



 **Goldring**

**The History of
Goldring Since 1906**

G900
SERIES
MAGNETIC CARTRIDGES

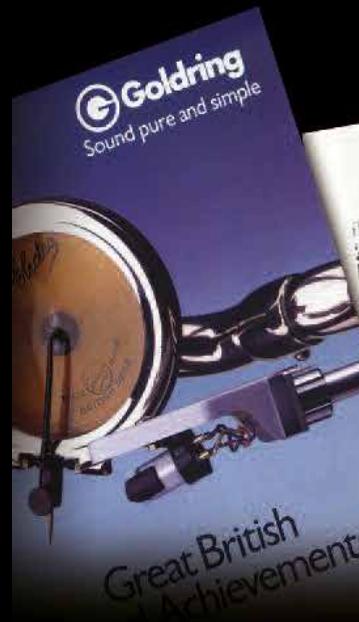


over

100

years
of audio excellence

 Goldring



The History of Goldring
Since 1906



Goldring Interview - Ray Giffin

Where It All Began With My Love of Music

I was born in 1928 and had trained as a carpenter after leaving school in 1942. I had always loved music and was fascinated by electronics, which I dabbled in as a hobby.

In 1954 I purchased a new 'Pick-up' head for my father's large horn gramophone, which also had a built-in radio. In those days, the pick-up was a complete cartridge/arm assembly. It had a steel needle in a simple magnetic cartridge, with a single coil and a single magnet. The arm was made from Bakelite and you attached it by the side of the turntable and connected the output into the radio.

I had purchased the pick-up from a local record shop but, when I tried it at home, I was very disappointed because its performance was very poor. On inspecting it, I saw the company that made it was based in South Woodford, not far from my home in Chingford (both are districts of north-east London). They were named 'Sharp Brothers'. So, rather than take the pick-up back to the shop, I visited the manufacturer.

I explained the problem to the receptionist and she said she would fetch the engineer. So this older gentleman came over and asked me to follow him through to a room where there's a large pile of these pick-ups on a work bench. He picked four of them, checked them on some test equipment and then asked me to select whichever one I wanted. So I said "OK" and he held each one in turn onto a record; he just handheld it onto the grooves and I listened to them.

Then I said "I'll have that one", pointing to the third one he'd played. He said "Are you sure?" and I said "Yes, it sounds the best". He surprised me by saying "Do you want a job?" I asked "Are you serious?" and he replied that he was. I went home and thought about it and concluded it would be much more interesting than the construction work I was currently doing. So I went back the next day for a proper interview and got the job.

My First Day

I started on Monday 13th September, 1954 and the irony was that, in the beginning, they mainly wanted me to use my woodworking skills to manufacture loudspeaker cabinets. However, at home, as a hobby, I had already started to make valve amplifiers. I confess I still enjoy playing with circuits and with valves, I don't really understand transistors.

Since the company was founded in 1906, the company had always used a 'Gold Ring' as part of its logo and shortly after I started at the company, it officially changed its name to 'Goldring'.

LP records had been introduced in the early 1950s and in 1955 we launched a brand new magnetic cartridge, the 'Model 500', with a turnover 33/45 rpm double sapphire styli. It was designed to fit into the then modern arms, which looked not too dissimilar to today's models. It was smaller and lighter than the older designs and could be described as the

first hi-fi cartridge with low dynamic mass. It had a flat and extended frequency response and was able to track, with low distortion at around 3 grams.

This cartridge was an overwhelming success; it was widely used by the BBC and was acclaimed throughout the world. The '500' spearheaded Goldring's place at the top table was fully secured in cartridge design and manufacture over the following decades.

Chief Engineer; Ever Improving the Products

I worked at Goldring for over 40 years until 1995, rising to become their Chief Engineer. During the period our products improved as science, materials, manufacturing techniques and our own knowledge improved. We collaborated with research scientists in universities and other industries and we all learnt so much.

Sometimes we learnt from our competitors and sometimes we learnt from unrelated sources. For example, we learnt about the importance of using butyl rubber (which we use in the cantilever mount) from a company that made church organs. We learnt that butyl rubber was the best material to use if you needed a material that was flexible, but completely predictable and relatively unaffected by temperature and humidity. We acquired expertise in both polymer and chemical engineering. It's surprising how much of a cartridge's ultimate sound quality is the result of chemical, as well as mechanical and electrical engineering.

Sometimes of course, we learnt from our mistakes. In one early model we made the damping pads from a PVC material which, over time, attacked the polystyrene used as part of the coil assembly. The plasticizers migrated and caused a drop-off in performance. Another example was the stylus mass on the 700 Series. It was perfect for monoaural records but, too great for stereo discs and we were slow to realise how fast consumers would change to this new format.

However, with the 800 Series, launched in 1967, we got it absolutely right. The range was an incredible success, selling in huge quantities all around the world. Further acclaim and success followed with the 900 and 1000 Series, together with our moving coil cartridges. Sales continued to grow until the introduction of Compact Disc players in the 1980s, when all turntable and cartridge manufacturers saw a steep and long term decline.

Goldring Today

Fortunately, although Goldring is a much smaller and more specialised cartridge manufacturer than we were in the boom times of the 20th century; we now successfully address a more demanding 'niche' market consumer. We have prospered because we continue to make excellent products and so many competitors no longer exist. I'm also very proud to say that Goldring's cartridge making tradition lives on in my family. My son, David has worked at the company for more than 20 years and now leads the team that manufactures the cartridges in the UK.

Goldring - A journey through time...

1906

Heinrich (Henry) Scharf (Erwin's Father) and Julius (Erwin's Uncle) found "Gebruder Scharf" (brothers) in Berlin, Germany, manufacturing clockwork motors, springs and steel needles.

