

A monograph on this outstanding personality has not yet been published; the few essays and encyclopaedia articles on him are based on the 1925 necrology.

The book is divided into six chapters: Life and background – The Musician – The Collector – Paul de Wit and the Restoration of Old Instruments – Paul de Wit and his Contacts – The Publisher.

The richly illustrated book with approx. 500 pages and around 50 essays in German or English will be published in May 2026. The book contains numerous new insights into the life, work and influence of Paul de Wit and also offers a special look at the pulsating music and book city of Leipzig between 1880 and 1925.

Some of the Authors are members of the Galpin Society. For more information on the various subscription options, please contact Eszter Fontana: e.fontana@gmx.de. Please send pre-orders to the email address pdw1925@uni-leipzig.de.

FEATURE ARTICLES

A Drum from the English Civil War, The New Model Army 'Fairfax' Drum, by James Bisgood



Fig. 1 Although dis-assembled the 'Fairfax' drum is complete and in original condition (author's photo).

Seventeenth-century drums are very rare beasts indeed and it has been usual past 'musicological' practice to list only three examples in publications. In fact this figure for the surviving drums can be entirely skewed by the inclusion of the unique Royal Collection drums on display at Hampton Court Palace. Here, on the walls of the King's Guard Chamber, hiding for decades in plain sight and viewed by literally millions of tourists are fifteen drums hanging on the walls as part of the fabulous patterned displays of over two thousand items of weaponry from the latter part of that century. Originally, well over thirty drums were included when John Harris made the initial designs but over four centuries the display has been trimmed down and today only these last surviving drums remain.¹



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Fig. 2 One of the fifteen Hampton Court drums



Fig. 3 A snapshot of 14 of the Hampton Court drums when they were removed for conservation (author's collection).

Put up on the walls in November 1699 these drums were 'old stock' from the Ordnance stores, as are most of the weapons themselves, being obsolete equipment even at that time. Logically, one does not put the service issue equipment up on the walls out of reach and it is very likely that the drums had been beaten by New Model Army regiments before the Restoration. They were refurbished and dated 1690 or '91 by W.G. and F.G. (chalked initials are inside some examples) who were probably relatives of James Goodale who held the King's Royal Patent as drum maker to the Crown from 1677.² A patent such as this being a hugely lucrative and jealously guarded contract of exclusive supply and renovation of all military drums.

Drake's Drum, the Royal Armouries drum, and the Oxford, All Soul's College drum were the original known survivors. Other than the fantastic anomaly of Hampton Court we can also add just a few more drums to those three examples. To the list must be added the Snowhill Manor drums and the Culpeper, Lisburn, Newdigate and Fairfax examples. These last four drums are all in private ownership and have only been on public display on a few rare occasions. The Royal Armouries, Lisburn, Newdigate and possibly three of the Snowhill drums owe their survival to their fortuitous conversion into long bass drums which enjoyed popularity in the 'Turkish' music section of military bands at the turn of the eighteenth century. The Culpeper drum has an original crested shell but the Fairfax drum is the only Civil War survivor in untouched original condition.



(Haags Historisch Museum)

Fig. 4 Detail: *Queen Henrietta Maria embarking from Scheveningen* (1643) by Sybrand van Beest. This is the only known colour representation of possible English Royal Guard troops from the Civil War period. As an elite unit (in exile) their flamboyant clothing and status does not represent the 'common' soldiers of the war.

These other survivors can be briefly outlined as follows. Four 'old' drums at the National Trust property of Snowhill Manor in Gloucestershire are labelled as eighteenth-century bass drums. One is just that, and a second could well be another probable conversion but I am convinced that two are certainly drums from the earlier period painted up and used as these 'long bass' drums.

