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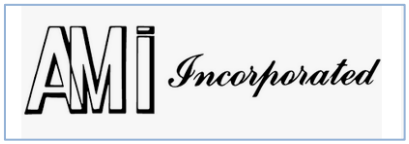

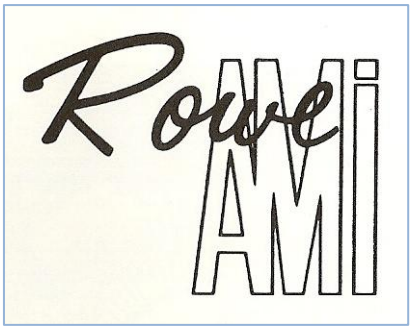

Jukeboxes

Company History

The AMI company originated from two stock-holding twin-companies, the National Automatic Music Co. (operating) and the National Piano Manufacturing Co. (manufacturing), founded in May and June, 1909, respectively. The facilities for production of nickel-in-the-slot players were in fact situated in a four-story building still with the name National Piano-Player Co. in the town Oregon west of Chicago until 1912. In June 1912, however, the elected officers of the two companies approved the resolutions authorizing the removal of the production from Oregon west of Chicago to new facilities in the Leonard Building on the corner of Ionia Street and Fulton Street in Grand Rapids, Michigan, before the 1st July 1912, and the new offices and factory facilities stayed there until 1922, when both companies moved to a former horse-drawn hearse factory building at 1500 Union Avenue S.E. (the Michigan Hearse & Carriage Co., later renamed Grand Rapids Motor Hearse Co., owned by Walter Ioor). In 1912 the piano manufacturing company was headed by the specialist in wood for cabinetry Clarence U. Clark as president, the investor Walter Ioor was vice-president, and I. D. Taylor from Chicago served as secretary. The operating company contracted to take the entire output of machines was at the same time headed by Carroll F. Sweet as president, Clarence U. Clark was vice-president, and Walter Ioor served as secretary. The coin-operated pianos were by then based on several patents by Edgar B. Sherman, Karl O. Carlson, Edwin A. Kingsley, and John P. Ioor (1843-1929), who most surely was related to the businessman, lawyer and investor Walter Ioor (1862-1941). Also important patents by Clifford H. Green were filed and granted around 1914-1915, and all rights to the known patents were assigned to the National Piano Manufacturing Co. when granted. All rights to the first patent were, however, owned by Edgar B. Sherman (1863-1948), so he might well have been one of the founding partners together with Carroll F. Sweet, Walter Ioor, Clarence Ulysses Clark and others in 1909. The investor Walter Ioor was also for many years president of the Cordolo Musical Instruments Co. at 788 North Orange Avenue in Orlando, Florida, run by his son-in-law Harry Alvord Yeider, the inventor of the pick-up arm for the National Automatic Selective Phonograph introduced early in 1927. It seems that Walter Ioor was a winter resident of Orlando since his first visit in 1916 until he decided to move permanently in 1931 to the more appealing climate in Florida. The two twin-companies in Grand Rapids merged into one stock-holding company under the leadership of Walter Ioor on the 9th November, 1925. The company was by then known for its main product, a special 8-selection coin-operated piano that looked like a normal upright piano, developed by John P. Ioor, but had no keyboard installed in the usual place. The cabinet housed an 8-roll changer including a selective mechanism with 8 coin-slots that played National coin-piano rolls. According to information from the historian Arthur A. Reblitz the National coin-piano rolls had their own musical layout, and the coin-operated pianos with dog races

