

# Recorder Reporter

Newsletter of two chapters of the American Recorder Society (ARS),

Chicago Chapter & the West Suburban Early Music Society

February 2018

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## Chicago Chapter

Lisette returns on February 18, and again on April 15. We have invited Andrew Shultze to direct for our March 18 meeting, and our season closes on May 20 with our annual spring concert. For our February meeting we will run through the music for the March 4 playing session again, though for this event we need to be finished and packing up to leave by 5 PM.

Lisette Kielson returned for our January 21 meeting to lead us in jamming, and tuning. We played *Senliche not früh und spat* (Glogauer Liederbuch), *Frietjes* by Glen Shannon, and *Dolzflöte* (from *Sieben Flötentänze*) by Hans Ulrich Staeps. *Frietjes* is a song about a popular snack in Belgium and the Netherlands—French fries—commonly served with mayonnaise. Don't ask for ketchup. There are not many songs about French fries around, and this is probably the only song on earth about French fries (frietjes) written for recorder. The world owes a debt of gratitude to Glen Shannon, even if his music tends to be full of C flats and B sharps.



*A solid turnout for our January meeting*

Our discussion of tuning involved techniques, not theory. One tuning exercise, among others, calls for two players to alternately, and rhythmically, play the same pitched quarter note back and forth. This can be done with an ensemble, where the quarter note pitch gets passed down a line of players one at a time. Another method involves two musicians playing dissonant notes (a half or whole step apart) at the same time, with one person then

switching to the same note as their partner. Or you can have two or three musicians playing the same note as a drone, such as C, and three others working up the scale to G and back down. If the playing is in tune, you should hear difference tones. It is important to make tuning an integral part of the piece to be played, because it is easy to work through tuning exercises and then start a piece and be out of tune! Playing a piece in tune is more complicated than simply focusing on a series of practice notes, especially if the piece is being played in a performance. It can be useful to tune the first chord or series of chords.

We also made some plans for future events. In February we are invited to offer a workshop at the University of Chicago Folk Music Festival, and we spent time playing through music for March 4 at Covenant Presbyterian Church, for the 9 and 10:45 AM services. Playing at Covenant on December 3 went very well indeed. So we are hopeful, but those of us who are taking part need to practice, and we will play the pieces again February 18.

**We need volunteers to bring food & drink for our February meeting. Please contact Larry Johnson.**

## University of Chicago Folk Music Festival, February 10

The Folk Festival organizers have confirmed that we will be offering a recorder workshop in the first floor library of Ida Noyes Hall at 10:30 Saturday morning, February 10. The event will last for an hour; Ida Noyes Hall is at 1212 East 59<sup>th</sup> Street in Hyde Park. There should be plenty of street parking available, but you can also take either the #6 Jeffrey Express bus to 59<sup>th</sup> Street or the Illinois Central to 57<sup>th</sup> Street from downtown, and walk. The music is available at [chicagorecorders.org](http://chicagorecorders.org), our web site, Resources/Meeting Downloads/U of C Folk Music Festival downloads. Also visit [www.uofcfolk.org](http://www.uofcfolk.org).

The Folk Festival only offers a single day of workshops this year (Saturday) and concerts on Friday and Saturday nights at Mandel Hall. One of the workshops features Sacred Harp singing, starting at noon. If you find you are growing tired of all our graceful elegance from the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, try belting out some Protestant hymn tunes. Sacred Harp is a folk tradition that originated in New England in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (when most of the hymns

were written) and it was kept alive in small churches in the South after the Civil War. It was intended to help country folk, farmers with no musical background, to sing in four part harmony. As a simple form, the first rule with Sacred Harp has always been “loud is good, louder is better.” But the second rule is more relevant to our experience—“We don’t rehearse, we don’t perform, we just sing.”

In Sacred Harp, everybody sits in a section and everybody sings. You can lead if you want, but after you lead you sit down promptly, and then you keep singing. Most of the time leaders do not say anything before leading a song except to announce the hymn number. Applause is rare, and generally reserved for child leaders. It is all a most agreeable rebellion against our Twitter generation. Sacred Harp does not have likes or followers or scandals. There are no microphones for beautiful people to squawk into. It does not go viral. Sacred Harp *does* have friends, the analog variety. And it has people who sit around the hollow square and sing really loud. What the art form lacks in subtlety it makes up for with irony-free passion. The primal energy found in Sacred Harp singing is really interesting—and beautiful. You can hear a singing from several blocks away. The food is pretty good, too. Potluck lunch. This is a southern tradition, after all.



