

# On track

Keeping you on track with the developments at Grahams Hi-Fi

Winter 2006



“One of the five best hi-fi shops in the world”

ARENA Magazine

## christmas opening hours

Our opening hours over Christmas And New Year will be as follows:

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> December  
9am – 6pm

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December  
CLOSED

Monday 25<sup>th</sup> December  
CLOSED

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> December  
CLOSED

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> December  
10am – 6pm

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> December  
10am – 8pm

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> December  
10am – 6pm

Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> December  
9am - 6pm

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December  
CLOSED

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> January  
CLOSED

## value for money for £50 or £150,000

We offer a wide range of solutions for our customers, be it a single room hi-fi system costing less than £1,000, or a whole house integrated system that includes not only hi-fi and home theatre, but also lighting control, data networking, phone systems, window treatments, remote access and much more...



Our “on track” newsletter regularly features a wide range of equipment and services in which we often write about the “higher end” solutions. We have found over the years that, irrespective of how much money our customers have or want to spend, everyone demands value for money.

Our £50 **Sennheiser** in-ear headphones (an ideal Christmas stocking filler) provide good value, they perform well, are small, compact and work with most portable players.

The new **Kaleidoscope** DVD server, now starting at less than £8,000, also provides excellent value for money. The value is apparent when you experience the way it handles your movie playback, allowing hundreds of films to be selected and played in a number of locations. The three-year warranty, remote monitoring of the hard drives, built-in hard disk backup (so in the event of a single hard disk failure you will not lose any of your films) and the on-line cataloguing all go to provide amazingly good value for money. The Kaleidoscope fits into the category of “it does what it says on the tin”.



When we choose our products and suppliers, we use the same criteria as you our customers do, when choosing to buy from Grahams. We make sure all products not only perform to an exacting standard; we also consider build quality, reliability, track record, backup and support from the manufacturer or supplier. All of these factors help us to provide the value that you, our customers, expect and deserve.

So whether you are spending £50 or £150,000 you can be assured you will get good value for money.

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## xmas stocking fillers



### Pure One DAB/FM radio (£50)

This is an excellent entry into DAB radio. It features two timers, scrolling text, 20 presets and comes in black, white and shocking pink.



### Pure Evoke 3 DAB/FM radio (£200)

For those with a larger stocking to fill, there is also this top of the range model. It lets the listener record DAB programmes to SD memory cards and also has the Pure Re-Vu feature which enables you to rewind live radio. It has many other features and comes with a handy remote control. Both radios can also be used with a specific rechargeable battery that is available separately.

### QED QUNEX J2P (£20, £30)

This lead is an ideal way to connect your MP3 or your portable player to your hi-fi system. It is a big sonic improvement over a basic lead. QED use high quality plugs at both ends and it comes in 1.5m (£20) or 3m (£30) lengths.



## naimnet music distribution

In our last newsletter we talked about the **Netstreams** IP based multi-room music systems that distribute music digitally across the home network. This technology is now being harnessed by **Naim Audio** to bring their systems right to the forefront of high quality music distribution around the home in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

To be known as **NaimNet**, this will comprise a range of Naim amplifiers and source components (music servers, radio tuners etc) which will provide a totally scalable system with a wide variety of performance options to suit each room.

NaimNet does not use any audio compression because it sends digital audio that's a bit-for-bit copy of the CD across the network to any room. A party mode provides sync between rooms. There is no practical limit to the number of rooms the system can accommodate (it's actually 1.8 million and whilst we work in some large homes, we've yet to do one with 1.8 million rooms!).

The system can be controlled using a wide range of easy to use interfaces such as in-wall panels, wireless PDAs and web tablets, a PC or a stand-alone control interface.

The range of hardware includes four different audiophile music servers; a DAB/FM multi-tuner, which allows four different radio stations to be listened to in any number of rooms; a main system pre-amplifier which digitises and streams up to four analogue audio sources anywhere around the house; a concealed room amplifier and a standard case room amplifier.

The equipment should be available early in the New Year.