The Lisburn example was very briefly on display at the Irish Linen Centre and Lisburn Museum in Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland but has returned to the family owners. Again it had been pressed into service as a bass drum and apparently, legend has it, was used at 'the Battle of Antrim' (1798) a relatively minor riotous disturbance in Irish political history. However on close examination it has all of the same attributes of the Royal Armouries drum; a two cylinder oak veneer shell, nail head pattern and dimensions of 24" diameter by 24" deep that correlate with these much earlier drums. During the Irish Confederate wars, Lisnagarvey (as Lisburn was then known) was the site of a major engagement and defeat of Royalist supporters in December 1649. The chances of a stray military drum being abandoned in this area is entirely probable and it has remained, owned by the same family, to the present day.³

The Newdigate drum is in the possession of Viscount Daventry of Arbury Hall, Warwickshire, and the drums' written provenance goes back to 1683 when it was confiscated following an ancestor's implication in the Rye House Plot. Arbury Hall was fortuitously bypassed by most of the Midlands Civil War action but it is likely that the drum was brought into the estate around the time of that war when many houses organized their own defence forces. It has been savagely cut down in the nineteenth century and the oak shell has been shaved down to fit pre-existing counter hoops. The result of this botched conversion is that now it measures 23" across the head in one direction and only 22" in the other! However, the weight and thickness of the remaining shell point to an early date for its original construction, possibly Jacobean.

The Oxford drum was purchased by All Soul's college at the time of Monmouth's Rebellion (1685) for the local militia force and has remained in the Bursar's office ever since! It is in original untouched condition and despite the late date was almost certainly 'army surplus' stock as, following the conclusion of the Civil Wars, England was awash with military equipment—thousands of drums having been made or purchased for the use of the various forces employed in that war.

The Culpeper drum is now owned by a private collector but was for decades on display at the armoury of Leeds Castle, Kent. It is a complete drum with an original oak shell emblazoned with the arms of a Royalist officer from a minor gentry family who took part in the defence of Colchester during the siege of 1648.



(Royal Armouries)

Fig. 5 The Royal Armouries drum c.1635 speculatively labeled 'Dutch'.

The Royal Armouries drum is a fine specimen but as is usual the counter hoops, ropes and braces are modern replacements, following extensive restoration in the 1970s. Described as 'Dutch' this oak drum shell (genus; *Quercus*) was dated by dendrochronology to not before 1630. The growth ring pattern is continental (probably Hamburg area) and spans the years from c.1416 to 1603.⁴ The shell is plain varnished veneer (3.2mm thick with an overlap of 30.5cm) made from two cylinders glued together in a manner found to be typical in drums of this date. Oak veneer, of the finest quality, was imported regularly from Germany and Holland as 'wainscot' oak for use as panelling from the late sixteenth century onwards. 'Wainscot' drums are mentioned once in the surviving New Model Army contracts.⁵ Exactly where the drum was manufactured and why it survived in the Tower of London, the home of the Ordnance Office, is therefore open to debate. Hundreds of drums were imported for use in the war specifically by major arms dealers like John Bradley and Owen Rowe along with other individuals.⁶

The Fairfax drum

This drum is privately owned and not on public display. The provenance is undisputed. It is a very important instrument as it is the only extant drum that is associated with a leading Civil War general and is likely to have seen active service in that war. An active professional soldier for most of his early life, Sir Thomas Fairfax was in charge of Parliamentary forces in Yorkshire and the North at the start of the wars. A committed Parliamentarian, despite some occasional setbacks, he showed considerable military skill and political acumen in this role. Overshadowed today by the more famous Oliver Cromwell, who was in command of the cavalry, on 21st January 1645 it was Sir Thomas who was made Captain Generall of the New Model Army. This army was a completely new concept in Britain and was

the first standing professional army, properly recruited, well trained, extensively equipped and regularly paid. It can be considered to be the nucleus of our modern army and some units have a continual unbroken history until the present day. With this newly modelled force he was to go on to achieve the final victory for the Parliamentary cause.

