



## **Bell Piano 0083**

The Royal Retirement Residence on Gordon Street in Guelph was pleased to accept this 1885 piano that was made in Guelph 121 years ago by the Bell Piano and Organ Company. This piano is not only a playable piece of history but is the Royals newest and oldest resident.

Brigid Dekker, the Activities Director, of the Royal was contacted by David Briant of MBI Communications, a Guelph piano tuning technician, to see if the Royal would be interested in having this early Bell piano. Mrs. Dekker was enthusiastic and delighted to have this piano added to the Royal.

Information is sketchy on the history of Bell 0083. What is known thus far is that it was in Montreal being used by a piano teacher. Later it was sold to a piano store in Sydney, Nova Scotia. It was then sold and remained in the one family for 40-50 years until 2005. At that time it was moved back to Picton, Ontario by the brother of the Nova Scotia owner. It remained in their garage until August 2006 when it was moved to Guelph.

Mr. Briant has tuned the piano and it is in good playable condition. Other than needing the original strings and bass bridge replaced this piano has been well taken care of over the years. The case is scratched but is holding up well considering the age and travels.

### **Some interesting notes about this Bell piano**

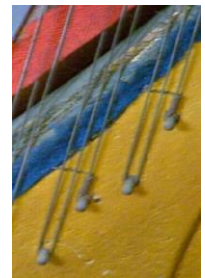


Unlike other Bell Company pianos this early model did not have the familiar Bell logo of two Bells (picture at left). The company name was not displayed above the strings on the frame. In 1885 the company was called Wm Bell & Company and this name can be seen under the bass strings.

Bell 0083 has no steel construction. On the top number 0083, shown at did not start making 1885. Although they 1864 they had only time. The first published serial numbers was in 1894. Based upon this information it can be surmised this piano was probably made in late 1885.



soundboard frame and is an all wood right corner of the soundboard is the serial right. According to newspaper accounts Bell pianos until the spring of had been in business since made reed organs until this



A distinction about Bell pianos is the way the treble strings were strung. Instead of stringing from a hitch pin at the bottom to a tuning pin at the top Bell looped the string around the bottom thus making it a loop pin (picture at left). This reduced the number of bottom pins from three to two and speeded up stringing.