## arcam's best ever dvd player

In a world of uncertainty with high definition format wars, **Arcam** is introducing its best ever DVD player, the **FMJ DV139** (£1,800). Offering stunning picture and sound quality, it has been designed for both movies and music enthusiasts using some of the most cutting-edge DVD technology to obtain the best quality from DVD-Video, DVD-Audio, CD and SACD. A unique feature is "Audio Direct" mode for superior CD music playback - the entire video scaling and processing circuitry gets 'shut down' whilst in music listening mode. It includes on-board video scaling offering outputs at up to 1080p resolution.



## arcam solo movie 5.1 home cinema system

The **Arcam Solo** music system has proved to be one of the most successful products for Arcam as well as giving music lovers high quality sound in a stylish single box and at an affordable price. The launch of the new Arcam Solo Movie 5.1 home cinema system – an integrated disc player, radio, AV processor and 5-channel amplifier - is set to provide a very impressive music and home cinema system in a neat, stylish and easy-to-use package. This one-box solution has an internal video scaler up to 720p/1080i, HDMI digital input and output switching and universal disc playback to include CD, DVD-V, DVD-A, DivX and SACD. Numerous features include: an internal DAB/FM or AM/FM radio tuner, integrated iPod control via r-Lead/rDock, 8-page backlit learning remote control, second zone audio output with independent volume control, video set-up 'Wizard', full IR and RS232 serial control. The Solo Music system should be available in the first quarter of 2007.

## creek's new evo range

Following the recent success of the Destiny series, **Creek** has launched the entry-level **EVO** series to complete their range of electronics.

The EVO CD player (£495) uses a Philips laser assembly with a brand new transport mechanism. Creek has written their own control software to allow for seamless integration. Sonically, Creek has managed to produce an extremely refined CD player which is exceptionally good value for money. Detail, clarity and air are just some of the words we would use to describe this machine's capability.

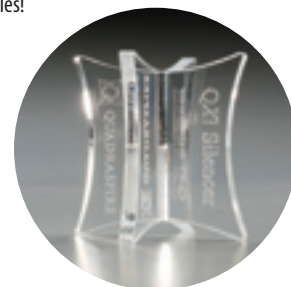
The EVO amplifier (£495) offers the usual complement of inputs and functions: remote control, headphone socket and phono stage etc. But the biggest area of change is in the Evo's ability to drive all types of speaker load. It produces 85w per channel into 8 ohms, and this amp certainly sounds extremely controlled and assured. It also shares the sonic characteristics of the EVO CD player, making for a very rewarding combination.



## xmas stocking fillers

**Quadraspire QX silencer** (£25, £30 or £50 for a set of 4 depending on size)

Developed from the acrylic Q4 reference table, the QX silencer is an isolation support that is designed to isolate equipment from harmful vibrations that are present in any system. Used in conjunction with your existing rack, the Silencer dramatically improves sonic performance, giving a cleaner, more open and better defined sound. They come in three different sizes and can even be used to support your speaker cables!



**Arcam rDock** (£130)

The rDock is a great add-on for those wishing to integrate their iPod with their audio systems. It features gold-plated phono sockets, enabling high quality audiophile interconnects to be used to achieve the best sound quality. The rDock also charges the iPod. The Arcam Solo system can be adapted to communicate via the Apple Universal Dock connector to achieve iPod control via the Solo remote, with text display to the front panel. Video iPods can output S-Video or Composite on rDock. Available shortly.



# what's new at grahams

## have you signed up yet?

Our 'Hi-Note' programme offers our customers the opportunity to keep their hi-fi, entertainment and home automation systems operating at peak performance. Through planned maintenance, the Hi-Note programme provides a way of ensuring all of your systems are kept in the best working order. We carry out bi-annual visits, software updates and reduced call-out costs with priority booking. There are several levels in the maintenance programme which will meet most customers' needs. Why not call us for more information and a 'no obligation' quotation?

## new web site

Our web site is going through a major re-vamp. Whilst we have had some very positive comments about it over the past couple of years, we felt it was time to freshen it up. The new site is just as fast and easy to use, but we have made changes to allow us to ensure the site is always up-to-date and provides a good source of interest for our customers both existing and new.

