

# Recorder Reporter

*Newsletter of two chapters of the American Recorder Society (ARS),  
Chicago Chapter & the West Suburban Early Music Society*

**March 2016**

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## Chicago Chapter News

Mirja Lorenz directed the chapter in Renaissance dance music on February 21. We danced the afternoon away, or, well, we could have, except that we were playing recorder. We worked carefully through pavaues, galliards, and saltarello from a collection brought to England from Italy in 1560. We once again enjoyed Mirja's leadership. Note that she will be performing on Friday, April 22 as a part of Bach Week, with Lisette Kielson (see "Music Coming Up" below).

For our March meeting, we are planning to take part in Play the Recorder Month and return to the **Oak Park Public Library**, but this year the meeting will be held on **Saturday, March 19 at 2 PM**.

Lisette will direct us in a recorder orchestra session and will provide parts. The library is at 834 Lake Street, near Oak Park Avenue. You can park in the garage, or on side streets. You can also walk from the L stop at Oak Park Avenue or the Oak Park Metra station. Our friends from the West Suburban Early Music Society are sponsoring this meeting, and we look forward to them joining us. They plan to bring some of their own music, too.

Lisette returns in April to direct. We need someone to provide food and drinks for our April gathering. Joanne Miller, president of the West Suburban Early Music Society, is generously sponsoring our April meeting. So we have received two gifts from our friends at WSEMS.

We close our season with our spring concert on May 15. Sort of. It's not too early to start making plans for the spring concert, but we are also considering performing again as part of Make Music Chicago again on June 21. Last year found us playing on a sunny afternoon on a plaza at Lincoln Park Zoo. This year June 21 falls on a Tuesday, so we might want to think about performing at a place and time—noon in Millennium Park has been mentioned—where we will find a weekday crowd. If you are interested in taking part in Make Music Chicago again this year, let one of the officers know.

Finally, Valerie DePriest is making plans to host a master's class at her home in Oak Park on Saturday May 7 with Lisette Kielson. Anyone who would like personal coaching from our music director is welcome. Contact Valerie at [themusicalchild@mac.com](mailto:themusicalchild@mac.com) or at 708-524-1625.

## Folk Music Festival Recorder Workshop

Members of the Chicago chapter gathered for the third time at the University of Chicago Folk Music Festival on February 13 in Hyde Park to lead a recorder workshop. After playing Lully's Chaconne, we spread out with our music stands and instruments to play Renaissance folk music with members of the audience.



*Playing recorder with our workshop participants*



It was another excellent day for music making, the 56<sup>th</sup> annual event, workshops on blue grass and Sacred Harp singing, Russian folk music and sea shanties, barn dance and Celtic tunes. Several recorder players were seen in the jug band workshop, and some were even seen playing washboard or whiskey jug.



And we have some hope that this venerable tradition will continue. A volunteer showed me a sign up list of U of C students who were interested in helping out in 2017. The Folk Festival draws on many old friends across the city who donate time and money to make it happen each year. But for the event to continue to use Ida Noyes Hall and borrow the name of the University of Chicago, it needs to be managed by students. Recruiting those students in recent years has been very difficult.



*Valerie on washboard, with the Strictly Jug Nuts*

As with Early Music, folk music suffers from changing music tastes and an aging client base. But one volunteer I spoke with also observed that the students they sought to recruit repeatedly told the Folklore Society that they were not interested in helping with the Folk Festival because they wanted to devote their time to activities that would better enhance their resumes. Everything yields to their need to compete for a job after they graduate, even from the University of Chicago.

When I was in high school, even during the stagflation of the mid 1970s, the plan after graduation featured college, finding a job, buying a car, finding a wife, finding a house, getting a dog, etc. A checklist. I don't remember

approaching SAT tests with desperation, or the pursuit of a college placement as Life Mission. Modest expectations (wedding receptions in church fellowship halls) traveled with modest student loan debt and a reasonable hope that a job with health insurance would follow a bachelor's degree. At that time it was still fairly common for an ordinary job to last 25 years instead of 2.5. The rise of our digital culture has created an astounding number of opportunities, but with those opportunities also come endless distractions, a zeal to monitor personal brands online 24/7, and a relentless need to be prepared for the next lurching change. And the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy affords young people no margin of error.

The origins of the American Recorder Society are rooted in a post-war culture *and* economy that was stable and predictable; it was a culture that offered a working man or a housewife a measure of free time and elbow room. It seems most young people in this generation don't feel they can afford to "waste" time with barn dance or hand bells or recorder ensembles, even if they found those pursuits otherwise appealing.

Well, it was a great day. And we will hope to return to Hyde Park for recorder playing (and blue grass) in February of 2017.

## A Merger Proposal

In January the board of the Chicago chapter presented to the members a proposal that the Chicago chapter merge with the West Suburban Early Music Society. This was considered as a means to secure recorder playing in northern Illinois for the future, by forming one strong group of musicians from two chapters. We included in the proposal that we would move the monthly meeting site to a more central location for both groups (Oak Park), and move our meetings to the second Sunday of the month, to accommodate the West Suburban members and music teachers from the Greater Chicago Orff Chapter. We would also form a new board made up of members of both chapters, and proposed that we would start meeting as a joint chapter in September of 2016.

Proposals are meant to be specific. Hence all of these details. And the goal seemed prudent to us, as we reflected on an opportunity to pool resources, to have more helping hands and finances available to manage projects and cover the costs of a regular music director. We also sought to have enough players each month to form break-out groups so that beginners could work at their own pace while advanced players could take on challenging works.

