



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to William J. Lenz Piano Tuning Collection

NMAH.AC.0511

Michael Randers-Pehrson

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	William J. Lenz Piano Tuning Collection
Date:	ca. 1903-1955.
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0511
Creator:	Everett Piano Company Hammacher, Schlemmer & Company Chickering & Sons Piano Company Pratt, Read and Company Wood & Brooks Company Otto R. Trefz, Jr., & Company Piano Parts Mfg. Co. Lynn & Healy Company Lang, C. H., & Company Lenz, William J. (piano technician) (Collector) Wurlitzer Company
Extent:	0.25 Cubic feet (2 boxes, 1 oversized folder)
Language:	English .
Summary:	Advertisements, catalogs, repair manuals, union materials, and technical drawings related to pianos and piano tuning (companies and organizations listed below). While providing a window into a profession that spans both science and music, this collection contains information concerning economic changes, advertising, trade associations, and technical advances.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Collection donated by University of Pennsylvania, through The Curtis Organ Restoration Society, May 24, 1994.

Related Materials

Materials in the Archives Center

Pratt-Read Company Records, 1893-1990 (NMAH.AC.320)

Steinway Piano Company Collection, 1850-1906, 1953 (NMAH.AC.0178)

Warshaw Collection of Business Americana, Series: Pianos (NMAH.AC.0060)

Wood & Brooks Company Records, c. 1890-c. 1958 (NMAH.AC.0457)

Wurlitzer Company Records, 1864-1984(NMAH.AC.0468).

Processing Information

Collection processed by Micheal Randers-Pehrson, November 6, 1996.

Preferred Citation

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Biographical / Historical

Born sometime before 1890, Lenz spent most if not all of his life in Philadelphia, Pa., where he worked as a piano tuner and technician. Judging from materials in the collection, it is likely that he was a member of the National Association of Piano Tuners, and later the American Society of Piano Technicians. He probably died in the mid-1950s.

Scope and Contents

The William Lenz Piano Tuning Collection contains advertisements, catalogs, repair manuals, union materials, and technical drawings related to pianos and piano tuning. The collection is divided into five series. These series are William Lenz, Piano Tuners Societies and Associations, Piano Tuning and Playing, Manufacturers and Distributors of Parts, Supplies and Tools, and Manufacturers of Pianos.

Included in the collection are a number of manuscript technical drawings by Lenz of the mechanics of trackers organ from 1925. The piano supply catalogs date from c. 1903 to 1952 and document changing prices for parts and the development of piano technology. The Piano Tuners Society and association publications and correspondence include materials from the American Guild of Piano Tuners, the National Association of Piano Tuners, and the American Society of Piano Technicians (also known as the American Society of Piano Tuner-Technicians).

While providing a window into a profession that spanned the fields of both science and music, the William Lenz Collection contains information concerning economic change, advertising, trade associations, and technical advancement.

Arrangement

Divided into 5 series.

Series 1: William Lenz, 1925-1955

Series 2: Piano Tuners' Societies and Associations, ca. 1914-1954

Series 3: Piano Tuning and Playing, 1927-1953

Series 4: Manufacturers and Distributors of Parts and Tools, circa 1903-1952

Series 5: Manufacturers of Pianos, 1946-1955

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Organ (Musical instrument) -- 1900-1960
- Piano -- Maintenance and repair -- 1900-1960
- Piano -- tuning -- 1900-1960
- Repairing
- Trade and professional associations -- 1900-1960
- Trade unions -- Musicians -- 1900-1960

Types of Materials:

- Advertisements -- 20th century
- Catalogs -- 1900-1960
- Clippings -- 20th century
- Correspondence -- 20th century
- Manufacturers' catalogs -- 1900-1960
- Pamphlets -- 1900-1960
- Technical drawings -- 1900-1960

Names:

- American Guild of Piano Tuners
- American Society of Piano Technicians
- National Association of Piano Tuners

Container Listing

Series 1: William Lenz, 1925-1955

Box 1, Folder 1 Advertisements, Business Cards and Address List, September 29, 1925-
August 8, 1955

Box 1, Folder 2 Legal Materials, circa March 14, 1917

Box 1, Folder 3 National Geographic Society Membership Certificate, January 1, 1948

Map-folder 1 Technical Drawings, Tracker Organ, October 26, 1925-November 10, 1925

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Series 2: Piano Tuner's Societies and Associations, circa 1914-1954

	American Guild of Piano Tuners, circa 1914-1915
Box 1, Folder 5	American Society of Piano Technicians, Inc., July 27, 1954 and undated
Map-folder 1	American Society of Piano Technicians, Inc., Convention Program, July 1949
Box 1, Folder 6	National Association of Piano Tuners, Inc., June 30, 1927-September 28, 1927

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Series 3: Piano Tuning and Playing, 1927-1953

Map-folder 1	Advertisements and Poster, undated
Map-folder 1	Newsclippings, December 25, 1915 and January 1927
Box 1, Folder 7	Pamphlets on Piano Playing, 1927-1953
Box 1, Folder 8	Tuning and Intonation, undated
Box 1, Folder 9	Miscellaneous Materials, undated

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Series 4: Manufacturers and Distributors of Parts, Supplies and Tools, circa 1903-1952

C.H. Lang & Co., Chicago, circa1953

Box 1, Folder 11	Hale, Boston, 1927-1938
Box 1, Folder 12	Hammacher, Schlemmer & Co., New York, circa1920
Box 1, Folder 13	Lyon & Healy, Chicago, 1917-1921
Box 1, Folder 14	Otto R. Trefz, Jr. & Co. Philadelphia, undated
Box 1, Folder 15	Piano Parts Mfg Co., Chicago, August 1914-September 1914
Box 1, Folder 16	Schaff, Chicago, 1955 and undated
Box 1, Folder 17	Wood & Brooks, Buffalo, undated
Box 2, Folder 1	Miscellaneous Materials, 1924-1948 and undated

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Series 5: Manufacturers of Pianos, 1946-1955

Box 1, Folder 18	Baldwin Piano Co., Cincinnati, 1946 and undated
Box 2, Folder 2	Pratt, Read & Co. Ivoryton, Connecticut, undated
Map-folder 1	Pratt, Read & Ivoryton, Ctm Technical Drawing, Grand Action Regulating Block, July 1953
Box 1, Folder 19	Stienway & Sons, New York, 1946-circa 1950
Box 2, Folder 3	Wurlitzer Co. Dekalb, Illinois, 1955 and undated
Box 2, Folder 4	Miscellaneous Piano Manufactures, 1946 and undated

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