in the top section had been operated on company owned routes in several States for more than ten years. The new company name, Automatic Musical Instrument Co., registered in 1925 was apparently not used officially until after the introduction of the coin-operated, selective phonograph developed by Clifford H. Green with a record changing mechanism invented by Bertram C. Kenyon. The patent for the mechanism was filed for patent on the 15th July 1927 by Bertram C. Kenyon, Wilmur W. Boa, and Clifford H. Green. On the same day the three inventors filed a patent for a special coin-chute for the phonograph. As a result of that it is often mentioned in jukebox history publications, that AMI introduced the first coin-operated, electrically amplified, 20-selection phonograph with a mechanical ten-record system that played on both sides. The modern style jukebox was born. According to basic company research by John H. Perschbacher of the Babcock House Museum Collections in Manistee, the Automatic Musical Instruments Co. wanted to put 8,500 multiple-select phonographs in operation in the field, similarly to their piano routes, in late 1926 and early 1927. All pianos and phonographs operated on the routes in more than thirty states were owned by the company in Grand Rapids, and the route manager would deposit all coins in a local bank account. As a result of this procedure the head office back home at 1500 Union Avenue S.E. in Grand Rapids could always keep track of the profitability of the route. Also it seems that the National Automatic Selective Phonograph was licensed for manufacture for the home market to General Motors Radio Corp. in 1928. These phonographs had the auto-select feature and a remote control unit of vest-pocket size to turn the machine on and off, change records and volume, instead of coin operation.

In January 1929 lawyer Walter Ioor and the Automatic Musical Instrument Co. had a lease on three floors in the four-story factory building of the Chase-Hackley Piano Co. in Muskegon, Michigan, and Walter Ioor tried but unfortunately failed to exercise the option to purchase the old plant at a bargain price of $100,000 due to the financial crisis. This was a hint in the wrong direction, and soon the Automatic Musical Instrument Co. itself ran into serious financial difficulties like many other companies due to the Depression. In March 1931 the company was forced into receivership by the Grand Rapids Trust Co. and Harry M. Baxter of the American National Bank, and according to the thorough research of John H. Perschbacher, the treasurer-secretary of AMI, Cornelius H. Knoll, who was in his mid thirties in 1931 and an employee since 1920, was instructed by the receivers to resolve the financial problems. The company survived the years of recession with the phonograph model F until the model FR with a new mechanism developed by the company's chief engineer at the time, Clifford H. Green, was introduced in 1934. The practice that all machines in the field were company owned was finally changed early 1936, and from then on the AMI phonographs were sold to the operators or route managers. Clifford H. Green, the chief engineer for many years who had been responsible for the development of the

selective phonograph in 1927, died in an automobile accident aged 51 on the 29th July 1934.

Among the important industrial designers connected to the Automatic Musical Instruments Co. was also the engineer Lloyd J. Andres, who worked near the top of AMI in the early 1930s together with engineer Clifford H. Green. The two engineers had been authorized by investors and the management to develop a new line of improved coin-operated phonographs after the depression, and Lloyd J. Andres has not been mentioned as much as he deserves in previous literature about jukebox history. His first patented full size jukebox design of 1937 got the official name Top Flight, but Lloyd J. Andres had before that also designed the casing for a special remote control selector in 1936. The remote selector units designed by Lloyd J. Andres were important, because many locations were too small for full-size jukeboxes, and the table-top jukebox models introduced mainly by The Rudolph Wurlitzer Co. had no chance to compete with the hide-away units with remote controls, which were introduced for real in 1939 by the Automatic Musical Instruments Co. in the form of Mighty Midget units, and in the form of Wall-O-Matic and Bar-O-Matic units introduced by The J. P. Seeburg Corp.. The small counter-top jukeboxes could not survive the hey-days of design and the competition during the years 1940-42, but the hide-away units did survive. The impressive AMI Singing Tower models were operated by an affiliation of Automatic Musical Instruments Co. called Singing Towers Inc. in Chicago, and the system worked well for years, and survived the war years until the Automatic Musical Instruments Co. of Grand Rapids introduced the AMI Model A nicknamed Mother of Plastic. The Singing Tower cabinets were all but one designed by Lloyd J. Andres, and his first design was filed for patent on the 13th April, 1939, and the following four designs were filed on the 19th and 21st February, 1940. The industrial designer Jean Otis Reinecke assigned the patent for the Model A to AMI Inc. in 1946 (the name of the company was officially changed to AMI Inc. in 1946), and the talents of industrial designers sure did become an important asset of the big jukebox manufacturers in Chicago, Grand Rapids, and North Tonawanda.

