

F.E. Olds & Son Trumpets and Cornets

This guide contains photos from my collection, advertising, and the websites of some resellers, which detail the trumpets of the F.E. Olds & Son Company.

Frank Olds, who was born in 1861 in Medina New York, began as a machinist and laborer, from the Toledo area who moved at a young age to Los Angeles where he became involved first in Bicycles and then steam automobiles – engaging in the repair of both. Some time before 1910, he began to manufacture trombones in his garage. This expanded into the band instrument company that bore his name. In 1928, Olds and his wife embarked on a lengthy cruise aboard the SS City of Los Angeles. Five days into the trip, Olds died of a massive heart attack and was buried at sea. Early the following year, the company, under son Reginald B Olds, introduced its first trumpets.

Olds was absorbed by the holding Company Chicago Musical Instruments at the end of World War II. CMI hired King designer and former York apprentice Foster Reynolds out of retirement to run the Olds plant. Reynolds helped launch the Ambassador student line and enforced rigorous quality standards for new products such as the Olds Studio models until his death at the factory in 1960.

Reynolds' apprentice Zigmant Kanstul assumed Reynolds post, but pressures from new owners for greater returns on higher volume production led to a decline in quality and Kanstul left to run Benge for King in 1972. Unable to achieve desired profit margins, or to sell the company for an inflated price in an over-supplied market, Norlin shut down Olds and auctioned off the assets in 1979.



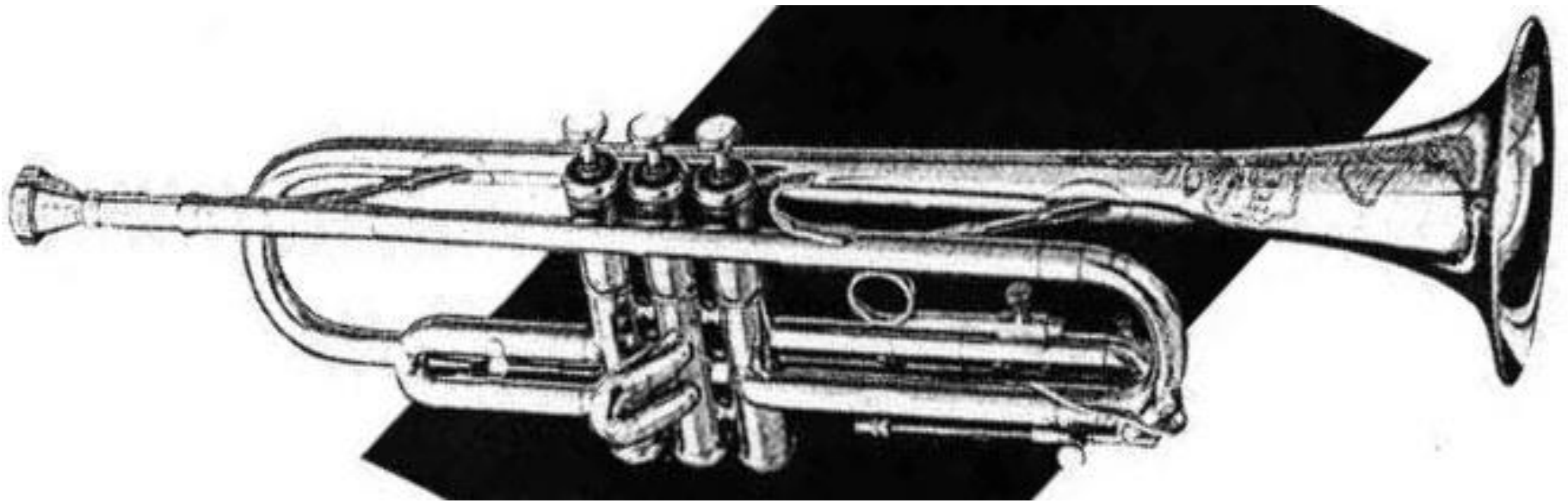
“The Olds Trumpet”

Years Built: 1929 - ca. 1930

Variants: Military edition of the original Olds Trumpet shown

Significant Characteristics:

Photo from Quality Brass



The Olds Standard Trumpet

Years Built: ca. 1930 – 1940

Variants: Available in Medium, Large Medium and Large Large Medium bores

Significant Characteristics: Bb/A quick change by way of the under-mounted stop-rod on the tuning slide.

Catalog language continued to refer to the Standard as simply “The Olds Trumpet” in the description beneath the Standard title for many years.

Catalog Graphic



The Olds Military Trumpet

Years Built: ca. 1930 – 1937/8

Variants: Available in Small, Medium and Large Medium bores

Significant Characteristics: Hammered finish on the entire bell.

Photo from Robb Stewart



The Olds Symphony Trumpet

Years Built: ca. 1930 – before 1932

Variants: Available in M-SYM and Symphony (large) bores

Significant Characteristics: The Martin large bore offering.

Photo from Quality Brass



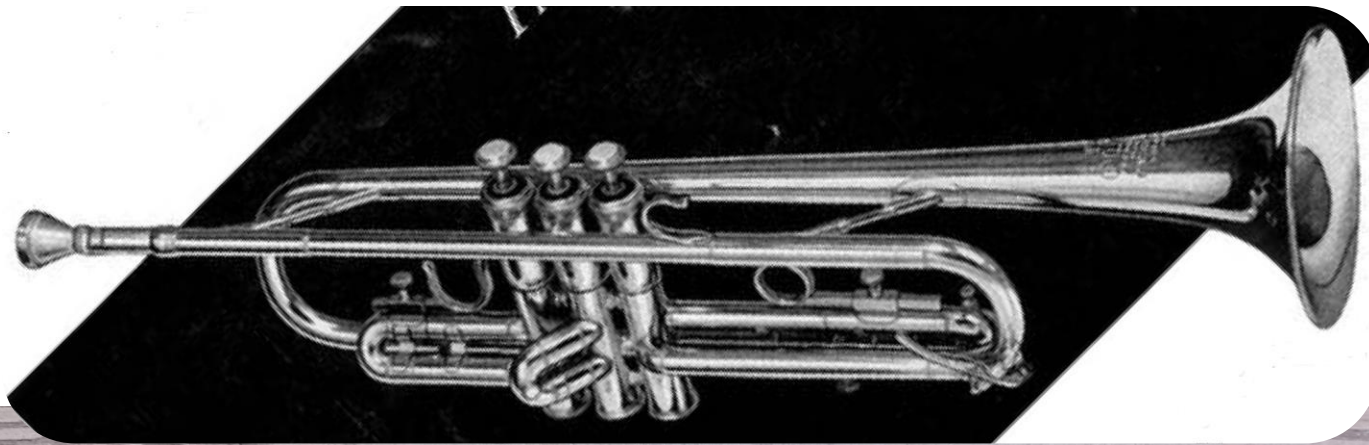
The Olds No. 31 Super Trumpet

Years Built: by 1932 - before WWII

Variants: Only one bore size – not specified in the catalog

Significant Characteristics: Nickel “Tone Ring” applied to the bell flare at the rim.

