AIO

Online Technical Resource

Comments on various chest actions

Brant Duddy

When sealing Estey chest pneumatics, use Carter's Rubber Cement and talc. Kilgen pouches were originally sealed with egg white, but the rubber cement/talc combination works fine.

Today's chrome tanned leathers work well for replacement; however, the leather is still porous for ventil work, and should be appropriately sealed.

There was a period in the 1959-1962 time frame when Aeolian/Skinner chest makers had bored the wells for the pitmans rather shallow in the original manufacture. When the boards were finish planed, the resulting wells were a bit shallow. The pitman leathers tended to grow with moisture, resulting in less than a thickness of onion skin paper for exhaust action. I know of one instrument converted to electro-mechanical action when they couldn't get the organ to function. We recently did over Aeolian/Skinner Opus 6000 with new pitmans, the leather having been punched from a lady's glazed by firm coat skin. All is working very well.

After an Austin chest has been reactioned, BE SURE to reregulate the chest valve clearances with the stop action bars. There should be at least 1/16" clearance between the valve jack and the stop action bar. Do NOT be afraid to reach up and hold the valve flat against the chest top, and push on the wire going to the jack fulcrum. It will bend relatively easily. The converse is true. If it goes too far, drop the stop action bar out of the way; decrease the travel, and the put the bar back, ascertaining that it has 1/16" travel again. The bass actions have a bit more pneumatic travel so as to have sufficient power to open the valves. If repetition is slow, as it often can be, open the setting on the larger bass notes to 1/8". It makes for markedly faster repetition.