In Grand Rapids a new AMI Model B was introduced in 1948 by the Automatic Musical Instruments Co. to follow the Mother of Plastic designed by Jean Otis Reinecke. The next model, the AMI Model C was introduced in 1949, and it is normally not considered to belong to the Golden Age of American jukeboxes. Both the B and the C model were not design patented. Like the other two major manufacturers, Rock-Ola and WurliTzer, also AMI Inc. was caught a little off guard when Seeburg introduced the 100-selection model in 1948-1949, but it was somewhat easier to increase the number of selections on the Model 500 Record Changer up to a total of 120 selections in 45rpm in the models E-120, F-120, and G-120 of the period

1953-1956, until a new vertical carousel mechanism was introduced for the model G-200 of 1956. The Model 500 Record Changer was originally developed, refined, and patented by Anthony M. Kasnowich. The design patent for the model G-200 was filed in September, 1955, by Melvin H. Boldt, and Boldt then carried on with the new line of nice, eye catching H-, I-, Jubilee-, and K-cabinets of 1957-1960. The G- and H-models, and also the Jubilee-model, were copied and produced by European license holders like BAL-AMI, the Balfour Machine Engineering Co., in England and IMA-AMI, Jensen Music Automates A/S, in Denmark.

Around the 27th March 1959 AMI Inc. still with main offices at 1500 Union Avenue S.E. in Grand Rapids finally merged with Rowe AC Services, a division of the Automatic Canteen Co. of America. The company Rowe AC Services in Chicago had been founded in 1926 by William Rowe, who is considered today to be the inventor of the first cigarette vending machine, and the first president of the new Rowe/AMI company structure was Clarence W. Clark of Chicago, Illinois. The new company name Rowe/AMI was, however, not used officially in advertising until 1961-1962. The main company, Automatic Canteen Co. of America, which had taken over the Rowe AC Services in the mid 1950s, was originally founded by Nathaniel Leverone in 1929. As the noted president of AMI Inc., John W. Haddock, decided to retire from the jukebox business in 1961, and the Automatic Canteen Co. of America took over the administration of the company structure, a new industrial designer, Jack R. Mell, was consulted, and he would soon come up with strange but beautiful patented cabinet designs.

John Wolcott Haddock took over control of the company with a group of investors in 1945, and changed the official name to AMI Inc., when he was still president of the Farrel-Birmingham Co. in Ansonia, Connecticut. He was formerly vice president of the Sullivan machinery Co. in Michigan City, Indiana. After leaving the jukebox industry John W. Haddock lived first in Estoril in Portugal and then in Scottsdale in Arizona, and there he lost his wife Gladys to cancer on the 30th January 1972 (Gladys Elizabeth *Moffett*, born on the 28th August 1898). Gladys (using the stage name *Baxter*) had been a popular opera singer/actress in the 1920s and early 1930s before she married John on the 2nd October 1935. On the 4th May 1974 John W. Haddock married Erma Patricia *Worlton* (1909-1983) in London, England, and after she died, he married Sibylle Ursula *Kuhn* (1944-) in La Jolla on the 22nd May 1987. John W. Haddock passed away on the 18th March 1998 in La Jolla, California

In the early 1960s the design of coin-op music machines became quite different, and a lot of design patents were filed in order to protect the models in competition with the few other major manufacturers on the American market. Especially Rowe/AMI and Seeburg used the right to design patent the jukebox cabinets. At AMI the two

distinct designs for XJ Continental and XJ Lyric were filed for patent in August, 1960, by Jack R. Mell, and both of them were assembled or produced on license in Italy by Apparecchi Musicali Italiani in Turin. The XJ Continental is often referred to as the Radar, and both the Lyric and the Continental are much loved by collectors and enthusiasts today. After the two models designed by Jack R. Mell (patents granted in 1962), Melvin H. Boldt took over the trend-setting again at Rowe/AMI and design patented the following models throughout the 1960s: JAL-200 and JEL-200 (1963), JBM Tropicana (1964), JAN Diplomat (1965), Wall-ette (remote control unit, 1965), MM-1 Music Merchant (1967), CMM-1 Cadette (1968), and the MM-2 Music Master (1968). Here it ought to be mentioned that Rowe International Inc. became a wholly owned corporate subsidiary of Triangle Conduit & Cable Co. Inc. (Triangle Industries Inc.) in Whippany, New Jersey, in the spring of 1968.