Photo from Robb Stewart

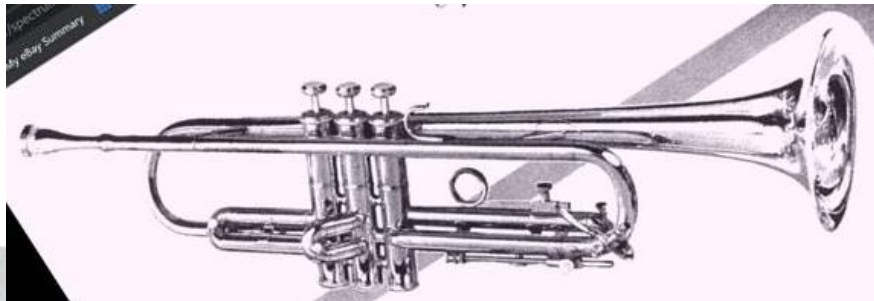


The Olds French Model Trumpet

Years Built: ca. 1933 - 1938

Variants: Available in French bore only.

Significant Characteristics: Optionally available with hammered finish bell for \$15 extra.



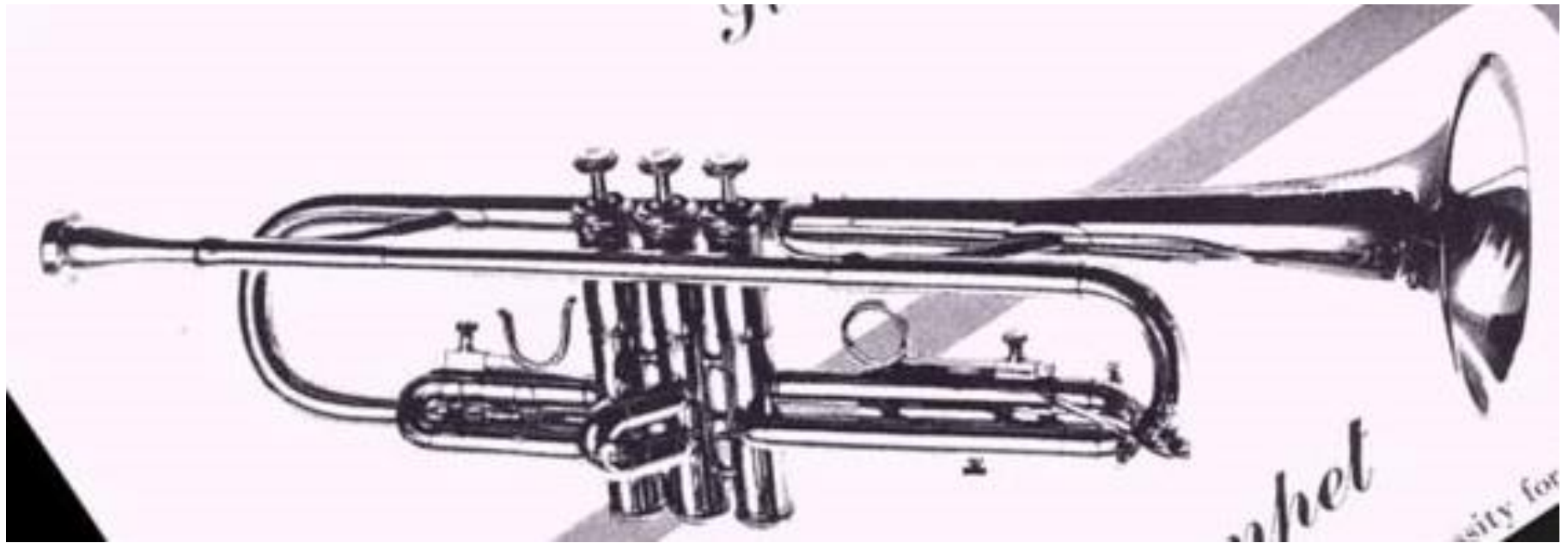
The Olds No. 11 Special Trumpet

Years Built: 1940 - WWII

Variants: Both receiver and receiverless.

Significant Characteristics: According to the 1941 catalog, the Special line was created as a budget alternative to the Standard and premium Super lines.

Receiverless photo from Quality Brass, graphic showing receiver from the 1941 catalog



The Olds Standard Trumpet

Years Built: ca. 1940 – 1941

Variants: Believed to be Medium-Large and a Larger bore

Catalogs do not mention if multiple bores remain available. This may have changed across WWII.

Significant Characteristics: Stop-rod for Bb/A quick-change has been deleted from the design.

Catalog Graphic



The Olds Military Standard Trumpet

Years Built: 1941 - ?

Variants: Believed to be Medium-Large bore

Significant Characteristics: Stop-rod for Bb/A quick-change has been deleted from the design. First and third valve slide throws have been deleted from the design. The third valve slide stop rod has been deleted from the design. The first slide assembly appears to be from a Super trumpet and the third from a cornet of some kind. Slide legs are nickel. Carries factory US military engraving.



No. 41 Super Olds Recording Trumpet

Years Built: before 1941 – ca. 1950

Variants: 1941 built with integral receiver shown.

Significant Characteristics: Nickel “tone ring” on bell flair at rim. Second valve is offset to the left.

Photo from Quality Brass



The Olds Standard Trumpet

Years Built: 1946 – 1947

Variants: Believed to be Medium-Large and a Larger bore

Catalogs do not mention if multiple bores remain available. This may have changed across WWII.

Significant Characteristics: Stop-rod for Bb/A quick-change has been deleted from the design.

