

Recorder Reporter

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

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Chicago Chapter News

Lisette returned April 23 to lead a small but thankful group of recorder players in some challenging pieces. That included Maurice Whitney's *Pastiche Overture* and *Kemp's Jig* by Andrew Charlton, a modern work based on a 16th century tune that starts out deceptively sounding like a 16th century tune. Leonie Jenkins' *Carousel* offers direction for recorder players to play "Quasi Queasy" to depict a carousel rider who rides the carousel too much and starts to get sick. We closed with the familiar *Ballad, Blues and Riffs* by Andrew Challinger.

The host of our monthly meetings, Covenant Presbyterian Church, is aware that carrying liability insurance is a financial hardship for the chapter, and they are willing to help. They are prepared to pay us for providing music for Sunday worship during Advent and Lent, December 3, 2017 and March 4, 2018. Their generous offer would end up covering the cost of our insurance policy. We need players to commit to these dates.

A Message from the President

As I look back over the past five years since I was elected President of the Chicago Chapter ARS, what comes to mind is how loyal and selfless the board and members have been. They volunteer to bring food, help each other out with rides and assist with setting up and clean-up for all meetings and events. Most impressive has been the financial generosity of our members to keep the chapter vibrant and alive.

There are several accomplishments that I along with Mark Dawson, who started as Vice President with me, can be proud of. First is bringing on a regular music director, Lisette Kielson. This has added needed consistency and quality to our meetings. Second is the regular performances outside our chapter meetings. These performances were made possible with the efforts of Lisette to give us a repertoire for such occasions. It has been enjoyable playing at libraries, Lincoln Park Zoo, and the University of Chicago. Lastly, we have been able to continue our bi-annual workshops with multi-state participants in spite of numerous challenges.

I leave the post confident that our new set of officers will bring fresh new ideas to the chapter. I look forward to the upcoming monthly meetings, programs and performances.—Ben Eisenstein

Spring Recorder Workshop, April 2017

Every two years the chapter sponsors a Saturday recorder workshop. This year Anne Timberlake of St. Louis offered a session on articulation when playing recorder, and then spent the afternoon leading us in playing music composed by sundry musical losers and troublemakers, gifted artists who were chased away or despised or fired or imprisoned in their time, guilty of everything from writing disagreeable poetry to murder. For the first time in 2017 we held our workshop at our regular meeting place, Covenant Presbyterian Church in Bucktown, rather than at Concordia University in River Forest. We had the same number attending in 2017 as we did in 2015, 22 people, but this event cost a lot less, and we also managed to have a splendid day of music making with a lot less effort than before.



Gathering for a day playing recorder at Covenant

We talked about anatomy. The alveolar ridge was Anne's favorite part of the mouth, the ridge on the upper jaw just behind the teeth. We can't do much with breath in managing articulation in a recorder; we need to use our tongue and upper palate. The idea is to keep the air moving and control this flow with tongue techniques, so we talked about and practiced double and triple tonguing. The air should be like a pilot light on a gas stove, always running. Anne suggested an exercise she called "the Folding Shawl," where you start with a whole note, move to two half notes, then four quarter notes, then eighth notes, and finally, returning to a whole note.



Then, we started making melodies together, enjoying compositions from trouble makers in the history of music. The offenses varied, and there are so many losers and scoundrels among celebrated composers that their music would not all fit in a week's worth of workshops.

Alfonso Ferabosco's (1543-1488) crime seems to involve being a Catholic in Elizabeth's England, though the French thought he was a spy when he fled to Paris, and they didn't trust him either. He was even tossed in prison by the pope at one point. The Englishman William Brade (1560-1630) bounced around Europe's courts, including Brandenburg and Copenhagen twice each, Hamburg, and elsewhere. We don't know what he did, but he evidently got fired a lot, and someone who knew him wrote a warning in a letter to a potential employer to avoid this "mischievous, wanton fellow."