After the MM-2 Music Master the official name of the product line was simply Rowe, and Melvin H. Boldt design patented the following jukeboxes from 1969 until 1973: MM-3 Music Miracle (1969), MM-4 Trimount (1970) named in honour of Rowe's New England dealer team, MM-5 President Line (1971), the RI-1 model line, and the TI-1 model line (1973). After 1973 Melvin H. Boldt design patented the following jukeboxes around 1980/81: R-82 Woodhue (1980), R-83 Claremont (1981), and finally the R-84 Prelude (1981). Year in parenthesis indicates the year the patent was granted. One particular Rowe design of the era had other designer names attached to it: The front panel for the CDII Cadette de Luxe Violetta was filed for patent by Walter L. Koch and Robert P. Franklin in 1971 and the patent was granted in 1973. Most if not all models of the 1980s clearly show the cabinet lines from the Boldt-designed boxes. Some trendy styles were the R-85 Starlight (1981), R-86 Blue Magic (1982), and the Sapphire series (models R-87 through R-92) leading to the new compact-disc era of jukeboxes that started in 1987.

Since the beginning of the new compact-disc jukebox era the original Rowe/AMI company structure has changed a lot, but a long line of CD-playing jukeboxes were produced through the1990s. Only very few features of the 1991-1998 LaserStar line were design patented. The CD-100A LaserStar model of 1991 can be found as a full patent by Jeffrey J. Kalis *et al.*, and also the wall-mounted CD20 Starlet produced the same year (1991) can be found as a patent.

The company Rowe International Inc. announced the filing of a voluntary petition for reorganization under Chapter 11 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code in September 2003 after more than ten years of burdensome debt. The action was taken to facilitate the sale of the company while moving forward with its development and manufacturing activities, and the company was acquired in November 2003 by the Harbour Group, a private equity firm based in St. Louis, Missouri, to become part of the Entertainment

Products Group. The latest patent filed by a group of engineers and executives at the Rowe International Inc., James Douglas Johnson *et al.*, concerns the CD-100L jukebox produced in 2006, and on the 11th July 2006 Rowe International produced its one-millionth jukebox.

Finally, in 2009 the new owners of Rowe International Inc. decided to shift manufacturing of musical equipment from Grand Rapids in Michigan to Reynosa in Mexico on the Texas-Mexico border, and there is no longer any jukebox production in Grand Rapids; - the city where it all began hundred years ago with coin-operated pianos.

* * * * *

Gert Almind, 09-23-2010

(1929-1930)

(February, 2011)

Jukeboxes, 78rpm Era

Year	Model	Records	Selections	Speed
1927	National Aut. Select. Phonogr.	10	20	78
1931-1933	F	10	20	78
1934-1935	FR	10	20	78
1935-1936	Modern	10	20	78
1936-1938	Top Flight	10	20	78
1938-1939	Streamliner	10	20	78
1939-1940	Singing Towers (Henry T. Roberts)	10	20	78
1940-1942	Singing Towers (Lloyd J. Andres)	20	40	78
1946-1947	A, *Mother of Plastic*	20	40	78
1948-1949	B	20	40	78
1949-1950	C	20	40	78
1951-1952	D-40	20	40	78
1953	E-40	20	40	78
1954	F-40	20	40	78
1955	G-40	20	40	78

Remote Selector Units, 78rpm Era

Year	Model	Selections
1931-1934	Remote Control for models ‘F’ and ‘FR’	20
1936-1938	Junior Remote Controller	20
1936-1938	Senior Remote Controller with Speaker	20
1938-1940	Midget 20-selection Barbox	20
1938-1940	Midget 20-selection Wallbox	20
1938-1941	Mighty Midget Wallbox with Speaker	20
1940-1942	10-selection Wall-Speaker for Autom. Hostess	10
1940-1942	20-selection Wall-Speaker for Singing Towers	20
1940-1942	40-selection Wall-Speaker for Singing Towers	40
1940-1952	WL, 40-selection Wallbox, 5c	40
1940-1952	WM, 40-selection Wallbox, 5c/10c	40

Auxiliary Speakers, 78rpm Era

Year	Model
1938-1939	Streamliner
1947-1954	S-81, Amivox, 8-inch, circular aluminum speaker