1947 Photo courtesy of Charlie Moher



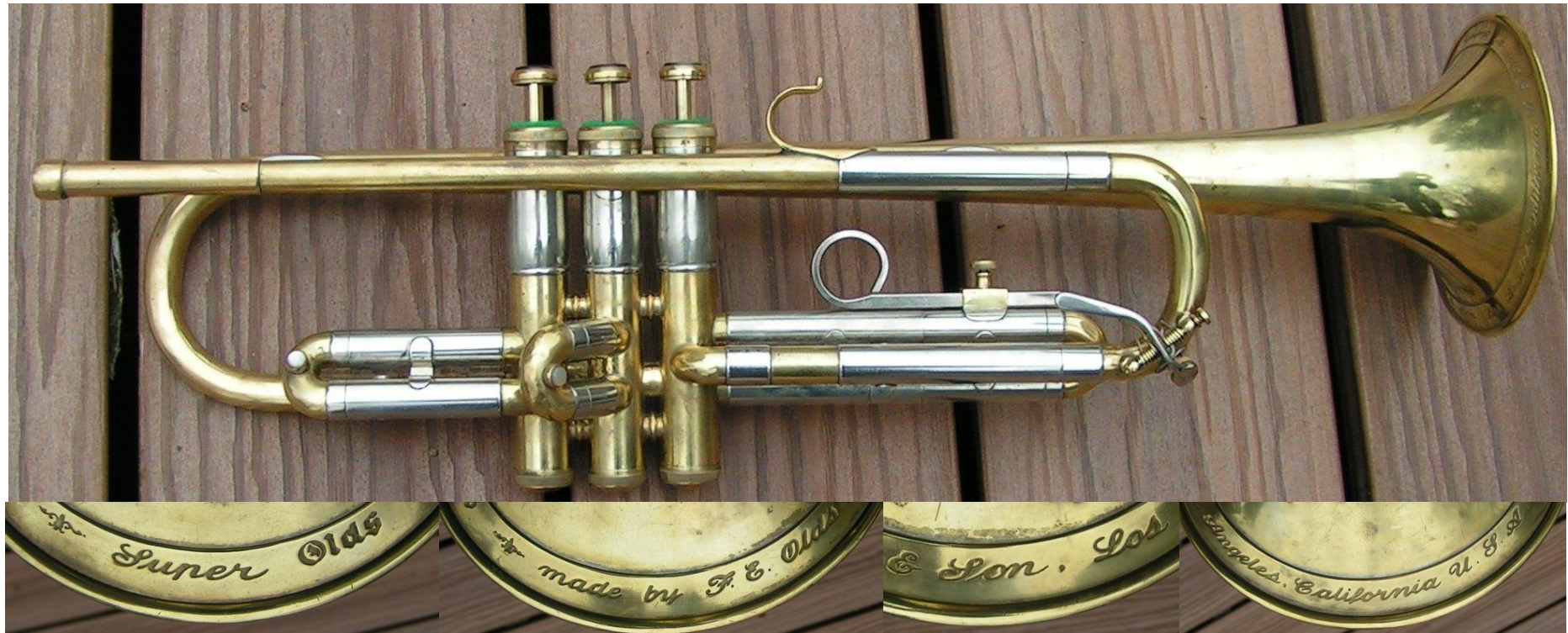
The Olds No. 11 Special Trumpet

Years Built: post-WWII – 1957/61

Variants: Medium-Large bore only listed in 1962 catalog.

Significant Characteristics:

Photo from Quality Brass



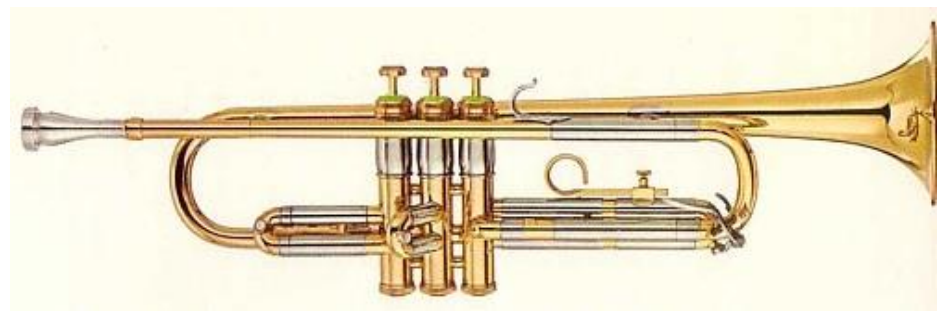
The Olds S-10 Super Trumpet

Years Built: before WWII – 1970/72

Variants: Medium-Large .460 bore only listed in catalog.

Significant Characteristics: “Tone Ring” applied to the bell flare at the rim.

Catalog image →





The Olds T-10 Studio Trumpet

Years Built: 1948 - 1965

Variants:

Significant Characteristics: Bell flare section is cupro-nickel while the stem is brass.

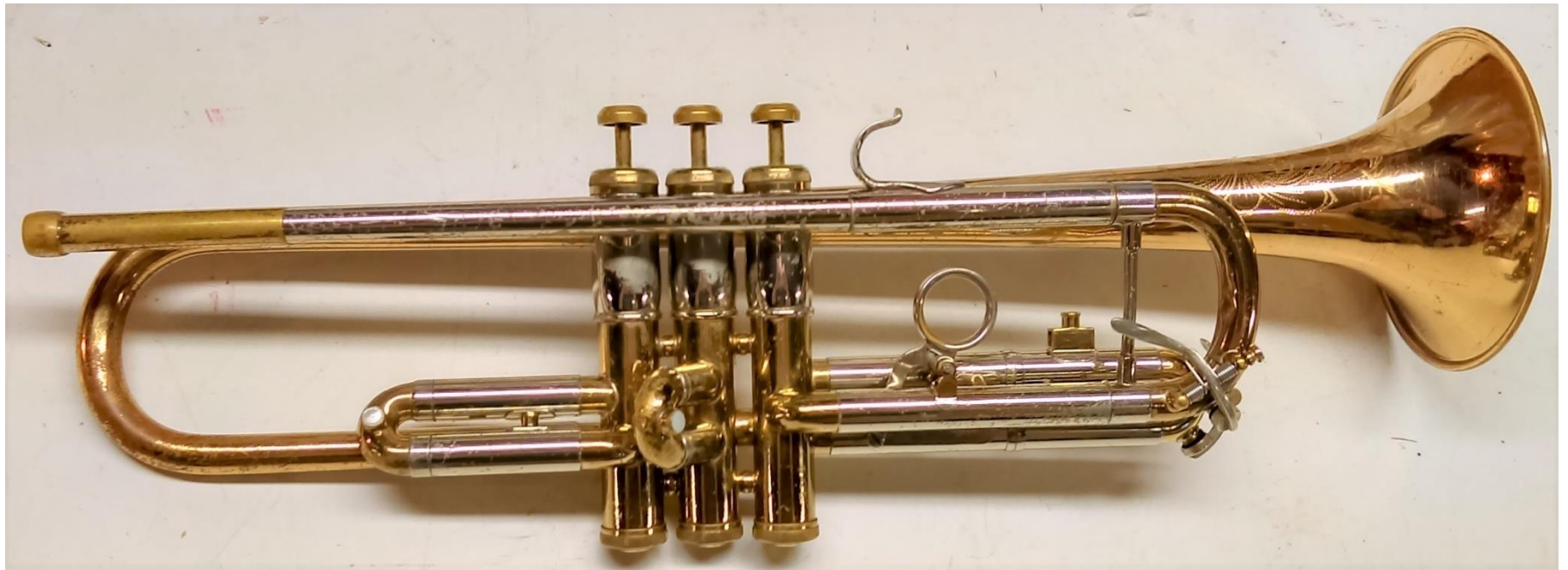


The Olds A-10 Ambassador Trumpet

Years Built: 1949 - 1979

Variants: Available some years in C or Eb also. .460 ML bore only for Bb models.

