

Recorder Reporter

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

Our 50th Anniversary Year!

May 2009

Volume 50, Number 9

Chicago Chapter News

For our last regular meeting Patrick O'Malley directed short works by Saint Saens, based on his *Carnival of the Animals*, followed by a series from Salomon Rossi. Then we trooped upstairs, not just to sit in the sanctuary and listen to the St. Luke's Recorder Series led by John Langfeld, but to take part. After a practice session and then explaining the piece to the audience, John directed 28 recorder players in performing his own work, *Dies Irae*. *Dies Irae* refers to the Day of Wrath, drawn from a thirteenth century Italian poem about the end of the world and set to Gregorian chant. The grim scene was popular in masses and music through the middle ages, and later; the theme appears in the works of Mozart, Berlioz, and Stravinsky. Langfeld's version of the piece was *so* cool, an amazing new work for a mass recorder ensemble. I wondered where our audience of thousands wandered off to. Why would anyone bother with Hip Hop when they could enjoy a modern recorder composition instead?



Dies Irae performance, featuring 28 recorder players

The rest of the meeting mixed 17th and 18th century works with 20th century works—the last, by Peter Hope, quite possibly influenced by television (John Wayne westerns meet the Renaissance). After the concert musicians and audience were treated to a generous reception. The St. Luke's Recorder series continues next year, November 15, 2009 and April 18, 2010.



Spring Concert

Now it's time to make plans to close out an excellent year. Our concert is coming up in a few weeks:

Sunday, May 17, 2008, 2 PM

**St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1500
Belmont Avenue, Chicago**

Email Larry at LL_JOHNSON1239@sbcglobal.net or call at (773) 631-6671 by May 12th. You can also contact Mark Dawson at msjddawson@sbcglobal.net.

- Name of the piece(s)
- Composer name, nationality, and dates (if known)
- Movement names (if any)
- Performers' names, instruments, and name of your group

We love to hear recorders playing in consort with other instruments and with vocal parts, and from all historical eras, so feel free to be creative! Offer any music on recorder or early music on any other instrument.

Please limit your performance to last five or six minutes.

ARS Festival

Remember to make plans for the American Recorder Society's 70th anniversary festival this summer, July 30 through August 2 at the University of Missouri St. Louis. Join us for classes, concerts, and late-night jam sessions. You should have received a flyer for the event; to learn more, visit www.americanrecorder.org.



Early Music Festival, the History

The seeds of what is now the Early Music Festival at the University of Wisconsin/Whitewater were sown a long time ago, even before I played the recorder. My earliest knowledge of its beginning was in 1965 at Milton College in Milton, Wisconsin, and it was called the Baroque Music Festival, featuring strings, chorus, and recorders. There was a format of classes, a final program, and, yes, jam sessions on Saturday evening. Room, board and tuition were \$20, \$10 for commuters.

Faculty for those early years included, among others, Katherine Bowers, Yvonne Bullis, Dr. Howard Mayer Brown, Marilyn Carlson, Charles Ario, Louise Austin, Roberta Sweet, and John Langfeld. In early 1976 there was no sign of the festival happening so I called Kay Bowers. She said they were not going to do it anymore, and if I wanted to carry on, I was welcome to it. With the help of many people in our very active Oak Park Recorder School Tuesday night group, I took over as director. Retaining the same format but renaming the event the Early Music Festival, my staff was Vic Hildner for chorus, James Plondke for strings, and recorder handled by myself, John Langfeld, Irmgard Bittar, Sonia Czazar, David Starr and Roberta Sweet. Jo Slivinski provided the art work, which you still see on the brochures. In 1977 we added Todd Wetherwax and Francis Hunt to the recorder cast.

After that year, I didn't feel that modern strings had a place in the festival, so the change was made to all ancient instruments. What did continue as a part of the festival were the vendors and the Saturday evening Renaissance Revel—the dance. I remember the second year, when we decided to have it outdoors in the tennis courts. This was a great idea, because they were brightly lighted. For a while. What we didn't count on was that the college shut the lights off at 8 PM, and we were far from through. Rising to the occasion, several people brought their cars around the courts, and turned on their lights.

