

## *FRIENDS' FOUNDER DONATES RUCKERS HARPSICHORD*

*Soundboard* is delighted to announce that Professor Peter Williams, founder of the Friends of St Cecilia's Hall, has kindly given his 1609 Andreas Ruckers harpsichord back on loan to the University of Edinburgh's collection of early keyboard instruments at St Cecilia's Hall. This instrument, which was previously on loan to the collection, was returned to Professor Williams some years ago. At present, it is the only playable Ruckers instrument in the collection.



The instrument is an example of a small single manual harpsichord, originally built with a 45 note C/E - c<sup>3</sup> compass, but it was altered in eighteenth-century England, where it received its present veneered case. The present compass is modern, dating from a restoration by Arnold Dolmetsch, but is the musically very useful range of C - d<sup>3</sup>. There are three registers - two at 8' pitch and one an octave higher.

As mentioned earlier, the harpsichord is in playing condition, and as such is a most useful addition to the collection. Ruckers' instruments are often considered to be the Stradivarius' of the harpsichord world and those fortunate to have heard a number of original instruments often find the small single manual models to be particularly appealing. Certainly the sound of the 1609 Ruckers is very attractive throughout its compass, and quite unlike other instruments in the Collection.

It is singularly pleasing for the Friends to have this special, tangible link with our founder and we look forward very much to hearing the instrument in future concerts.

*Darryl Martin*

*Three-quarter view (left), and side view (below), of the 1609 Andreas Ruckers harpsichord, loaned to the Collection again by the Friends' Founder, Professor Peter Williams, in position in the galleries at St Cecilia's Hall. [Photographs: Darryl Martin]*