1931

A plant was set up in England

1926

JUWEL ELECTRO SOUNDBOX was founded employing Gold Ring to denote quality.

1933

Official move to England, in Woodford, Essex



1935

The No.33 Electro-Magnetic Pick-Up was fitted to acoustic gramophones!



1943

The Essex factory was damaged by the "Doodle Bug" during the 2nd World War.

Relocation to Dalston in East London.



1947

No.100 Magnetic Pick-Up was launched.

Goldring - A journey through time...

1950

Headmaster launched Magnetic Pick-Up.



1953

300 Magnetic Pick-Up launched.



"Scharf Brothers" become "Goldring Manufacturing (GB) Ltd"

1955

Relocation to factory at High Road, Leytonstone, East London complete with 18th century house inside!



1959

G60 Pick-Up Arm launched.

1959

1951

165 pick-up arm launched



1952

200 Magnetic Pick-Up launched



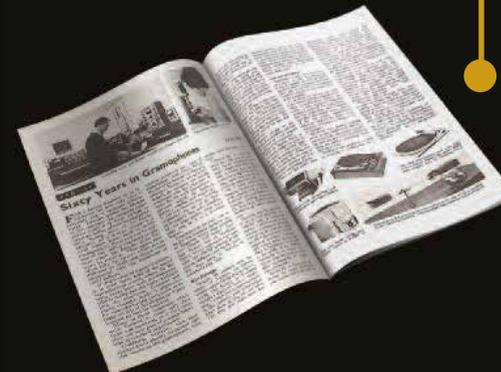
1954

500 Variable Reluctance Magnetic Pick-Up launched.



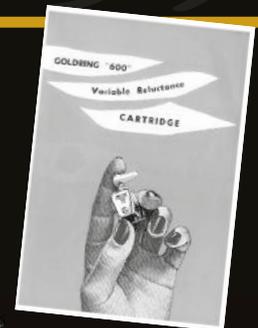
1955

Lenco agency started.



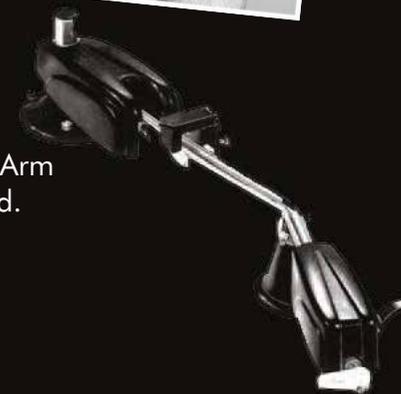
1958

600 Magnetic Pick-Up launched.



1958

Jubilee Transcription Arm TR-2 launched.



Goldring - A journey through time...

1960

700 Magnetic Pick-Up launched.



1969

800/SE Cartridge launched.

1968

800/E Cartridge launched.



1970

850 Cartridge launched.



1974

Goldring move to Bury St Edmunds, Anglian Lane - 26,000 sq. ft.

1975

900/SE Moving Magnet Cartridge was launched; production began in 1970.



1967

800 "Free Field" induced magnetic cartridge was launched.



1968

G65 low mass pick up arm launched.



Lenco GL75 transcription turntable launched.



1977

February: Goldring went into receivership.

August: Goldring Products Ltd starts. (Sue & Gerry Sharp, Ray Giffin as Directors)



1973

Lenco GL85 launched.

1978

900/SE/mk.2 and 900/E launched



1979

900 IGC launched (mm cartridge using Van den Hul diamond)



Goldring - A journey through time...

1980

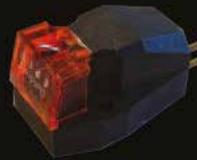
950 launched (mm cartridge).

1984

Further relocation to 8, Greyfriars Road. London BSE. 4000 + 1200 sq. ft.

1984

Epic launched (budget MM cartridge).



1986

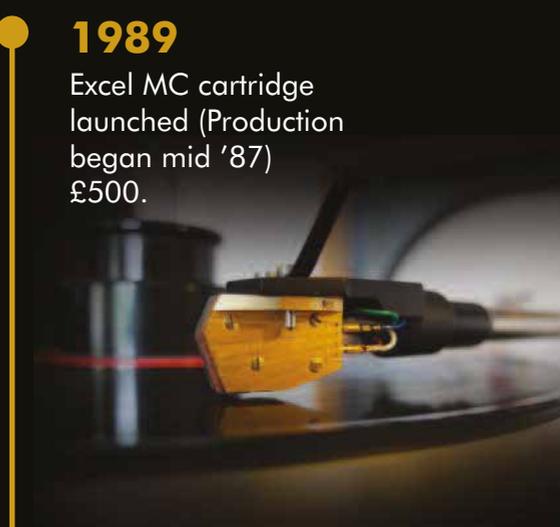
Gerard Louis MC cartridge launched (£400).

1998

Epic II launched.

1989

Excel MC cartridge launched (Production began mid '87) £500.



1984

Electro II LZ (low output) launched.

1983

Electro II launched - a stereo moving coil cartridge with high output.



1985

1000 range MM cartridges launched.



1988

Elan MM cartridge launched

1987

Eroica High output MC cartridge launched.



1989

Eroica LX low output MC launched.

1989

Updated 1000 range MM cartridges launched (1012GX, etc).



Goldring - A journey through time...

1990
Elite MC
cartridge
launched.



2005

Goldring launch the now
award winning
GR2 turntable



1993

Ekektra MM
cartridge
launched



2003

GR-1 turntable launched.



2009

Goldring 2000
and Legacy series
cartridges released



2011

Online repair
service launch





Armour Home Electronics,
Units 7 & 8,
Stortford Hall Industrial Park,
Dunmow Road,
Bishops Stortford,
Herts, CM23 5GZ

armourHOME