The offenses of John Bull (1562-1628) are more carefully documented. Bull, an instructor at Gresham College Oxford, was obliged to flee England in 1613 because he fathered a child out of wedlock. The Archbishop of Canterbury observed, "The Man hath more music than honesty, and is as famous for the marring of virginity as

he is for the fingering of organs and virginals." Peter Warlock (1894-1930), meanwhile was hurting for cash in 1927 and wanted to raise enough "to get suitably drunk" over Christmas, so he wrote a carol, "Bethlehem Down," and Christopher Tye (1505-1572) was known for being a grouch. "Dr. Tye was a peevish and humorless man, especially in his latter days," wrote an associate. When a woman in Ely Cathedral complained that Tye was playing the organ out of tune, he replied that her ears were out of tune instead.

Carlo Gesualdo de Venosa (1560-1613) wrote very dissonant music, strange even today and much more so during his own time. But as a wealthy nobleman he did not have to trouble himself with keeping up with popular tastes—or with the law. He is best known for killing his wife and her lover. We know how well Henry VIII (1491-1547) cared for his wife, too, one wife at a time. Less known is that Henry was a fine singer and instrumentalist, with a fine collection of lutes and recorders, and we have a number of his compositions.

Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632-1687) was a funny, gregarious Italian who, by the time he was 20 years old, was a fixture in the court of Louis XIV in Paris. For a time Lully was the Sun King's favorite musician, a prodigious composer and a master of the French Baroque. But his constant affairs with members of both sexes eventually led to him falling out of favor with Louis, who grew more pious as he grew older. But more than his aggressive pursuit of life, Lully is perhaps just as famous for how his life ended. While conducting a performance of *Te Deum* by beating the rhythm with his staff, he stuck the pointed end into his own foot. Lully refused to let his surgeon amputate, because that would mean he would no longer be able to dance! Gangrene set in, and the infection spread, leading to his death three months later.

And Matthew Locke (1621-1677) was a belligerent fool, several times provoking duels, and he was known for indulging in a bitter war in print with a rival over music theory. Locke condemned his opponent as "copper mouthed" and "sparrow nosed" because they disagreed over the proper way to notate clefs.

Still, as for all of these troublemakers, we will be tolerant. They all created splendid music, and one song by Locke we played, "Ne'er trouble thyself," offered some fine advice for us as we practice on our recorders:

Ne'er chain or imprison thy soul up in sorrow,
What fails us today may befriend us tomorrow.

A good day, fine music with friends, yet another successful workshop. Many thanks to Anne Timberlake for her skillful leadership.

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.

This spring concert will be a little different. We will miss some regulars due to other commitments, illness, and a medieval music festival in Michigan the same weekend that will draw away some of our members. What does that mean? Opportunity! Some of you who attend and maybe perform only with the chapter or only with the Oak Park Recorder Society, here is your chance to be a star. Let's have some duets and trios and quartets that have not been featured before.

West Suburban Early Music Society

Our meeting on April 9 was ably led by one of our members, the talented and experienced musician Daniel Heiman. Since the meeting was on Palm Sunday, he began by attempting to tune up the group with two settings of the chorale, "Herzlich tut mich Verlangen" (known in English as O Sacred Head Now Wounded). The first was a familiar one by Bach with straight 4/4 time, and then the original composition of the tune by Hans Leo Hassler, with much more jazzy rhythms, the latter to try to get the group accustomed to switching between duple and triple rhythm groupings.

Daniel then moved to the main theme of the program, trying to define the canzona—"trying," because the entry in Wikipedia is very brief and appears incomplete. He began with three examples taken from the collection of Antonio Mortaro, published in 1600, "La Portia," "La Saronna" and "La Montina." These illustrated the typical style of the form, four parts (SATB) and beginning with staggered (fugal) entrances of the initial thematic material, always starting with the long-short-short rhythm pattern now known as the "canzona figure." Mortaro's selections also all had an AABB structural layout, illustrating that canzonas often do employ repeats, though the sections are long and much more complex than in dance forms.

We then played "La Squizzerotta," a piece from the 1608 collection of Cesario Gussago, which though it is subtitled "Sonata settima a 4" still exhibits the characteristics of a canzona shown in the compositions of Mortaro, staggered

entrances of typical thematic material. That was followed by "Canzon Vigesima prima" of Antonio Troilo, from his collection printed in 1606. Again it begins with a theme building from the canzona figure, but here the additional feature is that the composition is SATTB. The repeat of the opening material comes near the end, so the structure is approximately ABA. From there we moved to more familiar territory, with a piece by Andrea Gabrieli from 1589. Though it is titled "Ricercar del sesto tono," it has the hallmarks of the canzona: staggered entrances of the four parts, all with the same thematic material building off the canzona figure. The repeat scheme is AABCC.