Significant Characteristics: Built as a student line.

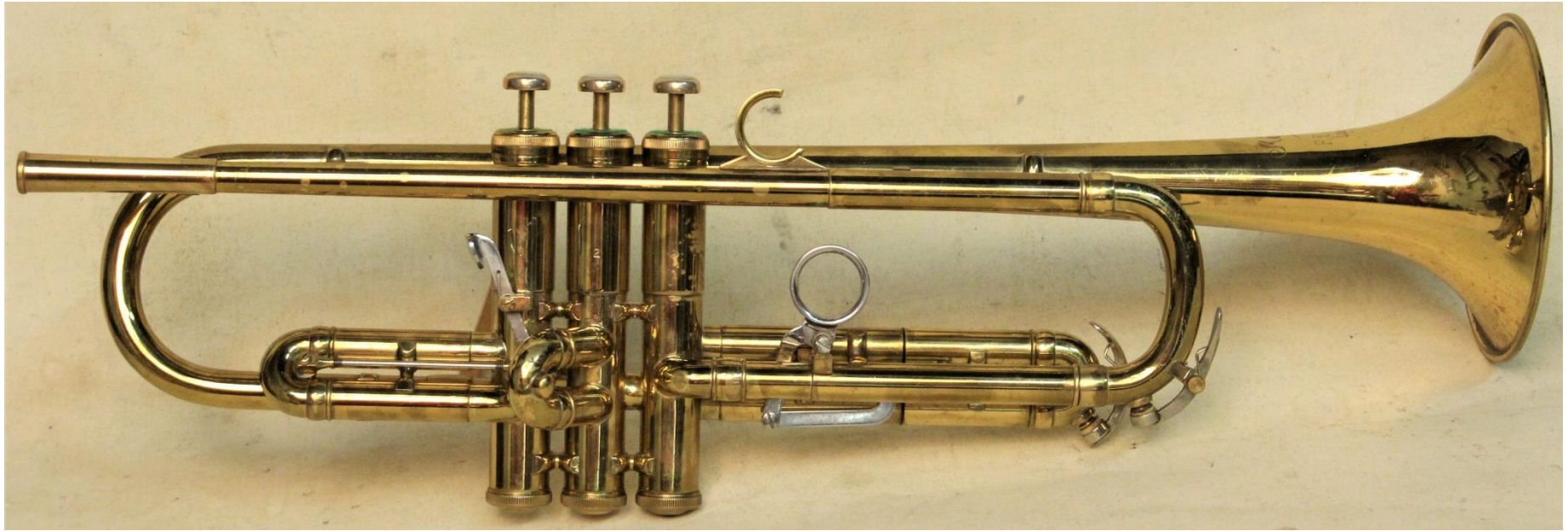


The Olds R-10 Recording Trumpet

Years Built: ca. 1950 - 1979

Variants: Bore listed as .460 in 1970.

Significant Characteristics: Second valve is offset to the left.



The Olds M-10 Mendez Model Trumpet

Years Built: 1952 – 1970/72

Variants: Also dubbed M-5 in the 1960s when all of the -10s are -5s. Medium-Large .460 bore.

Significant Characteristics: To satisfy Mendez, the valves had to be buffed down to leak. It is unclear how many production units share this trait.

Photo by Robb Stewart



The Olds O-12 Opera Trumpet

Years Built: 1958/60 – 1970/72

Variants: .468 bore. Brass & nickel bell options. O-112 fanfare available in the early years

Significant Characteristics: Large bore model

Brass bell photo from Quality Brass



The Olds L-10 Special Trumpet

Years Built: 1958/62 – 1979

Variants: .460 ML bore only.

Significant Characteristics: Brass body and lead pipe, nickel trim, cupro-nickel bell stem fused to rose brass bell flare.

Photo from Quality Brass



The Olds P-10 Custom Trumpet

Years Built: 1963/66 – 1970/72

Variants: Also available as C-10, D-10, and E-10 high-pitch trumpets, and F-10 alto trumpet.

In 1966 a Custom-kit model with interchangeable bells was offered. Bb and C in .460 ML bore, D and Eb in .437 bore, and F alto in .468 bore.

Significant Characteristics: The thumb saddle does not appear in catalog illustrations and may have been added to this example.