We have included a much wider range from our portfolio of installations which show some of the amazing homes that we have the pleasure of working in. We are very thankful of those of our customers who have allowed us to photograph their homes. We are always looking to keep this up to date and we would be very happy to look at featuring any of our customers systems on our site. Please let us know if you would like your system featured.



## cedia show report

David Graham visited the annual **CEDIA** (*Custom Electronic Design and Installation Association*) **US Expo** in September, at the newly expanded convention centre in Denver, Colorado. This show is the launch-pad for the latest in home electronic systems and also a training opportunity to help us all at Grahams keep right up to date.

The most impressive exhibit was Meridian; they were demonstrating their latest range of in-wall home digital speaker systems and the **Meridian Faroudja MF1** projector – (which Grahams has been stocking for a few months now).

Last year was the year of iPod integration into home systems. This year saw more media streaming devices for video, audio and digital images.

**Imerge** launched their new **S3000** music server which is based on a Windows XP embedded platform providing even simpler integration with iTunes and other media streaming devices.

**Kaleidescape** launched their new **1u** DVD server which now makes the entry level of this DVD server technology available at a more affordable level.

**Crestron** dominated the main show entrance and were demonstrating a whole host of new products that will no doubt filter through over the next few months.

**Netstreams** (whose technology the new Naim multi-room distributed music systems utilise, see page 2), showed a number of new IP devices that allow, for example, an IP based door entry system which integrates with their in-wall keypads and touch screens. When combined with the **Panasonic** IP web cameras, this could even allow you to speak to someone at your door from the other side of the world!

Next year the CEDIA UK show will take place in London, at the **ExCel London Convention Centre** from June 25th to the 28th. Whilst this is a "trade only" show we have made arrangements for a number of our customers to have an exclusive accompanied tour around the show. If you are interested in attending, please contact us and we'll be pleased to make the necessary arrangements.

*Meridian Faroudja MF1*



## management responsibility

In order to give our customers an even better experience when dealing with Grahams, we have re-organised some of our internal operations.

**Will Hammond-Clay** has been promoted to head up our custom installation department. He will ensure that projects are handled efficiently, providing a high standard of service and quality from start to finish.

**Philip Stagg** will now head the combined purchasing and warehouse operation. The objective is to continue to ensure we have the right product in the right place at the right time. This is critical with several thousand items in stock.

**Ray Horn** has taken on additional responsibilities in managing the service department. The objective is to achieve a fast, quality response to customer's needs - both in servicing equipment at our base and on home visits. Ray's team will also support our hi-fi sales team.

## david graham joins cedia board

David Graham joins the Cedia UK board. After a number of years on the "back benches", he has been voted by members of the association to serve on the board for 2007-2008. David was previously chairman of CEDIA during 1999-2000 in the early days of the UK custom installation market.

# to have it all

...with the help from Postman Pat (AKA postman Graham)

**Our "to have it all" section in this issue features a modern new build home with some interesting and unusual technology ideas.**

The systems include our usual mix of multiroom audio and video, lighting control, wiring for data and networking, telephones, door entry and CCTV. This was our first installation using the new **Lutron QED** (Quiet Electronic Drive) to control a number of electric blinds. In addition, this house has a custom designed electronic post delivery system.

In the early design stages, the client mentioned that whilst the house had some amazing design features, it bothered him that the front door was on the first floor and every morning, he would have to go out, walk down a ramp and external steps to get to the letter box to collect his newspaper. To put this in perspective, the client is certainly not lazy and has a strong keep fit regime, the proof being the indoor swimming pool and well equipped gym in the basement.

Whilst noting the "dumb waiter" (ie a lift for sending food and plates from the kitchen to other floors) on the plans David Graham came up with the idea to install a motorised lift mechanism to take the post from the ground floor, up through the garage and then deliver it through a hole in the floor and into the ground floor hall.

The design team 'brain-stormed' the concept and drew up plans for a working model of the custom letter box lift which was fabricated by our friends at **Future Automation** (whose plasma brackets, pop-up and projection lifts we use regularly).

