



Ye Old Piano Roll News

A Publication of the Barton Player Piano Company

One more time - August 2018

Barton Player Piano Company Reaches the End of the Roll

The seeds of Barton Player Piano Company were planted on Northridge Rd. in Columbus, Ohio, my childhood home. One day in 1963, I decided I was going to tune my family's upright piano. I went to the Library and checked out a book called "Piano tuning made Easy," then ventured to the local music store and ordered a tuning hammer. Not having a temperament strip for muting, I purchased a box of thin erasers to use as mutes. The outcome was not successful. I discovered that Piano Tuning is Not Easy. At least I didn't break any strings. Mom immediately called the piano tuner to straighten things out.

The failed tuning apparently did not dampen my enthusiasm for piano technology. During my college years, a bar on campus was getting rid of a piano. I rented a trailer and talked my buddies into helping me move the piano into my folk's garage. I proceeded to dismantle the piano, not having a clue of what I was doing. This project was cut short when my parents moved, requiring me to find a new home for the piano.

The Career, Minneapolis

Fast forward to the year 1972 when I attended a concert featuring pianist Van Cliburn. I was totally enthralled with his talent and technique, wondering (and knowing the answer), if I could ever master the piano.

In the program was an advertisement for MacPhail School of Music's Piano Technology course. It was at that point in time that I realized that I would never master the keyboard, but that perhaps I could care for them.



Don will now have time to master the keyboard.

decided to enroll in MacPhail's Piano Technology program. After successfully completing the program, I hit the pavement looking for a job. After being turned down at Schmitt Music, I wasn't sure where to turn. I had frequently passed by a little piano shop on the corner of E.24th St. & 13th Ave. that specialized in player pianos. It certainly wasn't Schmidt's or Bodine's, but I thought, "it won't hurt to check it out," so I stopped in and inquired about a job. Owner Grant Leonard hired me on a trial basis. That trial basis turned into a 13 year stint with Leonard's Player Piano Company, the premier player piano retail and restoration business in the upper Midwest. At

Leonard's, I learned the best techniques for restoring a variety of player systems, at the same time refining my Piano Technology skills.

It was a good run, but by the mid '80s, with a 4 year-old son and an adopted daughter on the way, I looked at my financial future and determined my position at Leonard's wouldn't be sufficient to raise a family; so after much soul searching, my wife Susan and I determined that I should start my own business. In 1985 we turned the lower level of our house into a workshop and showroom.

The home business worked well, but a change in residence in 1998 required me to look for a new space. The search took me across the river to 2715 4th St. S.E. The 1800 sq. ft. shop and show room allowed me to expand the business. But with the changing face of the East Bank of the U of M, the 2715 building was purchased for construction of apartment buildings on the site. In 2013 Barton Player Piano Co. moved back across the river to the current location at 1915 E. 22nd St.

The End, Retirement

Now after 33 years of restoring, maintaining, and marketing player pianos and piano rolls, it's time for a second cup of coffee in the morning, travel, and more time with my grandchildren. It's been a good run. I feel honored that so many people have entrusted the care of their beloved player pianos to my care. I have met many wonderful people and will miss the interaction with my customers.

Farewell Event
Saturday September 8, 11:00 AM
Height's Theatre
3951 Central Avenue N.E., 55421
Admission; \$8 adults. \$5 children

Barton Player Piano Co. is sponsoring The 13th Annual Movie Event. There will be a short silent film, accompanied by Ed Copeland on the Wurlitzer Pipe Organ. A documentary illustrating the process of piano roll manufacturing will be shown.

After a brief intermission the feature film we'll show Dr. Suess's The 5000 Fingers of Dr. T, the only non-animated Dr. Suess film. (See review on next page.)



Barton Player Piano Co.
1915 E. 22nd. St.
Minneapolis, MN 55404
(612) 378-1102



End of the Player Piano Roll Sale

Sat. Sept. 8, 1:00-5:00

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1915 E. 22nd St. Mpls. 55404
612 378-1102

Final clearance of piano rolls and Player Pianos

100s of new and used rolls \$4 to \$25.
Including Ampico and Duo Art rolls.
Prices drastically reduced on Player Pianos

Meet your new fixers: Caleb Spooner & Nate

Caleb Spooner



Caleb started in piano sales in 2004; his mechanical talent was recognized by the piano technicians he worked with there, and he began to learn to tune and repair pianos. Fascinated by player pianos, he learned to service modern Disklavier and Pianodisk player pianos during this time as well. One day the phone rang and it was a couple who needed to find a home for their 100 year-old Hinze player piano; He saw this as an opportunity to learn the

pneumatic systems used on the older player pianos, and he had it delivered to his house.

Since then Caleb has refined his tuning and repairing skills and is an associate member of the Piano Technicians Guild, where he is the chapter's newsletter editor. He has become Yamaha's go-to for modern Disklavier Mark IV/E3 player service in the Midwest and excels in tuning and field repair of older pneumatic player systems.

Also a performer, Caleb has over 44 years experience as a professional entertainer in groups like Denny & the Tornados and the Whitesidewalls; he was inducted into the Minnesota Rock & Country Hall of Fame in 2001. He currently fills out his days as a sales associate at the Music Connection in Forest Lake, and plays with River Rats Dueling Pianos and Latin-Fusion group Trio Tipo. In his spare time he restores and rides antique motorcycles, goes RVing, and pets beautiful but ungrateful cats.

