



World's oldest piano maker Pleyel shuts last workshop

Pleyel, the French piano maker and world's oldest still in activity, to shut last workshop in Saint-Denis in symbolic blow for France's struggling industry



Frédéric Chopin favoured Pleyel pianos Photo: AFP

By **Henry Samuel, Paris** 3:51PM GMT 13 Nov 2013

Pleyel, the world's oldest piano makers still in operation and the favourite of Frédéric Chopin, are to shut their last workshop in a symbolic blow for the once mighty flagship of French artistic savoir-faire and industry. Since Ignaz Pleyel, an accomplished composer-musician and friend of Joseph Haydn, launched his first



Look at the middle signature....

It's one of our esteemed Guild life members, Don McIntosh, active in our profession all these years. This may not be the earliest date of Don's that I've seen but none-the-less it's getting back a bit.

Did he start tuning at 12, its just that he doesn't seem that old!

Good one Don, plenty of quality tunings to come yet.

PIANO NEWS

French manufacturing plant in 1807, the brand has continuously produced pianos for more than 200 years. It was Pleyel who introduced the upright piano to **France**, who first used a metallic frame in his pianos and invented the sound known as "sustained".

His pianos' rich, velvety tones charmed Chopin, for whom Pleyel was the official piano supplier, but also a host of illustrious names including Liszt, Debussy, Grieg, Ravel and Stravinsky.

Many of the 250,000 Pleyels built in the past two centuries still furnish countless French homes, while the Salle Pleyel, designed to showcase them, is Paris' most prestigious concert hall.

However, after years of decline and a recent attempt to focus on high-end, tailor-made instruments, the maker has apparently succumbed to ferocious competition from Chinese and Korean rivals.

On Wednesday, Bernard Roques, its manufacturing head, confirmed the imminent closure of Pleyel's last workshop in Saint-Denis, outside Paris. The workshop, which employs 14 staff, was being forced to close due to "recurrent losses and a very weak level of activity", he said.

The Saint-Denis workshop opened its doors in 1865. Pleyel moved production to Germany in 1961 for 25 years before returning to Alès, southern France and then back to Saint-Denis in 2000 for the brand's bicentenary.

Fabrice Perret, deputy head of the workshop, said the closure spelled the demise of "a unique savoir faire" for the "Ferrari of the piano world".

"We used to deliver to yachts, to the Arab Emirates, to Australia. Now, Pleyel is finished," he told AFP.

From an annual production of around 1,700 pianos in 2000, the company now only make 20 per year.

Françoise Levéchin, head of the international music conservatoire of Paris, said the death of Pleyel was a "major catastrophe for the French piano school".

Wellington Workshop / AGM Meeting

April 5th - 6th 2014

The next Guild workshop and AGM meeting will be hosted by Stephen Powell at his workshop, 60 Ponsonby Road, Karori, Wellington.

An Australian Guest Lecturer will be presenting a couple of sessions along with some of our local members. There will also be the AGM

covering the business side of the Guild.

Full details on the next page.



"It's unthinkable that it can't be supported, that this very old house which is a great French maker and is part of piano history cannot be saved," she said.

Ironically, news of Pleyel's disappearance came on the day that France's Socialist government launched a 380 million-euro "economic resistance plan" to ward against a wave of plant closures.

With tens of thousands of industrial job losses expected in the coming months, Arnaud Montebourg, the industrial recovery minister, said the "exceptional means" would help struggling companies "find the path to viability and prosperity once more".

Each Pleyel piano requires 5,000 separate parts and up to 1,500 working hours bringing together 20 different expert artisans from the mechanism to the woodwork and varnish.

"All businesses in France are hit," said Anne Midavaine of the French Confederation of Art Professions, CFMA. "But don't we sum up everyone's dream of France's grandeur, its non-exportable knowhow?"

PIANO NEWS

Annual General Meeting of the PTTGNZ

Saturday the 5th and Sunday the 6th of April 2014

60 Ponsonby Road, Karori, Wellington

Host: Stephen Powell

Saturday

Coffee will be available from 9:00 onwards, Meeting commencing at 9:30.

9:30 - Introduction and house keeping.