There are a number of other Future Automation devices in this home - the plasma screen for both the kitchen and dining room as well as the gym are fitted on swivel brackets that allow them to be turned through 180 degrees to allow them to be watched from other rooms.

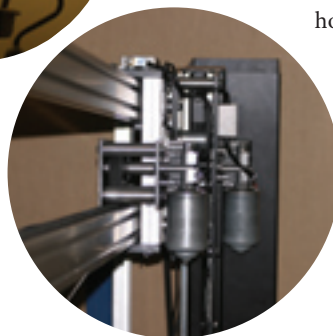
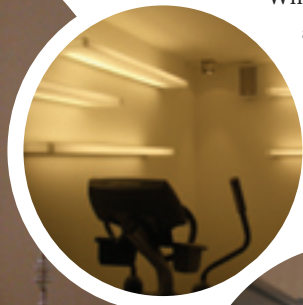
The motor in the QED drive units in the electric blinds is virtually silent and can be programmed to allow direct presets to any level (unlike traditional blinds where you have to hold buttons until you reach the desired level). The blinds can be grouped together or controlled individually and because they are integrated into the Lutron Homeworks control system, they can be operated by timed events too.

The main living room system features a **Pioneer 1080p** plasma and **Meridian MF1** projector with Meridian digital active speakers all built into a rather neat joinery unit. A **Creston** audio distribution system feeds music to other rooms including the leisure complex and master bedroom suite.

Whilst three **Sky+** HD receivers are predominantly dedicated to specific rooms, they are also re-distributed via the central system so any box can be controlled and viewed in any room. This is useful, especially with Sky+ when you may have recorded a program on one box and want to watch it in another room.

Full control of all these systems, including displays of various CCTV cameras is achieved using a Creston home control system with in-wall touch screens as well as portable XP based tablet PCs.

*Close up of post box lift mechanism*



## new staff



**Alex Lewis** has joined our Service Department as an engineer and installer. He previously worked for an electrical contractor. In his spare time he is a keen musician and

plays drums in his band Sumi Misen, check them out on [www.audiri.com/sumimisen](http://www.audiri.com/sumimisen) or [www.myspace.com/sumimisen](http://www.myspace.com/sumimisen)

**Simon Howe** hails from Australia and has joined us as an installation technician. He has been involved in musical theatre since he was four years old, has studied music and has a wide knowledge of classical and popular genres.

**Glen Smith** has many years experience within the industry and is working with the custom install team as a project engineer



**Piotrek Kaczaryk** has joined Grahams as an installer and programmer. He studied sound engineering at the University of Science and Technology in Krakow and went on to work for a custom install company in Poland.



## new 42" and 50" plasma screens from pioneer

Both the **PDP507XD** (£3,200) and the **PDP427XD** (£2,300) feature Pioneers 7th Generation Plasma Screen with integrated video processing, digital (Freeview) tuner and speakers. They have two HDMI inputs (for DVD and SKY-HD) and a PC input. The enhanced connectivity means that you have greater opportunity to take advantage of high definition media, via a single cable connection to other HDMI-compatible devices.

The advanced picture adjustment features include, new picture-in-picture modes, as well as enhanced ISF calibration options - you can have your plasma professionally tuned to suit your living environment. The integrated digital tuner also features a CI slot, so you can insert your top-up or pre-paid TV subscription card as well; there's no need for an additional module or decoder.

### **PDP5000EX** (£6,000)

Pioneer has further enhanced its reputation for superior performance of its plasma monitors with the launch of the first 50inch, 1080p plasma display. This technological innovation doubles pixel density and resolution to deliver the best flat-panel picture quality. With 1920 X 1080 resolution it is capable of displaying the entire range of HD sources including 720p, 1080i and 1080p and can additionally up-convert all other sources for improved HD image detail, colour accuracy and fast moving image clarity.

The Pioneer PURE Vision Black 1080p plasma display will accept both standard definition and high definition sources and automatically smart convert these to deliver the highest resolution picture possible. It combines the higher pixel count of 1080i with the faster refresh rate of 720p allowing for a smooth, accurate picture for fast-moving content such as action films or sports with the amazingly sharp, bright, accurate picture quality.

