

Important Dates in the History and Development of the Tuba

George Palton

- 1590 The Serpent is invented by Edme Guillaume, Canon of Auxerre.
- 1793 The “Bass Horn” is patented by Frichot, a serpent in the shape of a “V” made largely of metal, including brass keys. This marks a period from about 1790-1820 during which manufactures were interesting into integrating metal into serpents.
- 1815 Heinrich Stozel and/or Friedrich Bluhmel invent the first piston valve.
- 1817 Jean Hilaire Aste (Commonly known as Hallary) of Paris invents the Ophicleide.
- 1827 Stozel invents the “Berlin-Pumpen” valve, a piston valve which was shorter and had a wider diameter than its predecessors.
- 1830 Berlioz composes *Symphony Fantastique*, originally scored for two ophicleides, and later revised by the composer to call for two tubas.
- 1832 Joseph Riedl of Vienna invents the rotary valve.
- 1835 Wilhelm Wieprecht and Johann G. Moritz invent the first bass brass instrument called the tuba.
- 1838 Carl Mortiz invents the first tenor tuba.
- 1840 Wagner composes *Reinzi*, originally scored for serpent and later revised to call for bass tuba.
- 1842 Adolphe Sax moves to Paris from Brussels to escape his debts and begins work on his “Saxhorns.”
- 1842 Vaclav Cerveny begins manufacturing of tubas and euphoniums.
- 1843 Herr Sommer of Berlin invents the first euphonium.
- 1853 Wagner meets Sax in Paris and discusses the creation of Wagner tubas.
- 1874 David Blaikley invents the modern compensating system.
- 1899 The euphonium is first used in an orchestra for Strauss’ *Don Quixote*.

- 1908 Conn begins to manufacture the Sousaphone, an instrument modeled after the helicon with the bell straight forward.
- 1929 Harvey Phillips is born, one of the most significant advocates for the tuba of all time.
- 1954 Ralph Vaughan Williams composes Concerto for Bass Tuba and Orchestra, the first concerto for tuba and orchestra by a major composer.
- 1955 Paul Hindemith composes Sonata for Bass Tuba and Piano. Although it is not the first sonata for tuba and piano, it is one of the most significant early works for the tuba by a major composer.
- 1960 The University of Kentucky hires Rex Conner, the first full time tuba and euphonium college faculty member.
- 1966 William Kraft composes *Encounters II* for solo tuba, a very important piece towards setting a new standard for technical abilities of tubists.
- 1973 Formation of the Tubists Universal Brotherhood Association (TUBA) now the International Tuba Euphonium Association (ITEA).