Photo from Quality Brass



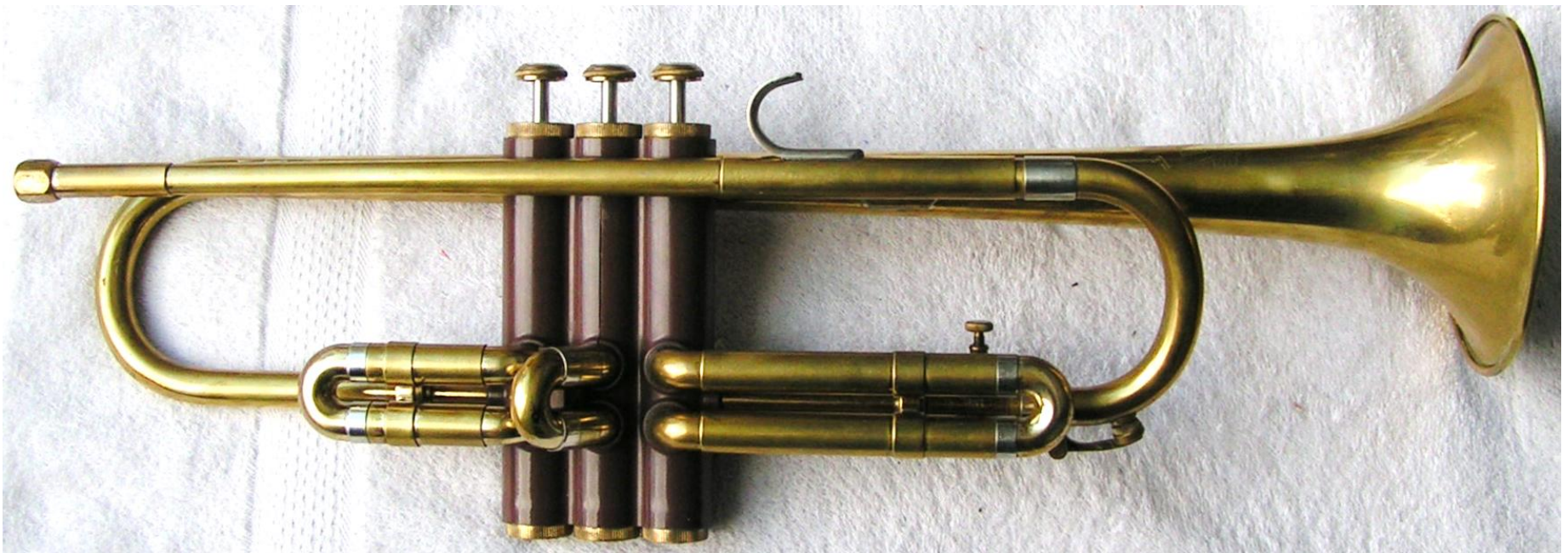
The Olds T-10 Studio Trumpet

Years Built: 1966 - 1970/72

Variants: .460 ML bore only.

Significant Characteristics: All brass construction.

Photo from Quality Brass



The Olds Pinto Trumpet

Years Built: 1971/73 – before 1977

Variants: Also sold as Reynolds Ranger

Significant Characteristics: all plastic valve body with interchangeable pistons.



The Olds S-12 Super Ultra Sonic Trumpet

Years Built: 1971/73 - 1979

Variants: .460 bore only.

Significant Characteristics:

Photo from Quality Brass



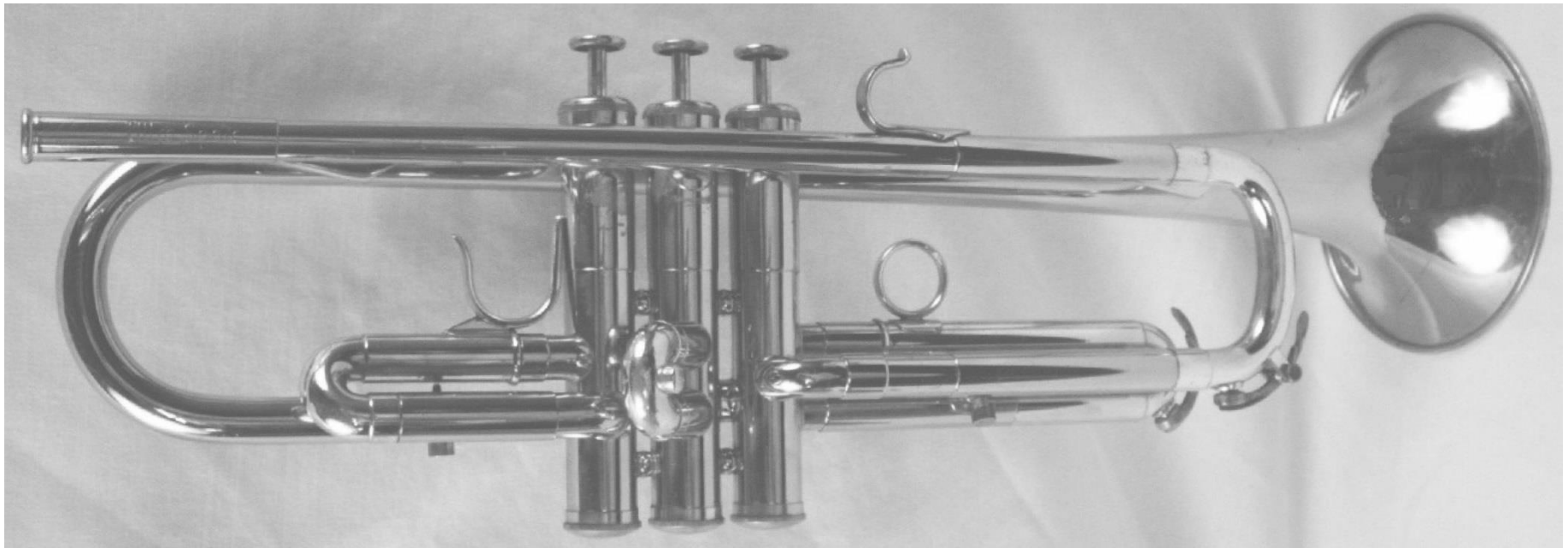
The Olds M-12 Mendez Ultra Sonic Trumpet

Years Built: 1971/73 -

Variants: .460 bore only.

Significant Characteristics:

Catalog image



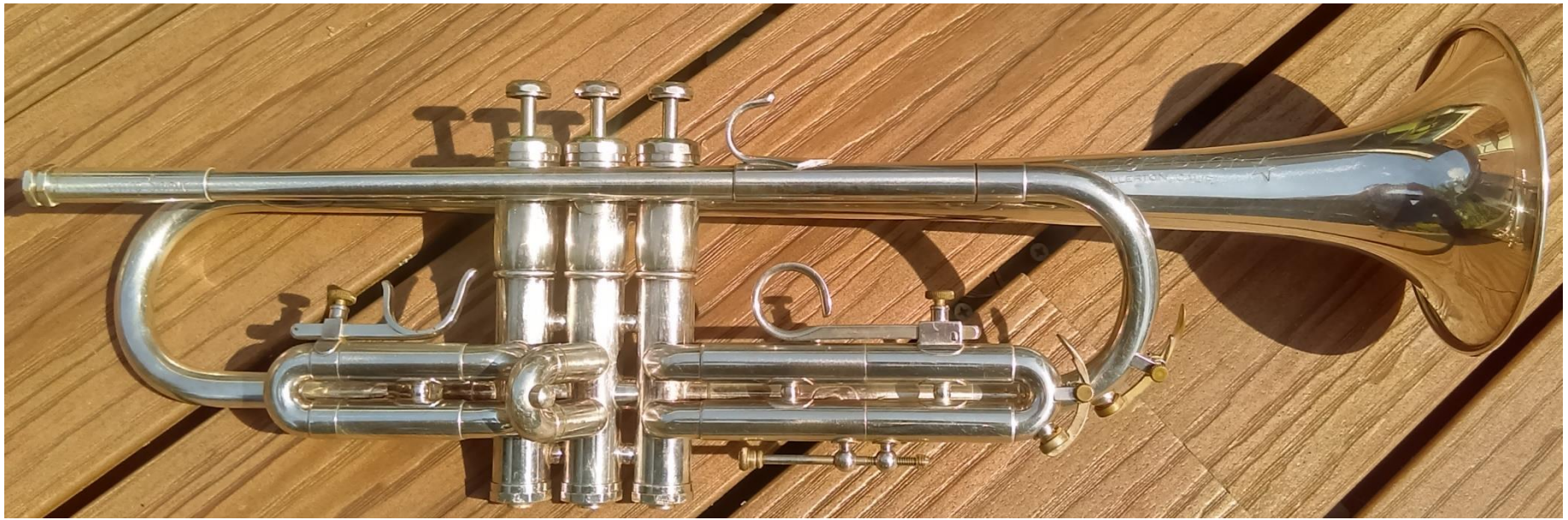
The Olds P-12 Custom Ultra Sonic Trumpet

Years Built: 1971/73 -

Variants: .460 ML bore P-12. Also available as P-12L .468 large bore, and C-12 and E-12D high pitch trumpets also in unusually large .460 bore.