To sum up, once you see it you will want one. You will not need another screen for several years because the 1080p resolution is ready for the next generation of HD-DVD or Blu-Ray players that will start arriving early next year.

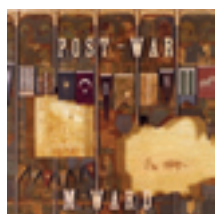
# who's new and who's who at grahams

# grahams recommended music



## 1. Aaron Neville Bring It On Home... The Soul Classics

This new album, mastered by Bernie Grundman, is Aaron Neville's best since 1991's 'Warm Your Heart', one of our all time favourite records. He is joined, on these thirteen soul classics, by musicians such as Chaka Khan and Mavis Staples. Forty years after recording his number one hit, 'Tell It Like It Is', there is a maturity to the New Orleans singer's wonderful voice. This recording comes after hurricane Katrina took away his home and some of his friends.  
**CD £14.00**



## 2. M. Ward Post-War

This is the first album that Matt Ward has recorded with a band, and includes all his own material, as well as a version of Daniel Johnson's 'To Go Home', featuring Neko Case on vocals. The songs are influenced by two post-war books, Hemingway's 'The Sun Also Rises' and Vonnegut's 'Slaughterhouse Five'. Although Ward is another indie singer-songwriter guitarist, there is a dreamy and even joyful quality about the songs on this album.  
**CD £12.00 LP £14.00**



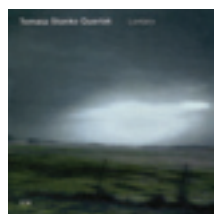
## 3. Martin Carthy & Dave Swarbrick Straws In The Wind

These two folk legends produced their first album together in 1967. By then Martin Carthy, vocalist, guitarist and arranger, had already influenced the young Bob Dylan and Paul Simon. Dave Swarbrick, folk fiddler and arranger, was yet to join the most successful Fairport Convention line-up. Virtually all of the songs on this new CD are arrangements of traditional songs from the Penguin Book Of English Folk Songs. Timeless songs performed by timeless musicians.  
**CD £14.00**



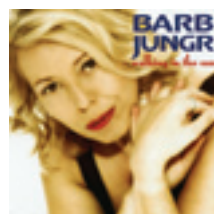
## 4. Son House The Original Delta Blues

Along with Charlie Patton, Son House invented the delta blues in the early 1930s. His powerful voice, and slide work on his steel-bodied National guitar, influenced Robert Johnson. But Johnson died in 1938 and Son House had stopped performing by the early 1940s. Rediscovered in the blues revival of the mid 1960s, Son House recorded these sessions in 1965 in a studio, set up like a small club, with an invited audience. This is blues at its best, acoustic and full of power.  
**CD £8.00 2 X 180grm LPs (extra tracks) £25.00**



## 5. Tomasz Stanko Quartet Lontano

This wonderful album is the third where the great master trumpeter is musically challenged by a young trio, and the interaction is almost telepathic, particularly with pianist, Marcin Wasilwski. As Stanko says "of the three albums recorded with the Polish quartet ('Soul Of Things', 'Suspended Night' and *Lontano*), this one is definitely the best...*Lontano* is the quintessence of experience of sorts". The atmospheric ECM recording is spot on once more.  
**CD £14.00**



## 6. Barb Jungr Walking In The Sun

Following her arrangement of the songs of Dylan, Brel and Elvis, this new album is a collection of gospel and blues songs from various artists, which have proved popular in her many concerts. Accompanied by Jenny Carr on the piano and Jessica Laurens on the organ, the set includes a couple of her own songs, as well as a new one from Eric Bibb, who plays guitar on the album. This hybrid Linn SACD is demonstration quality class.  
**SACD Hybrid £14.00**

This selection of music is available for collection or by mail order. Contact us by phone, e-mail, fax or post. Our contact details are on the front page of this newsletter. Postage & Packing for 1 LP or up to 3 CDs is £2.00. There is a maximum charge of £5.00.