The instrument is complete and appears to be in original condition despite being in a state of some disarray. The term 'original' in this context implies that all the associated furniture and heads of the drum are contemporary with its service life and are not more modern additions or replacements. The oak shell of this drum is 22¼" in diameter and 18½" deep, typical proportions for a military field drum of this period. It has been emblazoned with the correct arms of the Fairfax family which compare accurately with a known contemporary crest taken from a book-plate in Sir Thomas's own library.

The shell is constructed from two cylinders of oak veneers, originally around nine inches deep, being accurately joined together. This joint is almost invisible apart from a couple of areas where it has slightly separated with age. This method of construction is identical to the Lisburn, Oxford and Royal Armouries drums. These cylinders are laminates of two sheets of approximately three millimetre-thick oak veneer resulting in the shell being between five and six millimetres thick overall. A section of the batter head edge has been badly damaged by decay resulting in a filleted thirty millimeter wide repair strip being inserted in this area, replacing only the top layer of the veneers.

The lower snare head edge has been cut down by a slightly smaller amount resulting in both the vent hole and the painted crest being lowered off the centre line by about three quarters of an inch and the loss of any evidence for snare beds being cut into this lower rim. Inside the shell are strengthening stay rings at both ends of the cylinder. The stay hoop at the batter head end is of paler coloured wood than the surrounding oak veneer implying a later repair or addition. The lower snare head stay hoop is of an even lighter and more recent (but still old) wood and this was probably added at the time when the shell was cut away. Around the inside of the central joint of the two cylinders is a wide band of strong linen about four inches wide pasted into position as a strengthener. Any iron nail shafts that have poked through the shell have been turned over and there are a couple of small flat oak veneer repair patches over split areas.

The vertical joint in the shell is reinforced with nail head patterns which consist of three vertical double lines around three inches apart of slightly domed brass nail heads. Superimposed over the central row is a triple circle surrounding the 15mm vent hole. Four more small circles of nails fill in the quarters between these vertical lines. The nails are of three sizes, larger domed or elliptical headed nails being used as the central rings of the circular patterns. Some nails appear to have been driven into a soft mastic like substance perhaps to assist adherence.



Fig. 6 The vent with three sizes of nail heads and the shell joint is just visible on the centre left (author's photo).

The drum heads are of thick calf skin vellum and appear to be original. Modern drum head vellums, as supplied by William Cowley Parchment Works,⁷ are usually between 0.2mm to 0.35mm thick with very thick vellums graded at around the 0.4mm mark, these heads are approximately 0.45 to 0.5mm in thickness but as they are in situ it was impossible to measure more accurately with the gauge. The flesh hoops are about half an inch square.

The counter hoops appear to have been reversed. This may possibly be because the braces are set in the 'W' pattern with ten pairs of opposing buffs being pulled together towards the middle of the shell instead of the more usual 'A' bracing system with just one buff being pulled down towards the lower head to tension the skins. With the former system it is possible to relieve the rope tension enough to extricate the drum from between all the ropes and buffs without having to completely re-rope the drum as is usual with a snare-type roped drum. This has occurred with this example so, in error, the original batter head hoop is now on the lower end and vice versa. Both the nine millimeter thick counter hoops have the expected scarfed glued and nailed joints and are plain varnished wood (Ash?) with ten holes in each hoop to receive the roping. The present upper hoop (which was the original snare head hoop) has opposing groups of three holes drilled through it to act as anchor points for now missing snare gut. As there is no brass or iron snare tensioning device, often found on period drums, these holes allowed the usual very thick gut snares to be tied off on opposing sides.



Fig. 7 Three holes on opposing sides of the hoop for the attachment of snare gut (author's photo).