But the West Suburban Early Music Society formed in 1980 for a good reason, and that good reason still exists 35 years later. WSEMS members are spread out, and a



long way from Chicago. In truth, asking the members of *both* chapters to drive another 10 or 15 miles or more to a new meeting venue would be a hardship that many of them would be hard pressed to accept. Further, the two chapters have distinct personalities and playing styles, and merging them appears to be impractical. So it seems best to set this idea aside, at least for now.

We continue outreach efforts. In the meantime we had some excellent conversations about the future of both chapters, and the boards in Chicago and Downers Grove are making plans to work together more. Look for plans for a summer BBQ, joint meetings in 2016-2017, and other ways to reach out to each other, across the miles. We share a history, Chicago and WSEMS, fine harmony, and a lot of fond memories. So we will build on that instead.—*Mark Dawson*

## Music Coming Up

We keep talking about the **Bach Week Festival**. The Friday evening candlelight concert, April 22 at 10 PM, will feature our own Lisette Kielson and the L'Ensemble Portique in the lobby of Nichols Hall, 1490 Chicago Avenue in Evanston. The April 22 7:30 concert, same place, features Lisette playing with Mirja Lorenz in Bach's Cantata 106: *Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit*. The Festival also offers concerts Sunday April 24 in the Nichols Hall and on Friday May 6 at 7:30 at Anderson Chapel, North Park University in Chicago.

The choral ensemble **Bella Voce Camerata** presents "The Three Sch's" Music by Scheidt, Schein, & Schutz," with the early music ensemble Rook to perform works by three celebrated German composers of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Heinrich Schutz, Samuel Scheidt, and Johann Hermann Schein. Saturday, March 5, 7:30 PM, St. Clement Parish, 642 W Deming in Chicago, and Sunday, March 6, 3:30, St. Luke's Episcopal, 939 Hinman Avenue in Evanston. To learn more visit [bellavoce.org](http://bellavoce.org).

**Jordi Savall** plays viola da gamba with bodhrán player Frank McGuire at Mandel Hall, the University of Chicago, Friday March 4 at 7:30 PM. Pre-concert lecture at 6:30. Tickets are at [tickets.uchicago.edu](http://tickets.uchicago.edu).

**Chicago Choral Artists** offers Double Baroque, masterworks of the era, including Scarlatti's *Stabat Mater*, March 5 at 7:30 PM at St. Sylvester Catholic Church in Chicago, 2157 North Humboldt, and March 6 at Grace Lutheran, 7300 Division in River Forest. Visit [Chiagochoralartists.org](http://Chiagochoralartists.org).

The **Haymarket Opera Company** offers *La Calisto* (1651) by Franceso Cavalli on Friday May 6 at 7:30 PM and Sunday, May 8 at 2 PM, at the Athenaeum Theatre, 2936 N. Southport Avenue in Chicago. Reserve your tickets at [www.athenaeumtheatre.org](http://www.athenaeumtheatre.org) or call 773-935-

6875. The Athenaeum is near the Music Box, and an easy walk from the Southport L stop on the Brown line.

The Brazilian recorder quartet **Quinta Essentia** performs as part of the Jewel Box series at Northeastern Illinois University, 5500 North St. Louis Avenue, at 7:30 PM on Friday, May 20. Tickets and information are available at <http://quintaessentia.com.br/en>.

## The Clearing, a Recorder Festival

The Clearing is a week-long recorder workshop in northern Door County, Wisconsin, on a secluded retreat setting on the bluffs of Green Bay. For over thirty years this gem of music making has become a favorite of members of the West Suburban Early Music Society. It's the music that is the big draw for most of us, but a week of retreat, nature, camaraderie, and fabulous old fashioned homemade meals make for a unique and fun experience. This year's class runs from July 31 to August 4. Learn more at the website [theclearing.org](http://theclearing.org). Hope 2016 brings you all you wish for, especially the magic of making music together!—*Joanne Miller*

Email Joanne at [wan1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wan1@sbcglobal.net) or call her at 847-359-8750 (home) or 847-345-9267 (cell).

## Whitewater Early Music Festival

Whitewater returns June 3-5 at the University of Wisconsin Whitewater. This year the festival features master classes from the Brazilian recorder ensemble Quinta Essentia (they are also performing Friday night May 20 at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago).

The registration page, schedule of classes, and list of instructors are all now available at the festival web page, [www.whitewaterearlymusic.org](http://www.whitewaterearlymusic.org), or find them on Facebook. Kate Schuldiner will be teaching gamba for the first time this year, an Oberlin graduate who teaches in Chicago and performs all over the country. Gayle Neuman of Portland, Oregon will be leading classes on vocal performance, featuring choral works by Byrd, Palestrina, Campion, and others. We will have classes on Henry Purcell and medieval notation, Antonio Vivaldi and Erik Satie, Palestrina and Shannon, playing alto up or tenor in the bass clef, and much more, for all levels. Contact Pam Wiese, [gcaosapam@gmail.com](mailto:gcaosapam@gmail.com) for more.

## West Suburban Early Music Society

A real winter day (with snow) did not stop the hardy group of recorder players who congregated in Downers Grove. WSEMS hosted a well-attended meeting that feature music our director, Laura Osterlund, had selected and that Nancy Chabala directed. For the discussion part of our meeting we welcomed Mark Dawson, who led a discussion about strategies for keeping recorder playing alive in the Chicago area, including a possible merger between WSEMS and the Chicago chapter. We played

pieces by Telemann, Pachelbel, Thomas Tomkins, as well as a work by Suan guess-Hansen, Adagio from Moon's Mystery, to close the meeting.—*Joanne Miller*



*Paul Schmidt and Jim Heup, WSEMS February meeting*



### Chapter Information(<http://chicagorecorders.org>)

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 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.

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

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**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 Lisle. 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.

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