

Sewing Machine Museum

Albrecht Mey Collection

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The sewing machine highlights in our exhibition



PEUGOT NO. 1 (ROUND)

1878, France

With its attractive models, the house of Peugeot is without doubt one of the most important French manufacturers of sewing machines.



BALTHASAR KREMS

Mayen/Rhineland, circa 1800 (reproduction)

The first working sewing machine in Germany, whose reliability is demonstrated by a machine that still exists to this day, is the Kranz sewing machine made by Balthasar Krems from Mayen in the Eifel Region.



OPEL NO. 1

1863, Germany

Opel's first customer was master tailor Hummel from Rüsselsheim. He used the machine for more than 40 years, which speaks to its high quality.



Sewing machine in commemoration of the end of the American Civil War (Wheeler & Wilson)

1866, USA

The centre of the lid features a very fine, detailed carving of the American national symbol, the bald eagle. The oak branch to the left of the eagle symbolises power and strength. To the right, the laurel branch stands for victory.

The interior of the lid features a wood inlay of the then coat of arms of the United States of America, with the inscription 'E PLURIBUS UNUM' and the initials of the manufacturer W. & W. Mfg. Co. underneath. The cabinet is opened via two round sliding doors. The right door portrays occupations, such as farmer, merchant, carpenter, mechanic, tradesman and sailor. The military is displayed on the left, including the job of fusilier, flag bearer, pikeman, cannoner, cavalryman and bugler. The entire head of the machine is inlaid with mother-of-pearl. Here once again, the American national symbol, the bald eagle, is depicted.

The sewing arms, gripper, throat plate and screws are gold plated. The machine was primarily used by the company as a display model. This is certainly why the machine is still in such excellent condition to this day.

A sewing machine shrouded in legend

Mr. Carlos Stebbins from Pike in New York State (USA) was an all-round genius. In addition to painting, he also ran an iron foundry.

When the Civil War broke out in the USA (1860-1865), Stebbins turned his thoughts to how he could support the troops in the Union. He came up with the idea of sewing undergarments and other articles of clothing for soldiers. To do so, he constructed a sewing machine, applied for a patent and produced a small number of units. Having his own iron foundry significantly facilitated the undertaking.

According to legend, he is said to have hired 17 young women to run the sewing machines. After the war ended successfully for the Union, he closed his 'manufacturing plant' and gave the 17 machines to his seamstresses. The only machine that is still known to exist today can be seen here in our exhibition.

Stebbins subsequently improved his sewing machine, registered two more patents and once again produced just a small quantity. A patent document from this second series is also showcased here.



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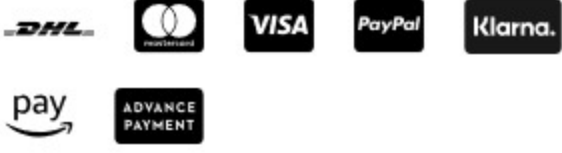
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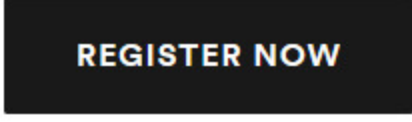
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