The twenty buffs of brown leather show some sign of a few replacements which accurately match the remaining possibly original buffs, some of which show the dry, powdery signs of age deterioration. Overall, the ropes and matching buffs appear to be original. Tied to the lower bracing rope are the remains of two silken rope knots. Although now faded and discoloured, on examining the brightest of the remaining un-bleached fibres, this silk was most likely a warm tawny orange colour. During the Civil War period the Royalist army wore scarlet red sashes and the Parliamentarian forces chose this tawny orange colour so as to differentiate the opposing forces in the field. The implication of these remnants is that the drum could have been suspended from a silken sash or sling when in use.



Fig. 8 The unique remains of silken rope knots from the suspension sash (author's photo).

All the essential elements of this drum are present and apart from the listed repairs, missing snares and the fact that one can never be sure if ropes and buffs are replacements, it appears to be in the original condition it was when in use.

In England at this period an ideal infantry regiment consisted of around 1,000 men, organised into ten 100-strong companies of pikemen and musketeers. There were an additional seven officers, including the sergeants and drummers for each company. A company of soldiers required two drummers per company and the Colonel's company, considered elite, also had a Drum-major in charge of all the other drummers. Each regiment therefore required 23 drums and this was the number supplied to each of the newly formed full strength regiments in the spring of 1645, either at Reading or Windsor as the New Model Army was formed. Many were new recruits but the bulk were from older regiments folded into the new organisation bringing officers and drummers alike. Following the battering of the first Civil War almost all of the weaponry and equipment was to be re-supplied and renewed and many of these supply contracts have survived providing crucial and valuable source material. The numbers of new drums required was well into the hundreds. Some came from Continental purchases but the majority were newly made by drum makers that had formed a minor industry to manufacture such large numbers. Giles Smart and Edward Tench were the major suppliers holding almost a monopoly, but a few other names also appear; either associates or possible competitors.

Ordnance-issue drums were always issued in a plain state and the majority of drums remained with plain wood shells, and the Rikjsmuseum has a fine example of such a pristine drum.⁸ The RA drum had the Royal Arms, a crest of William IV, added around 1837 when it was in use as a long-pattern bass drum and nearly all the other surviving drums are crested which, in most cases, also accounts for their survival as decorative family heirlooms. To emblazon a drum was a serious matter. Royal Arms required a Royal Warrant and usually only senior leading nobles would have their personal crest painted on the three prominent drums of their personal Colonel's company. In only one case have I found a reference to all the drums of a regiment bearing the arms of their commander. This is the case of the Parliamentarian General in the North West, Sir William Brereton, a particularly self-aggrandising pompous man who usually signed himself in documents in huge florid letters and included all of his detailed titles and honours. This was not the usual practice for a member of the very minor and only recently ennobled aristocracy but typical of an insecure social climber!⁹ The 'official' arms of the Commonwealth were, of course, not designed or in use until after the execution of King Charles I in January 1649.



Fig. 9 The armorial crest of the Fairfax Baronetcy matches a contemporary library bookplate from the Fairfax library (author's photo).

As Sir Thomas Fairfax was the supreme commander of the New Model Army, it was only correct for his infantry regiment's primary Colonel's drum to bear his coat of arms. It is quite likely that three drums were originally emblazoned in this fashion. This 'new' regiment was formed at Reading in the spring of 1645 and along with the weapons the drums were issued on the 4th and 5th July 1645.

Edward Tench (styled a 'Drummaker' and sometimes 'joyner') was the supplier of the new drums and received payment of 24/- per drum for delivery the day before.¹⁰

To pay unto Edward Tench drummer in full of his contract (for the use of Sir Thomas Fairfax his army) for sixti drums at twenty four shilling. A peece the sum of seavantie two pounds.
3rd day of April 1645

Almost uniquely, the roll call for two parades of Sir Thomas Fairfax's Regiment of Foot have also survived for the day that the drums were issued and on that parade on the 4th July.¹¹

Drums	Lewes Tanner	Drum major
	John Woseman	
	Willm Evan	
	Robert Bower	

And on the following day, 5th July, a second parade:

Drum major	Lewes Tanner
	Thos. Osleyer
	Gyles Prior
	Wm Jones
	James Symnell
	John Wilkes

As the Drum major, the most senior of the drummers in Fairfax's regiment, it is a very distinct possibility that the man beating the 'Fairfax Drum' was Lewes Tanner.