By 1981 we added Bud Asch, Judy Whaley and Michael Foote to recorder classes. As long as I was director I felt that we had plenty of talent in the Midwest and we didn't need to search the coasts for help. Even though we have faculty now who do not live in the Midwest (their loss, except for the weather), they found their calling in the recorder world in the Midwest, so they qualify. Also, by that year Milton College struggled to accommodate us, in spite of their impending demise. Many people helped in the search for a new home and Whitewater was willing to host a weekend of unusual merriment and devout playing

to the wee hours. Bill Nelson was now part of the faculty, and in 1983 we began offering viola de gamba classes with Thallis Hoyt Drake. Beverly Inman worked with beginners starting in 1984, and the Saturday evening Renaissance Revel with dancing developed its own town band led by Dave Fitzgerald. Faculty continued to grow and change; Susan Ross, Tom Boehn, Betty Hatcher, Karen Snowberg, Ron Laszewski-Greta Miller, Clea Galhano, Mary Waldo, David Echelard, and Vivian Montgomery all helped take us into the new century.

As time wore on and I wore down, I was offered help from Pam Wiese, who took over the books. I had worked hard in 1979 to gain the 501c (3) status for the Oak Park Recorder Tuesday night group and the Early Music Festival. Pam could not have offered her help at a more necessary time. Carol Stanger followed after that, taking charge of the brochure. Nancy Chabala began helping with the registration. The Festival was in good hands.

The Early Music Festival continues to be one great weekend for players and singers after my last year as director in 2002. I enjoy being modestly involved again, but I really enjoy just visiting and watching. Many thanks to Hilde Staniulis for the old brochures. This history should be a work in progress. It would be interesting if people would submit memories and events that they most enjoyed, feared, or carried on about over their years of attending the Early Music Festival.—*Louise Austin*.

I second that! If you have memories of recorder playing in the Midwest from years past that you would like to share with ARS members, please send them to me at MSJDDAWSON@SBCGLOBAL.NET or to 2425 West Leland Avenue, Chicago, IL 60625-2913. I would like to have some more historical essays for newsletters next season.

Early Music Festival, the Present

Why Whitewater? The Early Music Festival is still the best deal around for a weekend of intense fun and music. Double occupancy in the dorm is still \$210 for two nights and five meals. **And this year we offer a \$25 discount for those attending the beginning recorder class.** Your favorite instructors are back, as well as our vendors, Honeysuckle Music, Performers Music, Unicorn Music and Native Sounds. You should have received your brochure by now. To learn more please contact Pam Wiese (thewieses@sbcglobal.net), Nancy Chabala (708.442.6053) or Carol Stanger (cvstanger@aol.com), and the brochure and schedule are available online at ChicagoARS.org and EarlyMusicChicago.org.



Music Coming Up

Third Coast Viols Third Annual Memorial Day Weekend Workshop, Music Institute of Chicago, 1490 Chicago Avenue, Evanston, Illinois, May 22-24. For more see the Viola de Gamba Society of America, <http://vdgsa.org>. Faculty concert on Sunday at 7:30, \$20, \$15 for students.

The L'Ensemble Portique, Lisette Kielson, director, offers a concert "Simple Pleasures, Hidden Treasures: The Music of Boismortier" at St. Luke's Lutheran Church of Logan Square, 2649 North Francisco Avenue in Chicago, Saturday, May 9 at 3 PM. Suggested \$10 donation at the door. Visit www.stlukesls.org to learn more. Joining Lisette will be David Schrader on harpsichord, Craig Trompeter on gamba, and Garry Clarke on violin.

"Praying by Number: Proportion and Measurement in 15th Century Music," a vocal program by Schola Antiqua Chicago. Saturday, May 16, 8 PM, Rockefeller Chapel at the University of Chicago. They feature a mass by the medieval composer Jacob Obrecht. Call 773-955-5887.

WSEMS

The West Suburban Early Music Society April meeting led by Laura Kuhlman was full of beautiful and fun music that was new to me. We started with a sweet *Benedictus* by Jakob Handl and then moved to something completely different, *Vion Viette* by Claudin, apparently a bawdy drinking song. Jineen Heiman refused to translate the old French after the first sentence. *Pleurez mez yeux* by Dominique Phinot is a pretty love song. After our break, we played an arrangement of the *Capriol Suite* and we played and sang two songs by John Dowland. Our next meeting will be on May 3 and we are looking forward to a summer full of recorder playing. Our June meeting (probably 6/14 at 3PM) will be a mini-concert, location TBD. The annual WSEMS Garage Band and BBQ at Laura Kuhlman's place in Winfield will be on Sunday, August 9th starting at 2 PM. All recorder players in the Chicago area are invited! Bring a salad to share and RSVP to Laura by August 5th. Non-playing family members are welcome, as are children —*Eric Stern*

