



# ALEXANDER G. KEYLARD & SONS TOUR

BY DON HAMMOND

**K**eylard's, at first glance, is a modest building front with a small neon sign announcing "Pianos". Inside we met Richard and Jerry Keylard, surrounded by new and vintage rebuilt pianos – and a pump organ.

Richard began by saying "ours is the sixth and seventh generation, family-owned and operated business – he had our attention. Alex Keylard's career included design and engineering, part owner of a piano company, and, of course, starting Keylard's. Alex and his sons designed and built the building that is 13, 0000 square feet.

We were first shown a bass string winder they acquired from the Ibach Piano Company.

They wind their own strings in hex core wire. Concert grand strings are

obtained from Schaff Piano. Next

not power washed. All coating material is Nitrocellulose.



Soundboard blanks are purchased, cut to size, and dried in a room capable of holding six boards at one time. Pin blocks are cut from rock maple from Marion Plywood, Wisconsin and beechwood from Delignit, Germany.

we viewed the area where they strip and stray coat the pianos. Three

Delignit pin blocks got its start in the U.S. The quality of maple wood was being affected by the demand for higher quality maple wood for the bowling alley business. Keylard contacted and ordered Delignit from Germany. Schaff Piano learned of the purchase and after counsel with Keylard added Delignit material to their business.



grands were comfortably staged in the booth. Pianos are hand stripped,

Approximately 2200 pounds to  
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# THE WEIRD STUFF: ANOTHER CLICK

BY BRUCE DORNFELD, RPT

There is yet another click which has reared its ugly head in some grand pianos of different makes. It is a click you, or the pianist, hears when a key is played. The sound is heard about the same time as the note begins to sound, that is, when the key goes down, not on release. It sounds louder when the key is struck harder. In fact, sometimes it only clicks with a forte or fortissimo note. If it is there, you should hear it when tuning with a hard test blow.



Now there are many different clicks that happen on the attack. The most

grands and an older Yamaha grand. The noise sounded like it originated in the damper system. There was no click when holding down the sustain

problem. After adjusting the damper upstop rail for only a sixteenth inch follow and adjusting the sostenuto



rail a bit higher, the click was gone and a reasonable safety margin was there (Photo 3). While it might be tempting to simply adjust the damper upstop rail even lower, beware of two pitfalls. If it is set lower than how high the keys lift the damper underlevers, it will make the action

pedal, which helped to confirm the source. Everything looked good there (Photo 1). The damper upstop rails were well within normal parameters, the dampers moving an eighth to a quarter inch further than the key or sustain pedal lifted them.

feel heavier since that creates a lot of resistance to pushing the key all of the way down. Secondly, if the upstop rail is the first or only thing that



The click was coming from the damper underlever striking the sostenuto

common include loose hammer flange screws and loose hammer heads. Other sources are too numerous to enumerate here.

Photo 2 shows the underlever hitting the sostenuto when lifted by a finger – another way to confirm the source of the click. The sostenuto was also in good working adjustment. Adjusting these things to normal specs would not cure the

limits the damper lift using the sustain pedal, normal use of the pedal will loosen the upstop rail and push it up even higher.

The pianos I found this trouble with include a couple of quite new Boston





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North Shore Piano Technicians boarded Keylard's freight elevator to the second floor. The main display area was home to about 35 classic instruments, mostly pianos.

Included on this floor were Chicago made Kimball and Adam Schaff, Canadian made Heintzman, New York made Steinway, Ohio made A.B. Chase, Holland made Rippen, and German made Feurich, Schiedmayer, Bechstein, Grotrian, Bluthner, and Ibach pianos, plus a harpsichord here and there.

Returning to the main floor, Richard explained how a heavy duty pedestal drill press with a swing arm assembly drilled the pin block in the piano. To establish the 7 degree angled pin holes the piano rear legs are placed on raised wood blocks. The final area visited was a well laid out bench

area to perform action work, i.e., hammer and damper installation, regulation, etc.



A few notes (no pun intended) of interest:

All the contents of the main first floor shop area were lost in the 1981 fire. It was the 10" walls making up this area the contained the fire and saved the remainder of the 13,000 sq ft building.

Keylard will install genuine ivory of keyboards. Add \$\$\$ to the rebuild cost.

Keylard has an open invitation to visit their workshop to view "old world craftsmanship" going into each grand piano.

Thanks for the opportunity to see Keylard's

