

Recorder Reporter

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

Chicago Chapter & the West Suburban Early Music Society

April 2017

Volume 58, Number 8

Chicago Chapter News

Dennis Sherman gallantly directed the March 19 meeting of the Chicago Chapter as a competitive event.

The members who attended cast a wistful ear toward Byron Colby Barn in Grayslake, where the Chicago Recorder Quartet, Lisette Kielson, Patrick O'Malley, Laura Osterlund, and Mirja Lorenz, were performing. Or maybe they thought about playing in or attending a concert also on that Sunday afternoon, March 19, at the Music Institute of Chicago, "Sing and We Play It," that celebrated the 30th anniversary of the MIC Chorale. The concert also featured their viol da gamba ensemble and members of the MIC Recorder Orchestra.

The Chicago Chapter spent the afternoon playing selections from the *Odhecaton*. More properly named "Harmonice Musices Odhecaton," the collection was published in three editions in 1501, 1503, and 1504 by Ottaviano Petrucci, and is the first polyphonic music printed with moveable type. The typesetter printed in three passes, first the musical staves, then the words, and finally, the notes. The playlist included works by Josquin Desprez, Heinrich Isaac, Loyset Compere, and Alexander Agricola. There are more pieces by composer Jean Japart than by anyone else in the collection, but we know almost nothing about Japart, and his works appears virtually nowhere outside of the *Odhecaton*.

Dennis provided 11 pieces, and the chapter members worked their way through 8, and considered facsimiles of the scores with original late 15th century notations.

"We had a very satisfying session; many of the pieces, once worked on and nicely directed by Dennis, turned out to be quite beautiful," Larry Johnson said. "Dennis worked us up to counting whole notes, when the feel was definitely in cut time and the modern signature was 4/2."

Join us in force for our April meeting, when Lisette returns. **We will be meeting on Sunday April 23, not April 16, because the third Sunday of April is Easter.**

Spring Recorder Workshop, April 2017

Please send in your workshop flyer now! Our workshop with Anne Timberlake is on April 8, 2017 at Covenant Presbyterian Church, 2012 West Dickens. This is our regular monthly meeting place. We will play all day, starting at 9:30 and ending at 4 with a break for lunch, and

will start with an hour or two of work on how, where, and why to articulate with recorder, and then move into the workshop theme, "Bad Boys." The fee will be \$65 for members and \$75 for non-members. Lunch is on your own, but several restaurants are in walking distance.

Covenant Presbyterian Church is at 2012 West Dickens in the Bucktown neighborhood of Chicago, near Damen and Armitage and near exit 47 on the Kennedy. Street parking is available, and a lot behind the church on Charleston may have spaces. The church is also easily accessible by public transportation. Take the Blue line elevated train to either Damen or Western Avenue and walk (www.transitchicago.com), or take either the #49 Western Avenue Bus or the #50 Damen Avenue bus. The church is also near the Clybourn stop on the Metra Union Pacific North and North West train lines (www.metrarail.com).

Workshop brochures are available on the Chicago chapter web site, ChicagoRecorders.org, or email msjddawson@sbcglobal.net to have one emailed to you.

Spring Concert

Our annual spring concert is next month, May 21 at 2 PM. If you would like to perform, please contact Mark Dawson at msjddawson@sbcglobal.net, and provide:

- Name of the piece(s)
- Composer name, nationality, and dates
- Performers' names and instruments

Don't forget to bring treats to share! Any kind of music is welcome on recorder; you can introduce other instruments like gamba or lute or keyboard, or choral works, but they must be early music.

West Suburban Early Music Society

The WSEMS welcomed Dennis Sherman on March 12 to lead us again. The theme was "Rounds & round" and with the variety of pieces we thoroughly explored this genre. Old manuscripts survive to attest to the enjoyment and versatility with this musical concept. We enjoyed the many different ways "Sumer is icumen in" could be played ensemble. More complex forms followed with *O virgo splendens*, then *Laudemus virginem*, *Splendens ceptigera*, *Music Feast*, and *Vanitas*. We then tackled some fugues of Johann Walter (1496 – 1570). It was very enlightening to study in depth this musical artistry, often

just taken for granted. Join us for our April 9 meeting for another great musical journey.

Also, it is time again to sign up for the annual Recorder Week on the beautiful bluffs of Green Bay in Door County, Wisconsin. This year it is being held from August 6-12. Besides the wonderful variety of music offered, the woodland setting, secluded cabins, and home style meals can offer a really pampered get away from urban distractions. Any questions? Give me a call or email. More on the venue and other classes is available at www.theclearing.org. --Joanne Miller

Early Music Festival, Whitewater

The Early Music Festival returns June 2-4 this year at the University of Wisconsin Whitewater. Find the festival on Facebook, "Whitewater Early Music Festival," or visit www.whitwaterearlymusic.org. The schedule and registration form are now available for download and should be in print soon as well. You can also register online this year using PayPal. After May 20 a late registration fee of \$30 applies.

The University is about 150 miles from Chicago. Vendors on site provide music, instruments, supplies, and repairs. The first event is 7 PM Friday night June 3, and the weekend ends with a Sunday afternoon concert.