Jukeboxes, 45rpm Era

Year	Model	Records	Selections	Speed
1951-1952	D-80	40	80	45
1953	E-80	40	80	45
1953	E-120	60	120	45
1954	F-80	40	80	45
1954	F-120	60	120	45
1955-1956	G-80	40	80	45
1955-1956	G-120	60	120	45
1956	G-200	100	200	45
1957	JCH-100 (manual)	50	100	45
1957	JBH-120 (electric)	60	120	45
1957	JDH-200 (manual)	100	200	45
1957	JAH-200 (electric)	100	200	45
1958	JCI-100 (manual)	50	100	45
1958	JBI-120 (electric)	60	120	45
1958	JDI-200 (manual)	100	200	45
1958	JAI-200 (electric)	100	200	45
1958	JEI-200 (electric)	100	200	45
1959	JCJ-100 Mono (manual)	50	100	45
1959	JBJ-120 Mono (electric)	60	120	45
1959	JDJ-200 Mono (manual)	100	200	45
1959	JAJ-200 Mono (electric)	100	200	45
1959	JGJ-100 Stereo (manual)	50	100	45
1959	JFJ-120 Stereo (electric)	60	120	45
1959	JHJ-200 Stereo (manual)	100	200	45
1959	JEJ-200 Stereo (electric)	100	200	45
1960	JCK-100 Mono (manual)	50	100	45
1960	JBK-120 Mono (electric)	60	120	45
1960	JDK-200 Mono (manual)	100	200	45
1960	JAK-200 Mono (electric)	100	200	45
1960	JGK-100 Stereo (manual)	50	100	45
1960	JFK-120 Stereo (electric)	60	120	45
1960	JHK-200 Stereo (manual)	100	200	45
1960	JEK-200 Stereo (electric)	100	200	45
1960	JLK-100 Mono (automatic)	50	100	45
1960	JNK-100 Stereo (automatic)	50	100	45
1960	JJK-200 Mono (automatic)	100	200	45

1960	JKK-200 Stereo (automatic)	100	200	45
1961	XJAA-200 Continental Mono (manual)	100	200	45/33
1961	XJCA-200 Continental Mono (automatic)	100	200	45/33
1961	XJBA-200 Continental Stereo (manual)	100	200	45/33
1961	XJDA-200 Continental Stereo (automatic)	100	200	45/33
1961	XJEA-100 Lyric Mono (manual)	50	100	45/33
1961	XJGA-100 Lyric Mono (automatic)	50	100	45/33
1961	XJFA-100 Lyric Stereo (manual)	50	100	45/33
1961	XJHA-100 Lyric Stereo (automatic)	50	100	45/33
1962	XJBA-200 Continental 2 Mono (manual)	100	200	45/33
1962	XJCB-200 Continental 2 Mono (automatic)	100	200	45/33
1962	XJBB-200 Continental 2 Stereo (manual)	100	200	45/33
1962	XJDB-200 Continental 2 Stereo (automatic)	100	200	45/33
1962	XJEB-100 Continental 2 Mono (manual)	50	100	45/33
1962	XJGB-100 Continental 2 Mono (automatic)	50	100	45/33
1962	XJFB-100 Continental 2 Stereo (manual)	50	100	45/33
1962	XJHB-100 Continental 2 Stereo (automatic)	50	100	45/33
1962	XJJB-100 Continental 2 Mono	50	100	45/33
1962	XJKB-100 Continental 2 Stereo	50	100	45/33
1962-1963	JAL-200 Stereo	100	200	45/33
1962-1963	JEL-200 Stereo	100	200	45/33
1963-1964	JAM-200	100	200	45/33
1963-1964	JBM-200 Tropicana	100	200	45/33
1965	JAN-200 Diplomat	100	200	45/33