The canzona form was distinctly Italian, but to illustrate that the canzona form spread north toward the end of its period of popularity, we ended with "Canzon X" (1618) by Erasmus Widmann, a German who worked in the area around Nuremberg. The piece fits the mold fairly well, having five parts entering sequentially, all using approximately the same thematic material beginning with the canzona figure and a structure that includes a return to that material at the end. It was a wonderful time, much more like a workshop than a meeting.

We meet again on May 7 to close our season. We will play pieces contributed by members. The Alto Group will present some pieces to the group as will the Da Capo group. Then, we will hold our annual summer picnic/play event in July! Plans are underway with great food, great music, more food, more music, etc. Details (like the actual date) will be sent out soon. Happy summer break to everyone!

Also, it is time again to sign up for the annual Recorder Week in Door County, Wisconsin. This year it is being held from August 6-12. For more on the venue and classes visit 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.whitewaterearlymusic.org. The schedule and registration form are now available for download. You can also register online this year using PayPal. After May 12 a late registration fee of \$30 applies.

Officers for 2017-2018

We have a new slate of officers for the coming season:

President	Larry Johnson
Vice President	Lynette Colmery
Secretary	Hyacinth Egner
Treasurer	Valerie DePriest

Music Coming Up

The **Marion Consort** plans a concert at the Chicago Temple, 77 West Washington in downtown Chicago, at 3 PM on Sunday, May 21. "Broad is the Road" will feature songs from England and early America, including Shape Note singing, with songs taken from the Sacred Harp hymnal, published in 1844. The concert will also feature medieval madrigals. Tickets are \$15, and \$20 at the door. To learn more visit marionconsort.org.

The **University of Chicago Early Music Festival** offers their spring concert on Tuesday, May 9 at 7:30 PM at Rockefeller Chapel, 5850 South Woodlawn Avenue. The event features a variety of works from 15th and 16th century Italian composers such as Gabrieli, Frescobaldi, and Gastoldi, but highlighting Monteverdi, in "Finding Monteverdi: from Mantua to Venice." The event is free, and includes music for voice, viols, violin, recorder, crumhorn, cornettos, and sackbuts.

Lisette Kielson Fall Workshop

Join Lisette Kielson on Saturday, September 9 at the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts in Bloomington, Illinois for a full day recorder workshop about time, meter, and counting in music. The day will feature music from around the world, both modern and historical, to explore the effects of complex and changing meters, hemiolas, short and long notes, and playing without bar lines. Register by June 30 and pay \$80, or \$75 for ARS members. The fee includes music, snacks, and beverages. Music stands are provided. Contact Lisette at LisetteKielson@gmail.com. Look for a copy of the workshop flyer at ChicagoRecorders.org.

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)

President	Ben Eisenstein (BenEisenstein@comcast.net) (847) 998-0198
Vice President	Mark Dawson msjddawson@sbcglobal.net (773) 334-6376
Secretary	Nadine Petersen (nadptrs@gmail.com) (630) 654-2629
Treasurer	Valerie DePriest (themusicalchild@mac.com) 708-524-1625
Webmaster	Ben Eisenstein
Music Director:	Lisette Kielson lisettekielson@gmail.com

West Suburban Early Music Society (westsubems.org)

President/Chapter Representative:	Joanne Miller (Wan1@sbcglobal.net) (847) 359-8750
Vice President:	Darleen Kay (630) 679-1506
Secretary:	Nancy Finley (nfelma3@comcast.net) (630) 554-4363
Treasurer:	Kathy Hall-Babis (kathy.hallbabis@gmail.com) (630) 464-1828
Membership:	Nancy Finley (nfelma3@comcast.net) (630) 554-4363
Hospitality:	Nancy Culp (Nlw.Culp@gmail.com) (630) 690-7304
Recorder Reporter contact:	Eric Stern (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 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.

This is our final newsletter for the 2016-2017 season. Our next season opens September 17. Join us!

Visit us at chicagorecorders.org

Mark Dawson, newsletter editor

2425 W. Leland, Chicago, IL 60625-2913

Msjddawson@sbcglobal.net / (773) 334-6376

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