9:45 - Annual General Meeting and election of new council.

10:45 - Refreshment break with a selection of drink and food.

11:00 - Practical tuning techniques :How to maximize results for the amount of effort with **David Salmon**.

12:15 - Lunch, this will be catered in house with a selection of sandwiches, salads and cold meats.

1:00 - Australian guest lecturer, Guus van den Braak: The properties of timber.

3:00 - Refreshment break

3:15 - Guus van den Braak: Rescaling pianos during the re-build process.

5:00 - Break for the day with a few drinks before traveling to dinner.

7:00 - Dinner at Bistro Breton 87 Upland Road, Kelburn. See web link below for details.

http://www.menulog.co.nz/bistro_breton

Sunday

9:00 - Coffee

9:30 - Stephen Powell presentation

10.30 Refreshment break

11.00 Clare Gleeson. A brief talk on her book 'Meet Me at Begg's'

11.30 Kevin Hanna presentation

12:30 - presentations finish, goodbyes.

My recommendation for accommodation after some shopping around is; The Setup. See web link below.

<http://www.thesetup.co.nz/>

There are numerous other accommodation options of varying quality throughout Wellington for those wanting something else.

Please contact me to RSVP

Thepianotuner@gmail.com

[027-268-8918](tel:027-268-8918)

Thank you, **David Salmon**

PIANO NEWS

A few pics to make your day.....



Moki stretching out, leverage is everything!



For sale: Sanderson Accu-Tuner 2 with full instruction manual and power adapter. Overall condition and battery life is very good. This is a very reliable, accurate machine with good reviews internationally. \$150.00 or nearest offer.

Jenkin Piano Service Ltd

Telephone [09 480-1551](tel:094801551) Mob [0274-731-224](tel:0274731224)

The Seaboard - The Piano of the Future

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=qOt6ZKIb240

PIANO NEWS

Piano Tuning Apprentice

We are seeking an apprentice Piano Tuner / Technician. Training would be for four years commencing with a trial period in early 2014

The following skills would be taught.

- Tuning
- Repair and rebuilding work.
- Regulation.
- Voicing.
- Woodwork.
- Tool use and care.
- Theory
- Material knowledge and recognition
- Piano evaluations
- Quoting for repairs
- Valuations

The following background would be suitable.

- Technical, craft or design training or skills.
- English, Mathematics to year 11 or 12
- An interest or studies in Music to year 11 or 12 or beyond. Good general musical knowledge. Keyboard skills an advantage.

Personal qualities.

- Personable, reliable, well spoken and well presented.
- Practical. Committed.
- An ability to work unsupervised from time to time.
- Drivers license.

The trainee would be expected to be examined for membership of the New Zealand Piano Tuners and Technicians Guild (Member of the Australasian Association) at the conclusion of the third year of training. It may be useful to have potential trainees spend a few days at the workshop and with one of our tuners as an introduction to the work of a piano tuner.

We are the preeminent piano tuning and repair service in New Zealand, based at our large on the North Shore workshop with four qualified piano Tuner Technicians working across Auckland. We have previously trained seven Tuner / Technicians.

Please apply in writing to David Jenkin

JENKIN PIANO SERVICE LTD.

YUJI NAKAMURA, ASSOCIATE.

ADDRESS: 128 SUNNYBRAE RD. HILLCREST 0627

MAIL: PO BOX 34 363 BIRKENHEAD 0746

AUCKLAND NEW ZEALAND

PH 09 440-9565 / FAX 09 440-9566 / MOB 0274-731-224

www.jenkinpiano.co.nz david@jenkinpiano.co.nz

PIANO NEWS

APTTA Sydney Convention Review

This year the biannual APTTA convention was held at the Novotel Manly, in NSW. Approximately 150 tuners/techs attended, with plenty of other support staff working around us.

The venue was situated on one of Manly's beaches facing directly east and provided a very good setting, with good weather over the duration of our stay.

I had to admit, a serious effort was made to provide a top quality of venues and entertainment. Although pricey, you got what you paid for. Both Friday and Saturday evening featured a serious calibre of acts and meals. Friday evenings comedian/songwriter provided excellent entertainment with his song - Piano tuning man and many more gems.