**Chicago Anniversary Singing, January 14, 2018**

This is a link to the Easter Anthem, one of my favorite Sacred Harp tunes:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mWsBOsr\\_15s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mWsBOsr_15s)

This one is really cool as well, #496 in the Sacred Harp, “The Rock that is Higher than I”:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1fzZzoHBbFQ>

And this is a brief documentary about the Sacred Harp culture in a southern town, Hoboken, Georgia:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v9IYWYbqMVE>

After singing, join a blue grass jam session, or a jug band workshop, and there will be no less than five different kinds of folk dance! All of this is free. And historic. This is the 58<sup>th</sup> annual folk festival. We are part of more than one grand tradition.



**John & David Dawson in a children’s folk song class, University of Chicago Folk Festival, February of 1994**

## West Suburban Early Music Society

The West Suburban Early Music Society met on a sunny Sunday January 14 to welcome a new year of musical camaraderie. Nancy Chabala led us in some hand-picked favorites that we all enthusiastically enjoyed.

We played a William Byrd version of *O Magnum Mysterium*, and a modern composition, *A Song for Japan* by Steven Verhelst. We then played from a marvelous collection that Nancy has of music that for many years was the playbook of recorder players who performed at the Renaissance fairs. The pieces from this collection, *Faire Book – Musicke’s merrie companions*, included:

- Farnaby’s Humor
- Galliard: New yeeres gift
- Parson among the peas
- We be three poore mariners
- Fairie Round
- Daphne

After our break the Da Capo group read through the recently-released *Fantasia on a shape-note hymn* by Eric Haas. This SATB arrangement is an ARS publication that is included free in the winter 2017 of the Society's magazine for members. We found this new piece interesting both in melodic elements and some harmonies and some unexpected harmonies as well. I give it a thumbs up! Our group also read through a SATB arrangement of the lyrical *Song Without Words* by Gustav Holst from the second movement of his Second Suite in F for Military Band. A hauntingly lovely melodic theme. And we played one version of *Wohl Koment der Mai* by Senfl. We will play another version next month and compare them together.

Next month we welcome Mirja Lorenz on February 11, as our conductor.—*Joanne Miller*

## Recorder at the Clearing, July 22-28

In the bucolic setting near the bluffs of Ellison Bay, Wisconsin, for the week of July 22 – 28, 2018, immerse yourself in recorder music at the Clearing workshop.

Recorder ensemble is a longtime Clearing tradition. The week's focus is on group playing, with morning, afternoon and evening sessions. Daytime sessions focus on rhythmic challenges, recorder technique and ensemble blend. Evening sessions feature lighter fare, ranging from Renaissance to jazz. The class emphasis is on growth, process and, most of all, enjoyment. This year's class will include a special memorial commissioned composition in honor of Adrienne Paffrath, a longtime instructor. The composer, Alyson Lewin, will be in-residence as co-teacher, so students can look forward to gaining insights into some of their Lewin favorites.

To participate fully in this class, you should have at least intermediate skills on a C or F recorder. For the evening sessions, you are encouraged to bring pieces from your music library and multiple copies of at least one piece to share. While Pat and Alyson will furnish most of the week's music, you will need to purchase copies of the required repertoire prior to the class. The music list can be obtained from The Clearing after April 15th. The total cost for the music is about \$40. For special or hard-to-find pieces, a vendor will be included in the repertoire list. Pat will contact all students prior to June 1st, sending the assigned instrumentation for the week and individual parts for ensemble playing.

Pat Badger is Advisor to the Head of School for Arts and Equity at the Prairie School in Racine, Wisconsin, and the principal trumpet for the Racine Symphony. A longtime Clearing teacher, she received The Clearing's White Cedar award for excellence in teaching.

Alyson Lewin hails from England where she is a teacher, performer, composer and publisher. Having studied music at Bristol University, she taught music in the Staffordshire Schools and currently free lances in the South Staffordshire area. Although Alyson teaches piano, flute and violin, her specialty is recorder, and she tutors adults throughout the United Kingdom.

Come join us for a wonderful week with a favorite composer and excellent teacher! More details are at [www.theclearing.org](http://www.theclearing.org), or contact Joanne Miller.



*The Baron's Noyse, with a full set of Renaissance recorders*



*The men of the Pippins singing If Ye Love me by Tallis*

## Music and More Coming Up

**Schola Antiqua** offers a choral concert, "Sounds of Faith in Medieval Jerusalem" on Friday March 9 at 4 PM at the Oriental Institute in Hyde Park (yes, that's right, 4 PM) and Sunday March 11 at 3 PM at St. Josaphat Church in Lincoln Park. The concert at the Oriental Institute is free, \$25 for the event at St. Josaphat, an elegant church setting at 2311 North

Southport Avenue in Chicago, in Lincoln Park. Visit [www.lumenchristi.org](http://www.lumenchristi.org) for details.

