



the TOWN CRIER

AND FOOTHILL FOCUS

Published every Wednesday by Foothill Printing and Publishing, Inc., 350 Main St., Los Altos, Calif.

PRICE 5 CENTS

LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA

WEDNESDAY, JULY 26, 1961

Music by the barreland

Half of the driveway at 23 Arbuelo Way has been occupied, the past several weeks, by a two-wheeled trailer bearing a musical contraption known as a *draaiorgel* in the Netherlands, where it was built, and called in English a band organ or barrel organ.

It's an air-operated, self-playing instrument having 178 square wooden pipes, a cymbal, tone blocks, snare and bass drums, and enough valves (about 400), pipes, and levers to provoke a fairly involved combination of melody of accompaniment.

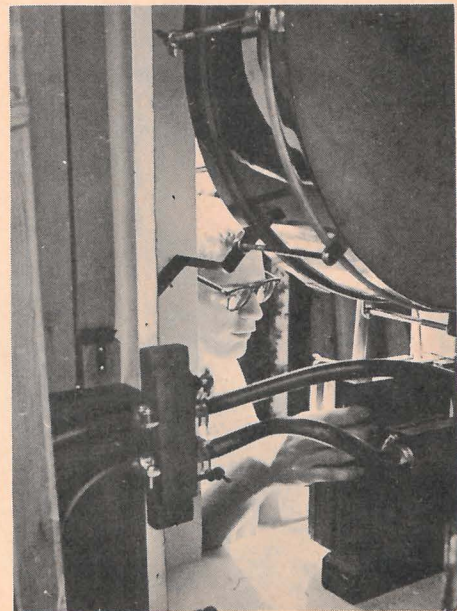
Roger Murray, a Los Altos High School and Foothill College graduate, is repairing-rebuilding, actually—the organ for its owner, Paul M. P. Merner, a Palo Alto lumberman.

A co-founder of Foothill's FM radio station, KFJC, and one of its early managers, Roger was led to the organ by his fascination with recorded sound. Using microphones and a recorder he built himself, he taped the organ's music in 1959, when he was seeking audible oddities for his nightly program on KFJC. It sounded laryngitic to him at the time, he recalls, but still a joy to a pursuer of recondite music.

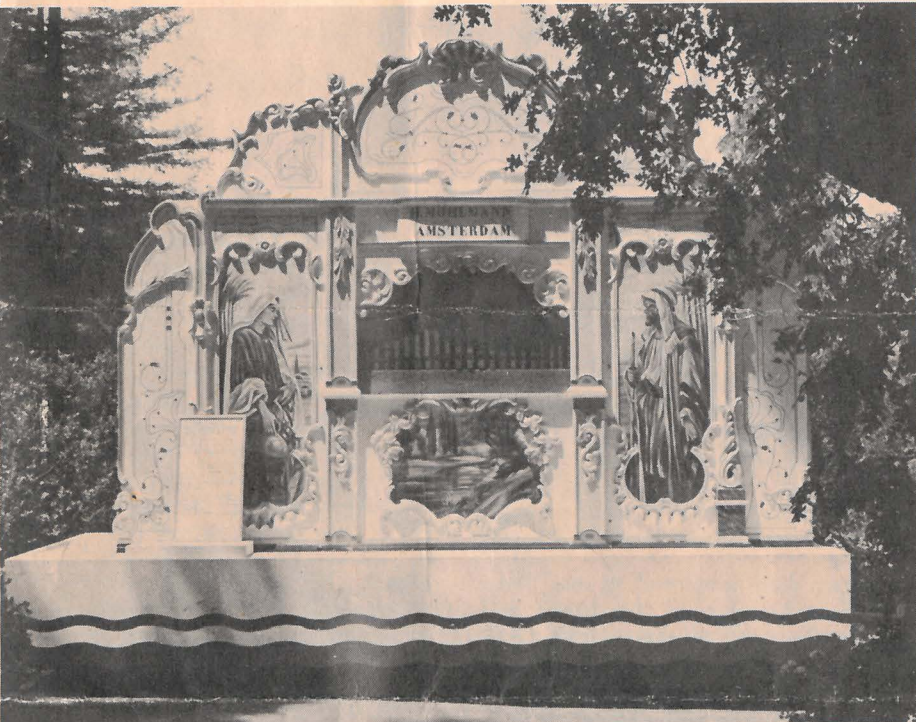
Merner bought the organ in 1958 following a trip to the Netherlands the preceding year. He and Mrs. Merner, who is a native of that country, spied a band organ playing in an orchard, and were so delighted that they immediately attempted to buy one of their own. The builder, H. Mohlmann, of Amsterdam, was reluctant to sell because, according to Merner, the Dutch attitude toward the *draaiorgel* is similar to that of the San Franciscan toward the cable car. After nine months of negotiation, mostly through Mrs. Merner's cousins in the Netherlands, a deal was made and the organ shipped to San Francisco and thence to Palo Alto, where several minor repairs were made while a search went on for a bona fide Dutch band organ mechanic.

In the meantime Roger finished his work at Foothill and continued to seek remarkable sounds, including those of passenger elevators. One day at a recording studio, Roger was introduced to Fred Trumbull, a Los Altos accountant, amateur

Roger Murray tinkers with the bellows device that operates a drum beater. Air pressure holds the beater out, against spring tension. When a valve opens on cue, the beater hits the drum.



