



Canadian Piano News[®]

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Wayne Kelly author of Downright Upright. Printed with his permission and the publisher.

Downright Upright is Still Alright

Since it was first published in 1991 and a second printing in 1992 Downright Upright is the encyclopedia of the Canadian piano industry. Although the book has been out of print since 1993 it is still referred to by piano technicians as the best source for the history of pianos made in Canada.

The author, Wayne Kelly, spent two years researching the museums and libraries of Ontario for information that had been lost and forgotten. "That was the most disappointing thing that so little information had remained." Said Mr. Kelly in an interview in a recent and rare interview. "When a company closed or was sold all the documentation was burned in the company's boiler room furnace. They did not think that the information was of any value to future generations of Canadians." He went on to say. As a result we have lost valuable history and knowledge

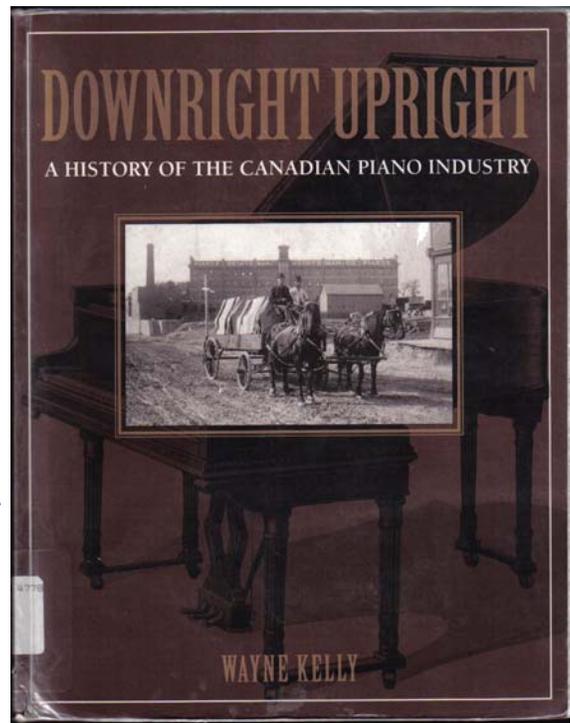
The 160 page book is filled with material that is extensive and informative. From a brief biography of over 200 piano makers to an in depth profile of the top sixteen piano companies this book has all the key details. There are also brief profiles of five great Canadian pianists and a brief review of our piano history. This small yet powerful book has captured a lost part of Canada's heritage

Wayne Kelly has always been interested in pianos ever since he was a young boy. His family was very musical. He took piano lessons for several years. His father would exchange one piano in the home for another always looking for the best sound quality.

This piano knowledge came in handy many years later in 1988 when he and his son were driving through Clinton, Ontario. They saw a public auction sign at the Sherlock-Manning Piano Company and went in. The auction was actually the next day but they were able to look around the seventy year old factory taking lots of pictures. This experience became a story in the Toronto Star and later the book Downright Upright.

Although this book is out of print it can be found in the major libraries. Copies are also available on the Internet ranging in price from \$75-150 US Dollars. Considering that the original book sold for \$19.95 Canadian this gives an idea of just how rare yet popular the book still is today.

Current there are no plans to reprint or update the book. If you get a copy keep it as part of a rich history and heritage not only of Canada but of pianos and music.



Downright Upright cover used with permission of the publisher Natural Heritage/ Natural History in Toronto, Canada. This is the 1992 hard cover edition from the Guelph Public Library.



Canadian Organ News[©]

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Bell Piano Newsletter[©]

Beethoven's Canadian Piano

Yes Beethoven was in Canada. Although it was in name only and on a piano. Between 1891 and 1908 they were made in Montreal, Quebec. First by George Ducharme and then by J. W. Shaw. In 1908 this brand name was taken over by R.S. Williams of Oshawa, Ontario.

Very little information is available on Shaw and even less on Ducharme. One source for piano serial numbers only lists numbers for Shaw from 1905 to 1939. No numbers are listed for Ducharme.

Recently a Beethoven piano, number 24,829 was found. This piano went from Montreal to Calgary and was sold in 1910 to the great aunt of Patricia Passmore. There it remained going from one family member to another for 85 years. When Passmore's moved to Ontario in the 1990s they took this family heirloom with them.

For the past 99 years this piano has stood the test of time. It still has all the original parts and plays well. There are plans that for its 100 birthday to have it rebuilt and refinished giving this piano another 100 years of life. Congratulations to the Passmore's for keeping this piece of Canadian history alive.



The Passmore's Beethoven piano with original finish October 06, top left. The original ivory keys are in excellent condition, top right. Original strings and hammers are worn yet give good tone, bottom left. The serial number based upon the year of purchase in 1910 indicates this was probably one of the last Montreal pianos made in 1908. The tuning dates in pencil go from 1943 to 1977, bottom right.

Publication Notice

Due to unforeseen circumstances in December and a system crash this issue of the CPN was not sent as scheduled in December 2006. Thus there was only one issue in 2006 not two. There are four issues planned for 2007. Please contact us if you have any story ideas.

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