For the first time, our old friend Louise Austin will not be able to join us. The leaders plan a slide show about Louise on Friday night. If you have any pictures of her send them to Pam Wiese at oprecorder@gmail.com as JPG files. Saturday we will gather for music as usual, but Shelley Gruskin will share his memories of Louise, and the Sunday concert will be dedicated to her memory. It is also possible that some of her music and instruments will be available for sale.

Make Music Chicago

The Make Music Chicago international music festival started in France in 1982, and was introduced in Chicago in 2011. The Chicago chapter decided to participate for the first time in 2014, performing at lunch time at the French Market downtown. The next season found us in a plaza near the flamingoes at Lincoln Park Zoo. Rush Hour Concerts reported that the 2015 event drew over 1500 musicians, who took part in over 250 performances in over 100 venues all over the city. It was great!

This year June 21 falls on a Wednesday. We didn't participate last year, as the event was also on a weekday. Do we want to take part in 2017? Organizers note that the event has been held on weekdays in years past, and to good effect; musicians and venues find that they serve large audiences on a business day that they would not

see on a weekend, because a lot of people are in Chicago who would tend to avoid the city otherwise. So mid-day events in or near the Loop tend to draw a crowd. Let Mark or Ben know, by email or in person, if you want to take part.



Recorder Orchestra, the Music Institute of Chicago



"Sing and We Play It" concert, Sunday, March 19, Music Institute of Chicago, Evanston. The event ended with a performance of "Spem in Alium" by Thomas Tallis



The viol da gamba ensemble, practicing

The Chicago Recorder Quartet

After their performance on Sunday March 19 at the Byron Colby Barn, the Musicians Club of Women invited the Chicago Recorder Quartet to perform for them at their March 20 meeting at the Union League Club of Chicago. Nadine Petersen graciously invited a number of Chicago chapter members to join her as guests for the event. The Club awarded Laura Osterlund a \$5,000 Farwell Trust Scholarship, as she came in first in their audition for the winds division. Laura can apply the award to her master's degree program in historical performance at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, where she expects to graduate in 2018.



Chicago Recorder Quartet, dress rehearsal



Patrick and Laura, practicing

The Musician's Club of Women was founded in 1875. That means that there must have been a group of elegant but sturdy ladies who rubbed the ashes from the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 off their hands and faces, looked at each other, and said, "We need to start a music club for women!" Today, nearly 150 years later, they are the

oldest musical club in the country and are dedicated to "promoting established and promising women in classical music through a scholarship program and performance opportunities."



Playing for the Musician's Club of Women, March 20

The mission of the Quartet is to bring early music to the contemporary world and present contemporary music on one of the earliest known instruments.

Music and More Coming Up

Bach Week Festival (44th annual) returns with two concerts at the Music Institute of Chicago, 1490 Chicago Avenue in Evanston Friday April 28 and Friday May 5, both at 7:30, and a Sunday afternoon concert on May 7 at 2:30 at Anderson Chapel of North Park University, Foster and Spaulding in Chicago. Single tickets are \$30; visit bachweek.org or call 800 838-3006. The May 7 finale features the choral motet *Jesu, meine Freude* and the Orchestral Suite #4 in D. A pair of keyboard concerti are offered for May 5, and Cantatas 54 and 202 on April 28, along with a pair of soprano duets.

Join the **First Brigade Brass Band** this summer at a pair of Civil War re-enactments in the Chicago area, Saturday July 22 at noon at Four Seasons Park in Lombard, and Saturday August 5 at Carpenters Park in Carpentersville, north of Elgin. In Carpentersville the band will play two circle concerts at 11 AM and 3 PM, and offer a historical program at noon, and then provide music for a period dance at 7 PM. This extremely cool Civil War era band features all authentic 1860s vintage brass instruments, terrific playing, and our own Paul Schmidt. Visit <http://1stbrigadeband.org> to learn more. And the Civil War events are great fun too for those of us who like hanging out with the obsessive in our midst. I have never been able to ask a question at a Civil War re-enactment that could not be promptly and thoroughly answered, and I once watched an artillery team fire a cannon from behind the Chicago Historical Society toward Lake Shore

Drive. Abraham Lincoln regularly shows up, and you can learn about period cooking without being obliged to eat any of it. The food vendors use 21st century ingredients, health standards, and customer service techniques.

A remarkable and inexpensive event for those who like music and have strong hearts would be to take a tour of the carillon tower at **Rockefeller Chapel** at the University of Chicago. The carillon—the second largest musical instrument on the planet, by mass—will be played at 5 PM on Sundays, July 23, 30, August 6, 13, and 20. You could relax on the lawn with a picnic blanket if you like, or you can meet at the front desk of the chapel at 4:30, and enjoy the distinctly medieval experience of climbing 271 narrow winding steps to the carillon studio, and watch the bells being played. Great views of Hyde Park from the tallest landmark in the community. Rockefeller Chapel is at 5850 South Woodlawn. Visit <http://rockefeller.uchicago.edu/the-carillon>.



An Antiphony, or Choir Book (Italian, about 1270), used by Dominican nuns. From the Deering Family Galleries of Medieval and Renaissance Art, Arms, and Armor, Art Institute of Chicago. The new galleries opened March 20.

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 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)

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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.

Visit us at chicagorecorders.org
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