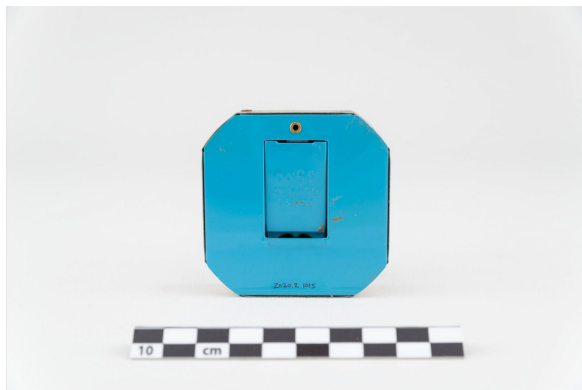


Piggy bank mechanical recorder

<https://collections.pacmusee.qc.ca/en/objects/piggy-bank-2020-002-1015/>

Collections / piggy bank



Mechanical money box from Hopkinsville Federal Savings & Loan Association. The chrome-plated case is square in shape. A slot is located on the top edge. A promotional message and the name of the institution are inscribed on the front. There are also two mechanical counters. The back of the piggy bank is blue and has an opening.

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Period 20th century

Materials metal

Historical context

From the last decade of the 19th century onwards, many American financial institutions adopted the portable piggy bank system developed in 1890 by the American Charles Owen Burns. These boxes became one of the banking institutions' preferred means of promoting savings. The boxes remain the property of the bank and are rented to depositors so that they can fill them up and deposit their savings in the bank.

A variety of piggy banks appeared in the first quarter of the 20th century. Manufacturers filed numerous patent applications: some models even had several features, such as this mechanical moneybox with a small calendar.

The idea behind calendar piggy banks was that saving money was not a one-off operation, but an activity that required a rhythm to be maintained. Manufacturers therefore devised mechanisms to encourage the user to save. Over the course of the century, the mechanism was applied to all kinds of piggy banks.

The idea for both automatic and mechanical piggy banks came from the realization that savers wanted to know exactly how much money they had accumulated before their piggy bank was full. In the case of mechanical models, coins are inserted into a slot and a counting mechanism indicates the amount accumulated.

Compared with automatic moneyboxes, these mechanical models have not been a hit with American financial institutions, or anywhere else in the world. This may be due to the complexity of the counting mechanism and their unreliable operation.

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Photo by Daphnée Bouchard