Nate Otto

Nate is assuming the duties of player piano restorations. Nate is 28 years old and lives in Anoka, MN. His interest in player pianos started at a young age as he enjoyed the Packard player piano at his family cabin in Sauk Rapids. The piano eventually fell out of service and in 2013, he decided to try his hand at restoring the player system. With some practice, the help of a how-to book and pointers from Don Barton, the results were successful. Nate has been working part time at Barton Player Piano since 2015, learning on the job by assisting with restoration, repairs, and service calls.



Nate started his own company that offers player piano rebuilding and repair from his shop in Anoka.

New fixers, tuners, and movers

RESTORATION AND MAJOR SERVICES: Nate Otto.
Phone/text; 612 508-9418. Email; natepicheotto@gmail.com
Refer to code 002 when contacting Nate

TUNING AND SERVICE: Caleb Spooner.
Phone/text; 763 443-1602. Email; spoon55432@gmail.com.
Refer to code 005 when contacting Caleb

MOVERS: Manny's Piano Moving. 612 529-4268

As of October 1, the shop phone will be disconnected. You can contact Don via email; bartonpianos@gmail.com or website; www.bartonplayerpiano.com

The AMICA News Bulletin

Automatic Musical Instrument Collectors' Association

July/August 1989

Volume 26 • Number 4



Don Barton

Pumping for Pipes Guinness Book of World Records Attempt

On June 16 & 17, 1989, at the Minneapolis Convention Center Mr. Don Barton a member of AMICA and of the Preservation Committee for the Kimball Pipe Organ “ pumped for pipes “ for thirty- six and a half hours as he attempted to become the individual to pump an authentic, pneumatic player piano for the longest recorded time. * (In an attempt to get into the Guinness Book of World Records). No one, to his knowledge, had tried to set a record of this nature before.

Editor's note; Guinness did not accept this as a notable record.



Movie Review—*The 5000 Fingers of Dr. T*

This classic 1953 film was shown at our movie event in 2006 and the response was so great that we decided to show it again this year. *The 5000 Fingers of Dr. T* is the only non-animated Dr. Suess movie ever produced. It involves the imagination of a young boy who is forced to practice the piano and is lulled to sleep by the monotony of his piano lessons. He dreams of a castle ruled by his piano teacher, the eccentric Dr. Terwilliker. Dr. T is determined to prove that his “Happy Fingers Method” of teach-



ing piano is the best method in the world. Having banished all other musical instruments to the dungeon, Dr. T lures 500 reluctant little boys to perform in a colossal concert on the grandest grand piano ever built. In his effort to escape, Bart comes in contact with some of the strangest characters imaginable. The film is filled with surreal landscapes, Ziegfeld Folliessesque dance numbers, and tongue-twisting rhymes.

If you took piano lessons as a child or have had to “encourage” your children to practice, this film is a must see for the entire family.

Thank you Don for over thirty years of support and business!
You are a true icon in this field and will be missed greatly.
We hope you enjoy your well earned retirement.



Supplier of NEW Piano rolls since 1900.

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Thousands of rolls in stock!
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1-800-247-6557

Or visit us online at
www.QRSMusic.com

Use code Barton for a 5% discount on your order.

Ye Old End of the Player Piano Roll Sale

This is it. The end of the roll for you to get a great player piano from the world record player piano player, Don Barton.



This is not a player piano, but a rare and unique Art Deco styled 44" Gulbransen console piano \$950



Raudenbush Player Piano with Autopiano player system. One of three piano companies based in Minnesota. Good unrestored condition. \$200



Euphonia Inner Player by Cable. This is one of the finest restored player pianos we have ever had. New hammers, case professionally refinished. Only \$2900



1983 Sting II with automatic rewind and shut-off. Reduced from \$2600 to \$1200.



Duo Art by Aeolian. Automatic rewind and shut-off. \$450



Conover Cable Inner Player. One of the best designed player pianos ever manufactured. XL unrestored condition. \$300



Seeburg Digital player piano. The best of two centuries. 1920s Seeburg Nickelodeon with the revolutionary 21st Century Pianomation CD system with remote transmitters. Extensive music library. \$4500.

This piano is not on site. For additional information contact Craig Swager: 651-486-6914.



Small 65 note Pianola Players. Perfect for small home or apartment. Two models to choose from; manual pump. \$400

Electric with automatic rewind and shut-off \$550



Holland upright player piano. Refinished and restored with electric vacuum system. \$450

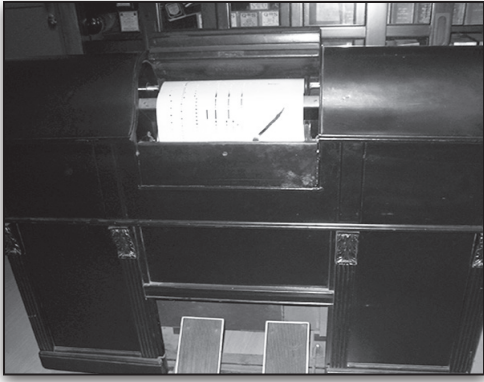
Saturday, September 8 | 1:00–5:00 PM | 1915 E. 22nd St. | Minneapolis. 55404



1960s Kimball player organ. In working condition. Some valves need work. \$500



Autopiano Conservatory Player Piano. This model is one of the few players that is manual pump and electric pump (not vacuum). Very good unrestored condition. \$500



1890s Aeolian Pianola push-up. Restored in working condition. \$850



Dynavoice key-top player unit and two framed pictures. Unrestored \$150

Framed prints:	Carnegie Hall 30" x 42"	\$300
	Gershwin Print. 40" x 30"	\$200
	Daude Framed print. 52" x 40"	\$275.



Set of 36 Pianolist's Themodist-Metrostyle Piano Rolls Very good original condition. \$225

Please come to our farewell event!!

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