

Karl F. Allmendinger

Queens & Brooklyn, New York

- 1910 Karl is born on April 7 in Bischleben, Germany.
- 1926 Karl emigrates to US with parents Ludwig & Elsa from Erfurt, Germany. Karl listed as “iron turner” (machinist?), Ludwig is a shoe maker (immigration papers).
- 1933 Marries Elisabeth (Elsie) Pattermann (photo 1 from 1932).
- 1935 Living at 1704 Stanhope St, Queens (NY Census, photo 5).
- 1939 Receives naturalization; listed at #1702 Stanhope St.
- 1940 Living at #1704 Stanhope St & working as a mechanic for a gyroscope company (probably Sperry Corp.). Listed as Carl in Census.
- 1944 Now at 1513 Greene Ave, Brooklyn (Elsie’s naturalization).
- 1950 Living at #62-16 Eliot Ave, Queens and owns a business making musical instruments (census).
- 196? Moves to Islip, NY (JA).
- 197? Moves to Florida (JA).
- 1989 Karl died on November 27th in Florid. Buried at Fresh Pond Crematory in Queens (Find-A-Grave).
- 2007 His wife Elsie dies at 96.

(JA) = John Albertini in 2016: Karl was his wife’s grandmother’s sister’s husband. She remembers Karl had a hobby of making brass instruments. Nicknamed “Schmalzie”.

Below are stories from owners and sellers of Allmen trumpets found with an internet search. These may or may not be true.

1. Karl was the shop foreman for trumpet maker Vincent Bach. [Karl lived 18 miles away so possible]
2. Karl’s trumpets were made using Bach valves & tubing combined with his own bells & lead pipes. [#193 & #1379 valves & tubing are not Bach but the design is similar]
3. The trumpets were made in the 1920s & 30s. [not likely as he was only born in 1910 and came here in 1926]
4. Karl was Vincent Bach’s step-brother. [see note at end]
5. 1,500 trumpets were made and 50 are known to be existing.
6. Karl worked for Bach at the Bronx factory before it closed (1953) and was a master craftsman there. After it closed (moved to Mt. Vernon) he went on to make the trumpets.



7. Allmen trumpets were licensed by Bach. [not likely]

So are they copies or do any use Bach parts as claimed?

Here is a 1937 Bach Stradivarius followed by Allmen #1202 [Cirksena coll.] then a 1967 Bach Strad [author's collection].



Did Karl buy parts from Bach to make his look the same? I have had trumpets #193 and #1379 and if they are a good example of Karl's work then they are not Bach at all. The valve design is different in many ways and nothing is interchangeable. Although at first glance these do look the same, there are many subtle design differences which make me think that, aside from things like pinky rings, third slide rings, and water keys, Karl made these all himself. The only part that seems to match Bach is the third slide finger ring.

Photo 1 at right is the #1704 Stanhope location with #1702 at the corner [Google Earth].

Photo 2 is the #1513 Greene Ave home only three blocks away from the last home and probably the location of his workshop in the photo below [courtesy John Albertini].

Photo 3 is Karl and wife Elsie c.1942 [family photos courtesy of John Albertini]



Here is Karl (center) with a few friends in his home basement workshop c.1955; possibly at Greene Avenue in Queens.



Here are the Allmen Co. trumpets that I have found so far:

#193: This is the lowest number I have found and owned this one for a couple of years. "Star" model with bottom-sprung valves [author's collection]



#231: Bb “Star” model, these early trumpets used round stock for the bell braces that were filed flat on the solder side [auction photo]



#1032: No model on bell, photo courtesy Jesse Church; by now he has the final form of his design with nickel silver tubing and third slide ring



#1090: A III model, now with third slide ring and flanged bell braces [auction photo]



#1202: A1 model; Karl has now added a 1st slide trigger



#1248: Star model [auction photo]



#1262: Bb "A1" model which he seems to use for all the rest of his trumpets. [auction photo]



#1293: Bb "A1" model [auction photo]



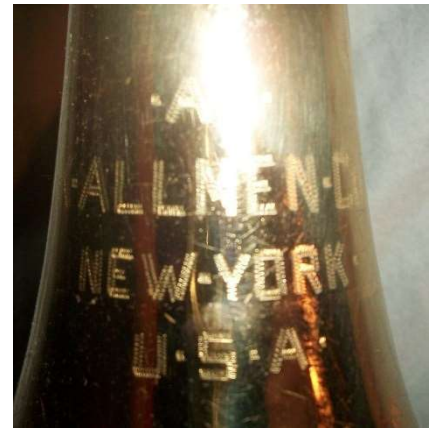
#1353: A1 model; auction photo



#1379: Bb "A1" model. I recently purchased this one and use it often. A great sounding horn that I like just as much as my Bach Strad from the 1960s. Medium bore. Unlike the early one, this has top spring valves that match the Bach design but are a little shorter. It looks like the original case and has a Zottola mouthpiece. [author's collection]



#1386: now made with multi-part bell braces [auction photo]



#1398: Bb "A1" model [auction photo]



#1478: A1 model (auction photo)



#1479: A1 model (Cirksena collection)



#1503: This one is in C and adds a 1st slide saddle although by the looks of it, it may have been added later. The valve caps now have vertical grooves instead of angled. [auction photo]



Note about Karl being a stepbrother of Vincent Bach: This story is definitely not true. Karl's father was Ludwig Allmendinger, a shoemaker, born in Duernau, Germany in 1879. His mother was Elsa born in Erfurt, Germany. Karl is listed as being born in Bischleben, Germany which is just south of Erfurt. Karl was an immigrant with his parents to New York in 1924.

Bach was born as Vincent Schrottenbach to Vincent & Leopoldina in 1890 in Baden bei Wien, Austria. When he emigrated here in 1914, he listed his closest relative as step-father Ludwig Eiermann of Baden so his birth father must have died by then. The two Ludwigs are about twenty years different in age and in different countries, so there can't be any relation between their sons.

In the 1950 census, we finally see that he owns a musical instrument business. This must be when a majority of the trumpets were made. His home is listed at 62-16 Eliot Ave, Queens, upstairs (photo 2 at right). Perhaps this is also where he made them. This seems to deny claim 7 above that he worked for Bach until 1953. My guess is that he still had to work for Bach at some point to learn the specific skills needed.