There were seven New Zealanders attending, most of them NZPTTG members all of us enjoying the locals sense of humour and relaxed demeanor. After all how could you get stressed with so much nice weather!

The lectures varied a great deal in topic, depth and quality. Guus van den Braak's class on the properties of wood was very well presented, as was John Hadfield's presentation about setting up and keeping your business in great working order. Yuji Nakamura's grand touch weight class was very well received and was even more polished and comprehensive than what some of us saw at the Auckland NZPTTG meeting. There were opportunities to see Lou Parke's workshop and watch him make a string or two, this was a good little break from the convention center.

The sponsor's stalls proved interesting as well. Mason & Hamlin have made a big push in Australia and it seems to be paying off for them. Kawai Australia gave a good presentation on their new range of pianos. On the other hand, Yamaha's presentation could have been better organized, given that it was an ideal opportunity to talk to so many tuner/techs about the new Approved Yamaha Training (YT) system.

I wish I had the opportunity to catch all the classes, but it never works that way. All in all, a very pleasant and informative experience.

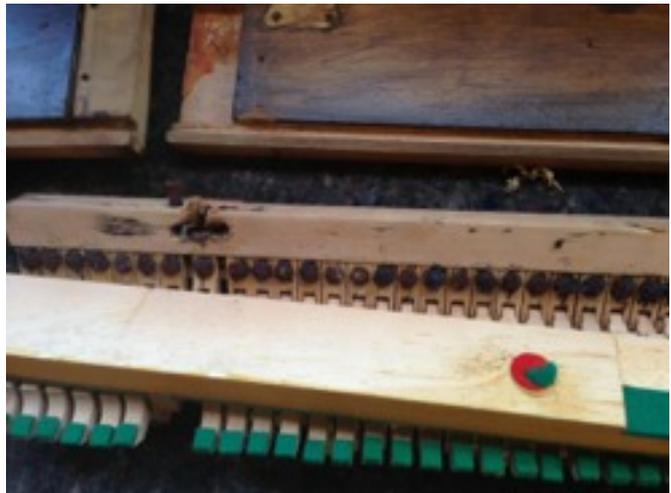


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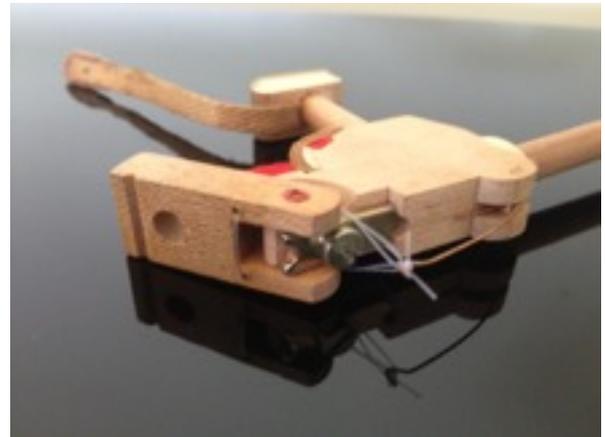
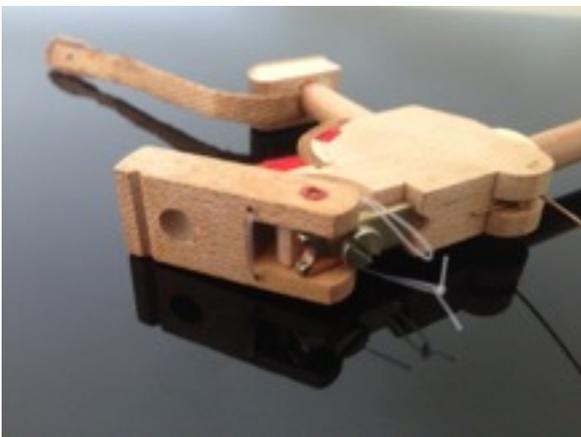
And some pics from the 'Horror' department...



A bridge over troubled....
or just a troubled bridge.



No explanation required!



An 'interesting' flange loop replacement seen in the Waikato region.