Significant Characteristics:

Advertising image



The Olds V-102 Super Star Trumpet

Years Built: 1974/77 - 1979

Variants: .460 ML bore only.

Significant Characteristics: Explosively formed “UltraSonic” bell



The Olds P-13T Clark Terry Trumpet

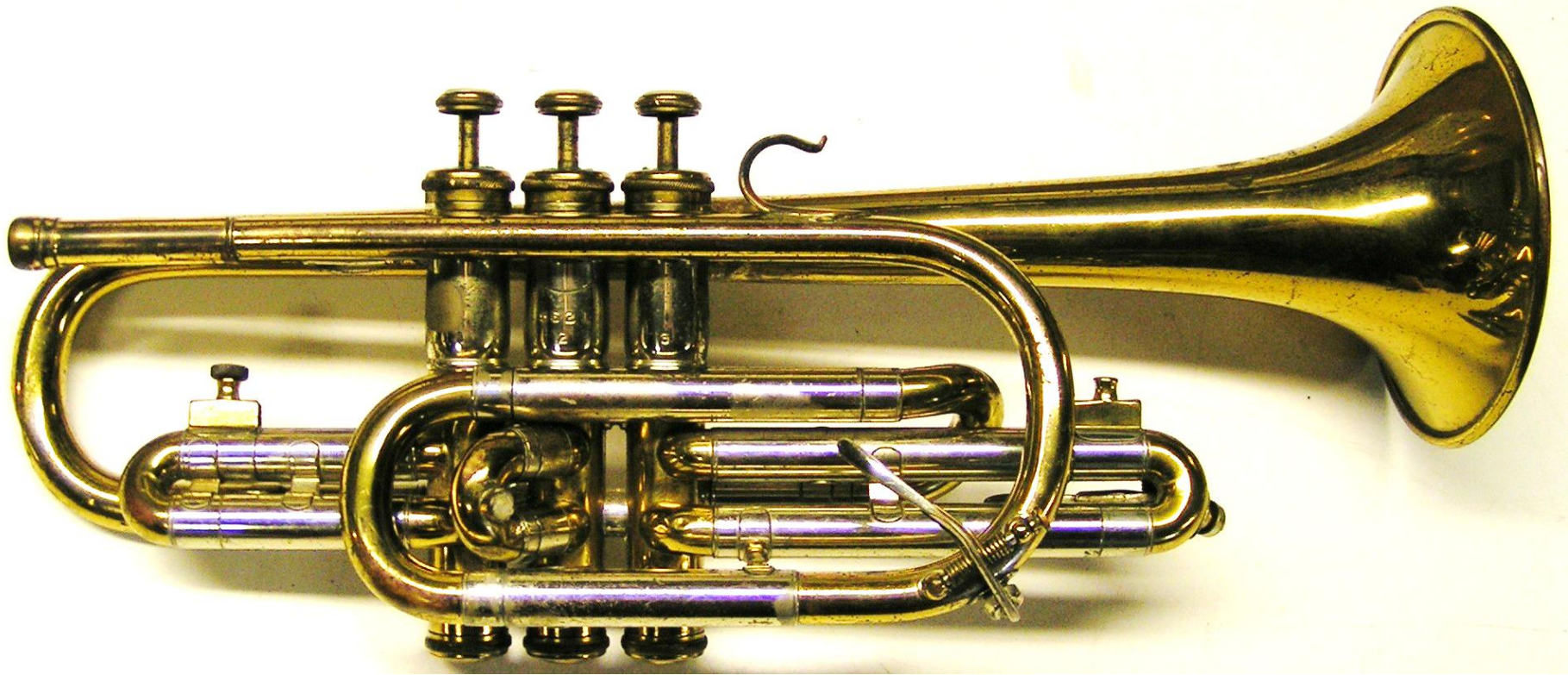
Years Built: 1974/77 - 1979

Variants: .460 ML bore only.

Significant Characteristics:

Catalog image

CORNETS



The Olds Standard Cornet

Years Built: ca. 1930 – WWII

Variants: Available in Medium, Large Medium and Large Bores.

Significant Characteristics:



