

FASCINATING FIND

FOLDER REED ORGAN



This folding reed organ was manufactured in Chicago by The Bilhorn Brothers Folding Organ Company which was founded in 1885. It is a style C model with double reeds and a 4 octave keyboard.

Peter Bilhorn, a well-known evangelist of the era invented the compact instrument which folds down to the size of a small suitcase, to use in his ministry.

It is built mainly from oak plywood, and is 740mm high, 660mm wide and 400mm deep (30" x 26" x 15") and weighs about 16Kg. The swell levers were operated sideways by the knees, while the pedals were pumped to operate the bellows.

These instruments were popular with missionaries, and were also used by the armed forces chaplains during World War 2.

This organ was used in Gympie by the late Miss Eva Coe, and was donated to the museum by Mrs C Ring of the Salvation Army. It is on display with many other musical instruments in the Church.