

Family Treasures

By Stephen Mikus

My family's treasure is bigger than a breadbox and smaller than a house, it's a piano! The piano has been passed down in my family for 3 generations. It was originally build 1910 in Dresden, Germany. It is an upright piano; it has carved designs on the front, four brass adjustable candlestick holders, the sides are engraved, three pedals and two handles on the side.

In 1942, my great grandfather, was living in Puno, Peru. Puno is a town on the high plains of the Andes Mountains at an elevation of 5000m. He bought the piano for my grandmother, who was 8 years old, and had recently started taking piano lessons. He bought it from a rich family that brought the piano from Germany many years before. Since then, the piano was owned by my family. All of my grandmother's brothers and sisters played the piano. My grandmother when in her 20's moved to Lima, the capital of Peru, to study. Eventually she got married and had her first child. Upon the birth of the child, her father decided to pass the piano on to a new generation of piano players. So the piano was loaded onto a truck and shipped to Lima, Peru. There, it stayed with the family moving numerous times as the family grew. Eventually, my mother learned to play piano on this instrument, and developed a lifelong love for it. Years later, my mother's family immigrated to Canada, but the piano was left behind. Eventually, my mother started going out with my father, and they made a trip to Peru. While there, they made a special trip to go see the piano. The bench had been consumed by termites. The piano was also infested with termites, but not very damaged. My mom was very sad, and it was there that my father offered to bring the piano to Canada. So the piano was packed up and shipped by air cargo to Montreal. The piano arrived, and ended up in my parent's apartment after they got married. After a few moves, the piano ended up in our house and I along with my brothers and sisters, learned to play piano on it. My sister, who continues to play piano, has said that she would one day like to have it in her house.