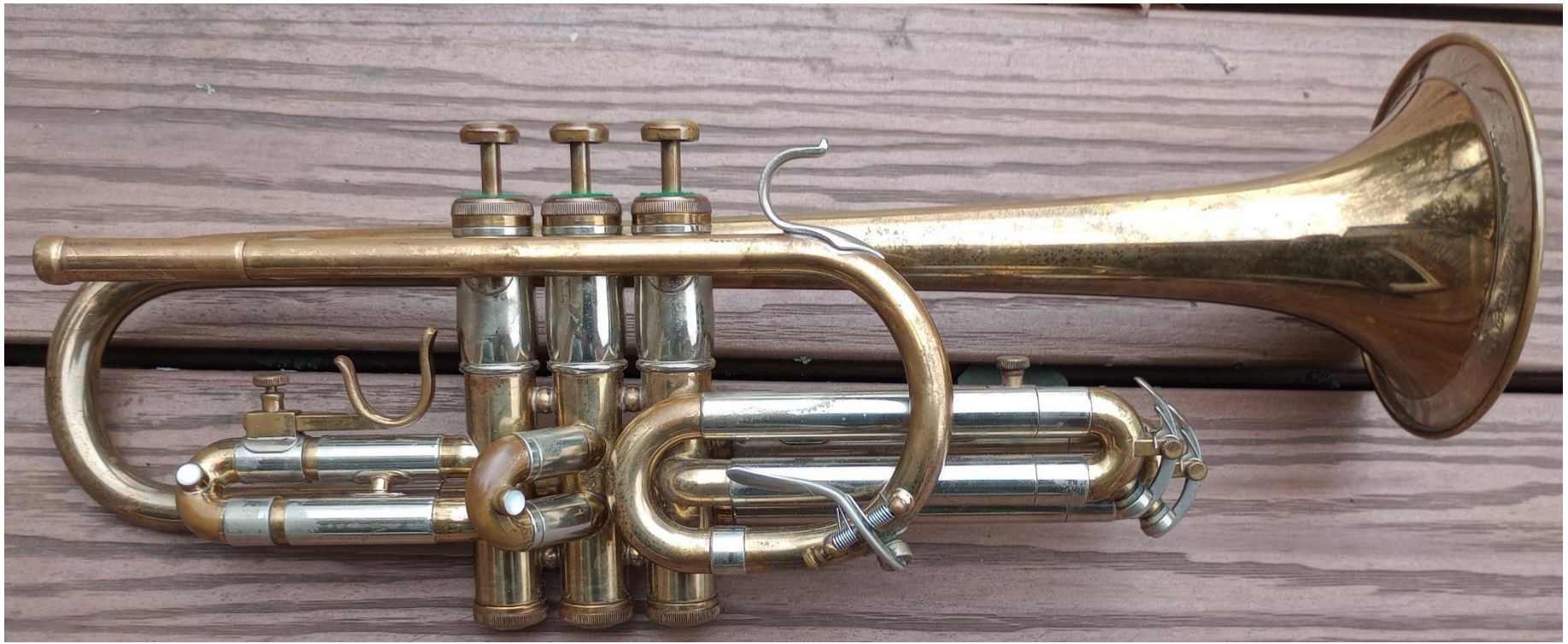
The Military Cornet

Years Built: ca. 1932 – 1937/8

Variants: Available in Small, Medium, Large Medium and Large bores.

Significant Characteristics:

Catalog graphic



The Olds No. 30 Super Cornet

Years Built: by 1932 – ca. 1970

Variants: Medium-Large bore listed in 1962 catalog as only size.

Significant Characteristics: Nickel “tone ring” on bell flare at rim.



The Olds No. 10 Special Cornet

Years Built: after 1932/before 1941 - WWII

Variants:

Significant Characteristics:

Photo from Quality Brass



The No. 40 Super Olds Recording Cornet

Years Built: 1940 – ca. 1950

Variants:

Significant Characteristics: Second valve is offset to the left. Lead pipe enters first valve. (1940 in finish #2 shown)

Photo from Centex Brass



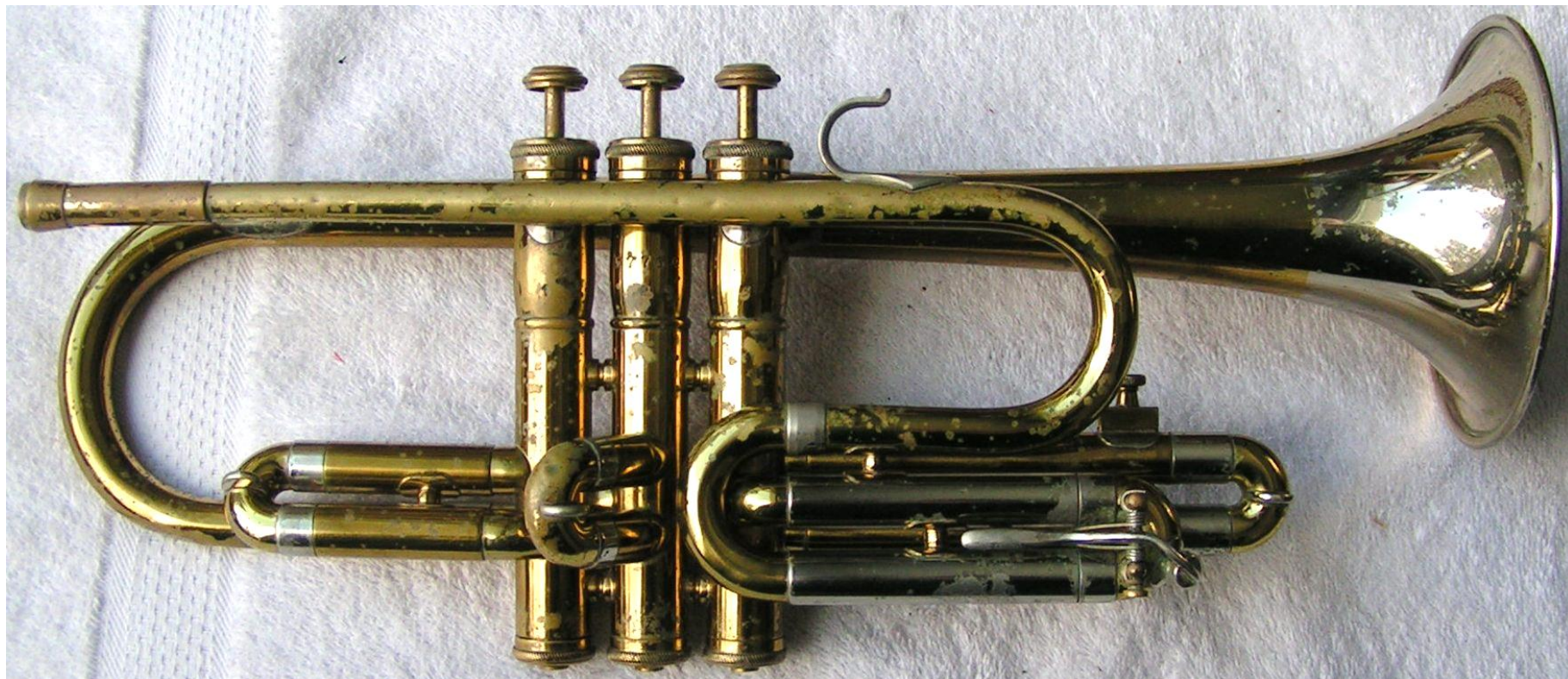
The Olds L-5 Special Cornet

Years Built: WWII - 1979

Variants: .468 bore only.

Significant Characteristics:

Photo from Quality Brass



The Olds Studio Cornet

Years Built: 1948 - 1965

Variants:

Significant Characteristics: Bell flare section is cupro-nickel while the stem is brass.



The Olds A-5 ambassador Cornet

Years Built: 1949 - 1979

Variants: "Medium-Large" .468 bore only.