All period military field drums had snares and although these are now missing the holes in the counter hoop would have provided an anchoring point. The very thick pieces of gut would have been trapped under this hoop and stretched across the lower snare head. Tensioning these is a simple matter even without the more usual brass or iron snare adjusting apparatus found on many surviving examples. The thickness of the few surviving snares is remarkable and they are usually 5mm to 6mm thick strings of gut. The contemporary French author Trichet (1640) states that:

snares should be larger than the largest string on a viol.¹²



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Fig. 10 One of three remaining thick snares on a Hampton Court drum, a unique survival. The graffiti is original and authentic.

All the early authors (Arbeau, Prætorius, Mersenne, Hexham et al.) mention or illustrate them and the rattling sound was not only desirable but cut through the noise of battle. The booming of an un-snared drum is easily lost in background noise. The author has experimented with gut snares of up to five millimetres in diameter and this comparatively really thick gut behaves in a very different fashion from modern thinner gut snares. Although responding instantly and loudly to beats directly over the path of the snare when beating the head further away from the central area, the snare is far less likely to give a distinct response. This must be due to the considerable energy needed to move such thick gut into action and explains why both Douce and Mersenne mention the importance of ‘a bang by ye hoop’ being a noticeably different type of drum stroke. Thinner gut snares give a more even and quieter response wherever the head is beaten. There is a real difference between the response of these thick snares when beating the head in two distinct areas. With more than one drum being beaten together this effect would become even more obvious and a distinctly different tone would be apparent. Original thick snare gut survives on a few of the late sixteenth-century drums in the Landeszeughaus Armoury, Graz, Austria and on three of the Hampton Court drums.

Considering the age, condition and importance by association with a leading participant protagonist, the New Model Army and the English Civil War this drum is a very important National historical artefact.

- 1 Lengthy personal correspondence with Ms. Anna Keay, Assistant Curator, Historic Royal Palaces in 1998–99 and Mr. James L. Jackson, Senior Arms and Armour Conservator, Royal Collection Department, 1999.
- 2 Andrew Ashbee, Editor, *Records of English Court Music*, (Snodland, Kent 1998) Vol. I, p.175.
- 3 Lengthy personal correspondence with Dr Ciaran Toal, Keeper of Collections and Mr Trevor Hall, Assistant Keeper (2003 and 2024) Irish Linen Centre and Lisburn Museum. Co. Antrim, N. Ireland
- 4 Dendrochronological Report by Dr J.M. Fletcher, Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art, Oxford. October 1974. Sample 188 Heartwood rings spanning c.1416–1603. Use of veneer (both cylinders from same tree) not before 1630. Ring pattern continental with best match derived from Hamburg. Similar to oak panels used by Rembrandt and Wouverman.
- 5 The National Archives (TNA) SP28/149/3, f. 151.
- 6 March 1643 Parliamentary Commissioners, John Bradley and Owen Rowe, purchased arms and equipment from France and Holland and in addition to 21,189 swords, 19,513 Bandoliers, 599 Corselets and 6,346 Muskets they acquired 261 Drums. CSPD (1641-43) f. 281
- 7 The last remaining firm in the UK still able to supply high quality vellums, William Cowley Parchment Works, 97, Caldecote Street, Newport Pagnell, Bucks. MK16 0DB
- 8 Drum NG-NM-3126-1.
- 9 TNA SP 28/225/1, f. 3.
- 10 TNA SP 29/1, f. 175.
- 11 TNA SP/1, f. 281,282.
- 12 P. Trichet, *Traité des Instruments de Musique* (1640, Reprint, Minkoff 1978).