The **Chicago Recorder Quartet** plays on Friday, February 2 at 12:10 PM at Fourth Presbyterian Church, 126 East Chestnut in Chicago, North Michigan Avenue just north of Chicago Avenue. They plan to offer a "German Gems" program, Samuel Scheidt, Georg Englemann, Matthias Maute, Georg Philip Telemann, and finally the modern composer Sören Sieg. The concert is free.

Fourth Presbyterian is an easy walk from the Chicago Avenue subway stop on the Red line, and you could spend the rest afternoon visiting the Museum of Contemporary Art nearby, or head north to the Chicago History Museum at Clark & North. Walk south from there to visit the new Apple store near the Michigan Avenue Bridge. Another option, walk a half mile south to the elegant Richard H. Driehaus Museum at Erie and Wabash ([www.driehausmuseum.org](http://www.driehausmuseum.org)). The mansion was built by banker Samuel Mayo Nickerson in 1883, and is a magnificent reminder of Chicago's Gilded Era.

***Dear Mother: I have written this to tell you my worrying secret. Now don't cry when you read it because it is neither yours nor my fault. I suppose I will have to tell it now without any nonsense. To begin with I was not meant to be an athlete. I was meant to be a composer, and will be I'm sure. I'll ask you one more thing—don't ask me to try to forget this unpleasant thing and go play football. Please—Sometimes I've been worrying about this so much that it makes me mad (not very).***

Celebrated composer Samuel Barber (1910-1981) wrote this to his mother in 1919, shortly before he set to work on his first opera, *The Rose Tree*. He was nine years old.

## Chapter Information

Our chapters are open to anyone, regardless of musical training, who wants to cultivate and sponsor love and appreciation of the art, history and use of the recorder and related instruments. Our meetings, programs and publications help members to come together and to find others with similar interests. Chicago Chapter Dues begin September 1, and West Suburban dues cover June 1 through May 31 and are due in September. Both groups include membership in either chapter and in the *American Recorder Society*. Members are listed in the ARS directory, receive *The American Recorder* magazine and this newsletter. The *Recorder Reporter* is published monthly from September to May jointly by the Chicago Chapter and the West Suburban Early Music Society.

## Tuesday Night Recorder Sessions

The Oak Park Recorder Society offers a fine way to gain regular experience in playing with a group. OPRS members meet Tuesday night, 8 to 10 PM, in the basement of the Pilgrim Congregational Church, 460 Lake Street. Go to the back entrance near the parking lot and ring the buzzer for the basement.

## Chicago Chapter ARS ([ChicagoRecorders.org](http://ChicagoRecorders.org))

|                 |                                                                |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| President       | Larry Johnson<br>(ll_johnson1239@sbcglobal.net) (773) 631-6671 |
| Vice President  | Lynette Colmey<br>(ljcolmey@gmail.com) (708) 638-7721          |
| Secretary       | Hyacinth Egner<br>(hyacinth_egner@yahoo.com)                   |
| Treasurer       | Valerie DePriest<br>(themusicalchild@mac.com) 708-524-1625     |
| Webmaster       | Ben Eisenstein                                                 |
| Music Director: | Lisette Kielson<br>lisettekielson@gmail.com                    |

**Chicago Chapter meetings:** The third Sunday of each month, September through May, 2 PM, at Covenant Presbyterian Church, 2012 West Dickens, Chicago.

Enter the front door of the parish building west of the church and go to the large fellowship hall on the right.

## West Suburban Early Music Society ([westsubems.org](http://westsubems.org))

|                                   |                                                                |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| President/Chapter Representative: | Joanne Miller<br>(Wan1@sbcglobal.net) (847) 359-8750           |
| Vice President:                   | Darleen Kay<br>(630) 679-1506                                  |
| Secretary:                        | Nancy Finley<br>(nfelma3@comcast.net) (630) 554-4363           |
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| Recorder Reporter contact:        | Eric Stern<br>(egstern1@netscape.net) (630) 428-8464           |

**WSEMS meetings:** Second Sunday of each month, September through April, first Sunday of May, 2-4:30 PM at the Downers Grove Friends meeting house, 5710 Lomond Avenue in Downers Grove. The church is located near Maple Avenue and 355. From 355, take the ramp and go east on Maple for 4/10 miles and turn right (south) onto Lomond street. The church is on the right.

## Visit us at [chicagorecorders.org](http://chicagorecorders.org)

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