Significant Characteristics:



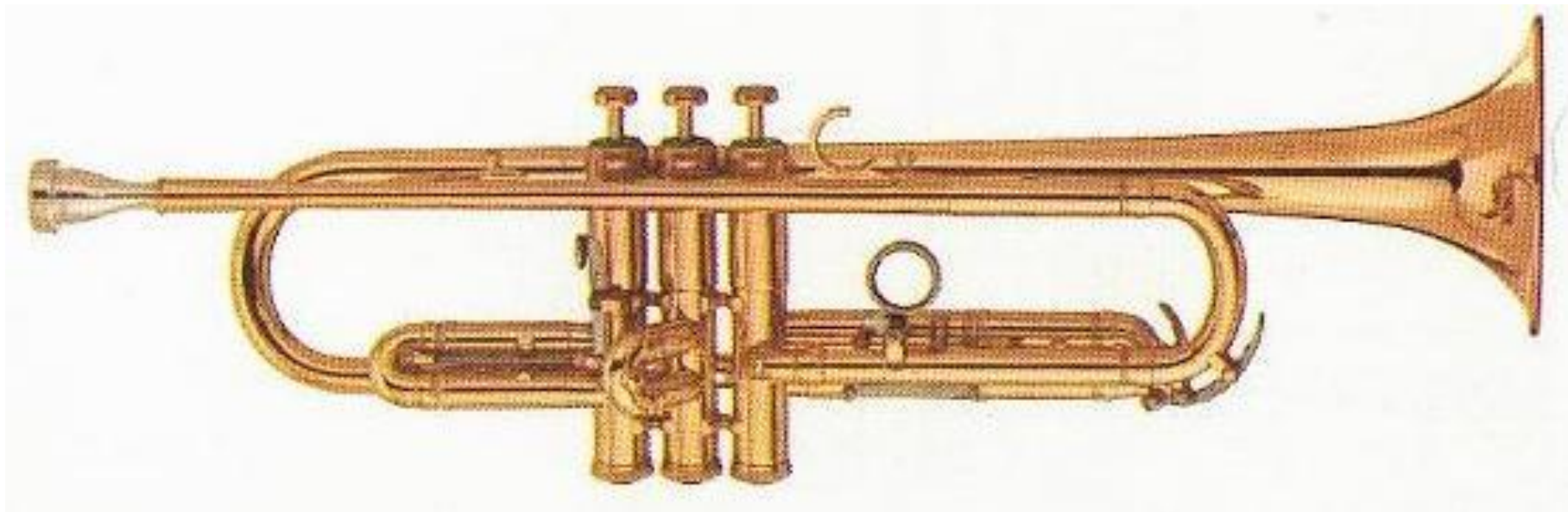
The Olds R5 Recording Cornet

Years Built: ca. 1950 – ca. 1970

Variants:

Significant Characteristics: Second valve is offset to the left. Lead pipe enters first valve.

Photo from Quality Brass



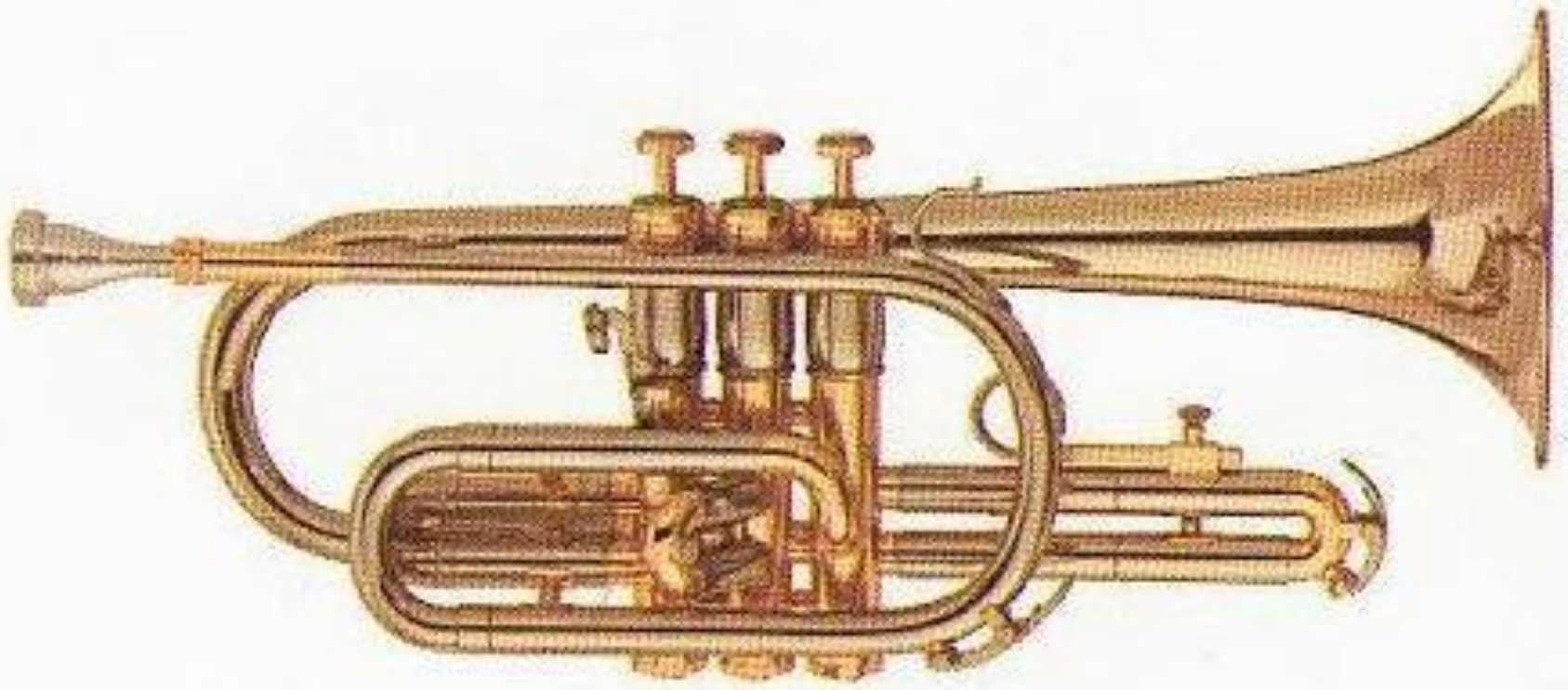
The Olds M-5 Mendez Cornet

Years Built: 1952 - 1979

Variants: Large bore model only.

Significant Characteristics: According to catalogs, the cornet looks just like the trumpet

Catalog graphic



The Olds O-5 Opera Cornet

Years Built: 1966 – circa 1970

Variants: Extra Large bore only.

Significant Characteristics:

Catalog graphic



The Olds V-52 Super Star Cornet

Years Built: 1974/77 - 1979

Variants: .468 bore only.

Significant Characteristics: Under-wrapped tuning slide similar to King Master Model.

Catalog image