(continued to page 2)



The Merners' barrel (or drum) organ fully assembled. Its name is "Oriental Lady." Formerly, as the desert artwork attests, its name was "The Arabian."

JULY sale

lots
and lots.
and lots of

**VALUES
SELECTION
QUALITY**

EL MONTE AVE. AT EL CAMINO
THE MAPLE Spinning Wheel
YO. 7-5464
MOUNTAIN VIEW, CALIF.

Open Monday And Thursday Nites

AUGUST SPECIAL

15.00 Permanent For _____ **12⁵⁰**

20.00 Permanent For _____ **15⁰⁰**

Includes Shampoo - Style and Cut.

This offer good Monday - Tuesday - Wednesday, August 1 - 2 - 3.

AIR
CONDITIONED
DRYERS

Altos

HOUSE OF BEAUTY

366 STATE ST.

PH. WH 8-3084

**BOWL
AND
STAY
SLIM**

ENJOY THESE FEATURES

- * 40 bowling lanes open 24 hours a day.
- * Catering to families. Free nursery service for tots daily.
- * Electronically filtered cool air.
- * Bowling instructions.
- * Coffee shop.



GOLOBIC'S

Camino

BOWL

Visit the

BOWLERO
Room

Featuring a superb selection of "stay-slim" summer-time salads . . . relax in one of the Peninsula's fine restaurants.

LANES
AVAILABLE FOR
OPEN PLAY
NIGHTLY

2025 El Camino Real, Mt. View

YO 8-0085

*It's too hot for my raccoon coat.
It's too cold for my bikinis.
What do I wear?????*



Music by the barrelful



Roger Murray examines the organs innards during exploratory surgery.

(continued from page 1)

naturalist, and producer of the record "Animal Sounds."

Finding a mutual mania, (Roger had just recorded the Otis at the Fox Theatre in San Francisco, and Trumbull had taped the elevator in the Eiffel Tower), the two chatted about sounds in general, and the Dutch band organ in particular, with the outcome that Trumbull agreed to finance Roger's production of a long-playing record of the organ's music.

Roger then proposed to the Merners that he rebuild the organ for the privilege of recording and marketing its music. The Merners, who despaired of finding the jolly Dutch tinker they had so long sought, turned the organ over to Roger, who, with utter confidence, took it completely apart. ("It's a relatively simple organ," he says with a shrug, "just a lot of things to it.") Putting it back together, he replaced a multitude of worn parts, many of which had ill-weathered the years since their manufacture, in 1898. Garden hose took the place of original tubing, some of which had been flexible cardboard, and copper fittings replaced wood where possible.

Roger calculates that 200 valves weren't working before he got it, and a fourth of the pipes were silent. He has replaced leaky valves in the main air chest, and cleared out the 56 ducts from the chest, which will operate at a normal five pounds of pressure, instead of the previous asthmatic 2 1/2. Roger used five kinds of glue in reassembly, in a quantity worth \$50 and supplied, fortunately, by Merner.

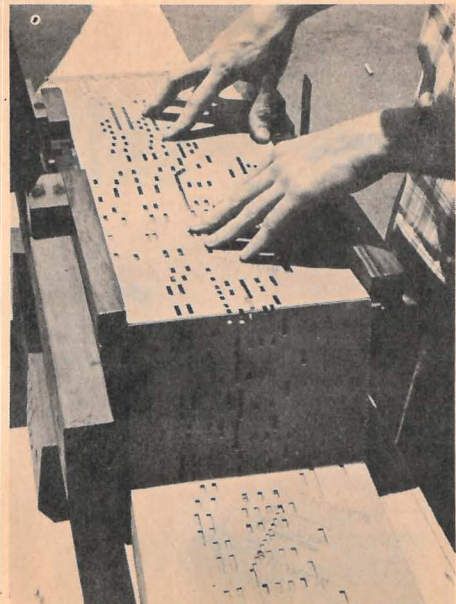
Looking at the organ the way a hot-rodder would a stock flathead Ford, Roger calculates that a manu-

al keyboard could be added, and accordingly he's investigating the keyboards of modern spinets. With a keyboard almost any sort of music could be produced, including jazz for those who like their piping hot. Then, too, he'd like to acquire the musical tracking mechanism from a Model 165 Wurlitzer Military Band organ. This, he believes, would add versatility to the present tracking device, which mechanically scans the holes in a heavy cardboard "book" of music. These books, costing \$25 each, are made only in the Netherlands and provide just three minutes of music each.

As soon as the organ is tuned Roger will move it for a recording session to one of several large halls he's scouted. He and Trumbull plan to press 1,000 recordings—half stereo, half monaural—for release in September under Trumbull's "Sounds Unlimited" label. The jacket, with the title "Imported from Amsterdam," will bear photos, artwork, and writing by friends of Roger's. "I believe in helping the young people," he says, stroking his crew cut.

He'll sell the recordings at various concerts he plans to schedule with the organ. KPEN, a San Francisco FM outlet, will present the organ in a live concert in September, according to Roger, when the station becomes a stereophonic broadcaster under the recently approved multiplexing technique.

Without the organ in the driveway and on his hands, Roger will return to another interest, that of designing and building high-quality microphones and recorders. "I suppose I'll be going into manufacturing before too long," he says, with the offhandedness of the young Edison.



The slots in the "book" of music activate the tracking mechanism which, in turn, controls the valves that send air through the pipes.