April 2009 Workshop

On April 25 at Concordia University in River Forest 25 recorder players enjoyed a workshop devoted to music from the Renaissance and to moral uplift. Besides Lisette Kielson's excellent leadership and tutoring, we all basked warmly as she told us repeatedly how fabulous we all are. Well, of course, but it's nice to be reminded. Still, as

grand as the music sounded, how much credit belongs to us? Monteverdi's *Kyrie*, from his *Missa In illo tempore*, was particularly exquisite, but we also enjoyed works by John Dowland, William Byrd, and Giovanni Battista Grillo. We closed the day returning to an old favorite of Dave Fitzgerald, *The Fairie Round* by Anthony Holborne.



Thank You to Patrick for a Fine Season

After serving us well for 2008-2009 as our artistic director, Patrick O'Malley has decided to step down. We will be looking for several other directors to lead us next season; we appreciate Patrick's skillful directing and teaching, and for guiding the chapter for the past season. We wish him well in his efforts to teach and make music. I'm certain we will be welcoming him to chapter concerts in the future, and announcing his concerts and other early music activities in this newsletter as well.

Early Music Resources

Florentin Tise, a music and chorus teacher in a public school in a Chicago suburb, manages a free web page called the Recorder Haven. The web site features a discussion forum, articles, an online store, and contact information for teachers, chapters, and ensembles. You can find it at www.recorderhaven.com.

Early Music America (EMA) is a not-for-profit service organization for the field of historical performance in North America. Founded in 1985, EMA's goal is to expand awareness of, and interest in, the music of the Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, and Classical periods. EMA's members receive a quarterly magazine, bulletins, and benefits including access to reduced-rate insurance, discounts on publications, concerts, and festivals, and eligibility for awards and scholarships. With its broad membership, including professional performers,



ensembles, presenters, instrument makers, amateur musicians, and audience members, Early Music America serves as an advocate for the field throughout the continent. See www.earlymusic.org.

The Music Institute of Chicago was founded in 1931, and is the only independent community music school in Illinois. Over 120 faculty at MIC serve more than 5,000 students, from four months to 91 years, and the school offers a wide range of performances by faculty, students, visiting artists, and ensembles. The main facility and Nichols Concert Hall are at 1490 Chicago Avenue in Evanston, a short walk from the Davis L train stop or from the Davis stop on the Metra North Line. Our own Patrick O'Malley teaches at the MIC, and directs the recorder orchestra. To learn more call (847) 905-1500, or visit www.musicinstituteofchicago.org.

Performers Music is a great place to buy classical sheet music, recorders, books, and supplies, on the 9th floor of the Fine Arts Building at 410 South Michigan Avenue. Visit www.performersmusicchicago.com; their email address is performersmusic@yahoo.com.

Gravitation is a new ensemble for early music based in Champaign, Illinois, but that performs regularly in the Chicago area. They focus on choral works for small groups from the medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque periods, sometimes accompanied by the lute. Their web page is www.gravitation.org.

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.

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* newsletter is published monthly from September to May jointly by the Chicago Chapter and the West Suburban Early Music Society.

Chicago Chapter ARS (chicagoars.org)

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Chicago Chapter meetings: Usually third Sunday of each month, September through May, 2 PM, St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1500 Belmont Avenue, Chicago. Enter at door west of main entrance to sanctuary; and go to Founders Hall in the basement.

West Suburban Early Music Society

Convenor:	Laura Kuhlman (Laura@thekuhlmans.com) (630) 462-5427
Vice-Convenor:	Ed Green (edwgreen@aol.com) (630) 983-7251
Secretary:	Eric Stern (egstern1@yahoo.com) (708) 594-9243
Treasurer:	Nancy Good (Good-Naperville@worldnet.att.net) (630) 355-6690
Membership:	Carol Stanger (cvstanger@aol.com) (630) 789-6402
Hospitality:	Nancy Finley (nfelma3@comcast.net)

WSEMS meetings: Second Sunday of each month, September through April, first Sunday of May, 2-4:30 PM at the Naperville Evangelical Covenant Church, 1150 Hobson Road, Naperville, southwest corner of Naper Boulevard and Hobson Road. Exit I-88 at Naper Boulevard and travel south. The church entrance is on a side street, more obvious from Hobson Road.

Mark Dawson, editor

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This is the last issue until September