1966	JAO-200 Bandstand	100	200	45/33
1966-1967	MM-1 Music Merchant	100	200	45/33
1966-1967	MM-1A Music Merchant	100	200	45/33
1968	MM-2 Music Master	100	200	45/33
1968	MM-2A Music Master	100	200	45/33
1968-1970	CMM-1 Cadette	50	100	45/33
1969	MM-3 Music Miracle	100	200	45/33
1969-1970	MM-4 Trimount	100	200	45/33
1971	MM-5 President	100	200	45/33
1971-1972	CD-2 Cadette	50	100	45/33
1972	MM-6 Superstar	100	200	45/33
1973	TI-1 Deauville, Monte Carlo, and Seville	100	200	45/33
1973-1974	RI-1 Heritage	60	120	45/33
1974	CTI-1 Crestwood	100	200	45/33
1974	TI-2 Caprice, Rhapsody, and Woodbridge	100	200	45/33
1975	R-74 Arlington, Classic, and SQ (quadrophonic)	100	200	45/33
1976	R-80 Fleetwood and Imperial	100	200	45/33
1977	CTI-1SC Camelot	100	200	45/33
1977	R-81 Constellation, Laser Blue, Moondrops, and Pulsar Orange	100	200	45
1977	RI-2 Canterbury and Fantasia	60	120	45
1978	R-82 Black Magic and Woodhue	100	200	45
1979	CTI-2 Kentwood	100	200	45
1979	R-83 Claremont, Disco 200, and Fiesta	100	200	45
1980	R-84 Prelude, Tempo, and Tempo Disco	100	200	45
1980	RI-3 Jewel	80	160	45
1981	R-85 Starburst, Starlight, and Starwood	100	200	45
1982	R-86 Blue Magic and Gold Magic	100	200	45
1982	RI-4 Jewel	80	160	45
1982	RI-5 Romantica	80	160	45
1984	R-87 Golden 7 and Sapphire 7	100	200	45
1984	R-88 Golden 8 and Sapphire 8	100	200	45
1984	R-88 Sapphire 8 Video	100	200	45/Vd
1985	R-89 Golden 89 and Sapphire 89	100	200	45

1985	R-89 Sapphire Video	100	200	45/Vd
1986	R-90 Golden 90 and Sapphire 90	100	200	45
1986	R-90 Sapphire Video	100	200	45/Vd
1987	R-91 Golden 91 and Sapphire 91	100	200	45
1987	R-91 Compact Disc	100	200	45/CD
1987	R-91 Video Jukebox	100	200	45/Vd
1988	R-92 Golden 92 and Sapphire 92	100	200	45
1988	R-92 La Combo	100	200	45/CD
1988	R-92 Video Jukebox	100	200	45/Vd
1988-	Bubbler Nostalgic	100	200	45/CD
1989	Rowe Star	100	200	45
1989	Rowe Combo-Star	100	200	45/CD

Remote Selector Units, 45rpm Era

Year	Model	Selections
1951-1954	W-40 Wallbox	40
1951-1955	W-80 Wallbox	80
1953-1955	W-120 Wallbox	120
1956-1960	WQ-120 Wallbox	120
1956-1965	WQ-200 Wallbox	200
1957-1965	WQ-100 Wallbox	100
1966-1967	WRA Wall-ette	200
1966-1967	WRB Wall-ette	200
1968-1976	WRC Wall-ette	200
1977-1981	WRD Wall-ette	200
1981-1985	WRE Wall-ette	200
1981-1985	WRF Wall-ette	200

Auxiliary Speakers, 45rpm Era

Year	Model
1956-1958	Corner Speaker with volume control
1956-1958	Recessed Ceiling Speaker with volume control
1956-1958	Wall Speaker with volume control
1959-1960	Stereomate Speakers
1960-1961	EX-500 Cylindrical Speaker
1960-1961	EX-800 Outdoor Speaker
1960-1961	L-2130 Ceiling Speaker, 8-inch
1960-1961	L-2135, L-2136, L-2137, L-2158, L-2159, L-2170, and L-2605 Speaker Grille Tiles for L-2130
1960-1966	EX-600 Cylindrical Speaker with chrome trim
1960-1966	EX-700L Walnut Wall Speaker
1960-1973	EX-700 Walnut Wall Speaker with volume control
1964	R-2051A Wireless Speaker
1964-1966	Wallbox Speakers for WQ-wallboxes
1966-1967	R-2092A Discoteque Speakers
1966-1973	EX-401 Wall Speaker
1969	Wall-of-Sound Speakers
1973	EX-201 Wall Speaker, 8-inch, 12W
1973	EX-301 Wall Speaker, 2-way, 24W