## package solutions

This is a new section featuring recommended systems. These packages are just a flavour of what we can offer and are by no means 'written in stone'. They are provided to make it easier for our customers to make a simple choice of a complete system.



The **Arcam Solo** CD system with **B&W XT2** speakers. A simple, elegant stereo system with striking looks and superb sound, comparable to separate CD, amplifier and tuner. The speakers should really be spaced further apart for best results. The Arcam Solo can be partnered with the new **Arcam rDoc** (an iPod docking station with gold-plated phono sockets). Complete system price including cables and iPod dock costs £1,950.

**Pioneer PDP 5000** - 50" high definition plasma monitor with three **Anthony Gallo Adivas** plus two rear surround Adiva speakers and **MP150** subwoofer (not shown in picture). Neat, stylish and one of the best sounding compact speakers we've come across, they can be used in stereo or 5.1 speaker systems. These 5-inch all-metal spherical speakers can be stand or wall-mounted, or simply placed on a shelf without comprising sound quality. Available in stainless steel, silver, white and high gloss black finishes, they are capable of producing a sound much bigger than their size suggests. The speakers will work with a wide range of amplifiers. To complete this system the **Naim Audio NV-I** integrated "one-box" DVD, CD, and surround amplifier is an obvious partner. The cost of the complete system is £10,950.

Options which look very similar but use the "standard" 50" plasma cost £8,150.

## grahams supports nspcc concert

Last October Grahams, along with the flute specialist shop ‘Top Wind’, once again sponsored the NSPCC Annual concert at the beautiful church of St James’s in Prebend Street. Local musician and committee member, Elizabeth Walker was the driving force behind the concert to raise much needed money for vulnerable children (at the time of going to press the concert had raised over £1300). The local committee is very active, and helps to support work carried out in the area to protect children and offer a much needed 24-hour service and helpline. The concert took place at the earlier time of 6pm to attract a younger audience and offered a range of music for strings, flute and voice.

This charming evening will hopefully be a permanent fixture in the calendar, along with the many other events run by the local Islington committee. More details can be obtained about future events, including how you could also join the committee, by contacting the NSPCC Appeals Manager on 020 8681 1029 or email [amcdowell@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:amcdowell@nspcc.org.uk).

## competition win a naim hi-line interconnect

In the last issue of ‘on track’ we wrote about Naim’s new Hi-Line interconnect cable. These have been a great success and are not just for Naim customers. They can be used with almost any system and are ideal for connecting CD players to amplifiers and even (non-Naim) pre-amps to power-amps. If you would like the chance to win a Naim Hi-Line interconnect worth £495, just answer the four following questions (all the answers are in this newsletter) and send your answers by post or email to [comp@grahams.co.uk](mailto:comp@grahams.co.uk) by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2007. The winner will be drawn from a hat from all correct entries. 25 runner-ups will receive a Naim CD.

1. **What screen resolution does Pioneer’s new PDP5000EX have?**
  - a) 1080p
  - b) 702p
  - c) 3 GhZ
2. **What is the new Creek Evo?**
  - a) Four-wheel drive sports car
  - b) CD player or amplifier
  - c) DVD player
3. **What is the name of the Grahams Service programme?**
  - a) Hi-Fi
  - b) Hi-Life
  - c) Hi-Note
4. **In theory, what is the maximum number of rooms NaimNet can support?**
  - a) 246
  - b) 30
  - c) 1.8 million



## competition winner

The first prize winner of the Jacob Jensen T6 cordless DECT phone in our summer newsletter competition was Michael James (from North London). The runner-up was Jane Lovering from NW London, who won the T1 fixed phone. Congratulations to both of these winners.

## 2007 calendar

Unfortunately we have not been able to run the calendar competition. Thank you to those of you who sent in entries, whom we will be contacting directly. In the meantime our Grahams 2007 calendar is now available for collection. Stocks are limited so if you would like to reserve one for collection at a later date, please call or email us so we can put one aside for you.

Our newsletters are published on our web site as PDFs which can be downloaded. If you would prefer to receive our newsletters electronically, please email us: [newsletter@grahams.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@grahams.co.uk) with your contact details and we’ll add you to our email list.