

# Recorder Reporter

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

*Chicago Chapter & the West Suburban Early Music Society*

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## **Hildé Staniulis, 1920 – 2020**

The Chicago chapter has a number of old friends, but we lost, truly, our oldest friend of all on Sunday October 11 when Hildé Rosenfeld Staniulis died peacefully in her sleep. She was born on February 24, 1920, so she was 100 years old this year! She was a part of the Chicago chapter from our earliest days.

Born in Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany, Hilde fled the Nazis as a 17-year-old girl, moving to Tel Aviv. For a while there she lived on a kibbutz and studied agriculture. After three happy years in Palestine she boarded the SS *El Nil* in Port Said, Egypt for a 66-day journey across the Atlantic, arriving in New York in April of 1941. It didn't have to be so long a trip, except that the *El Nil* went through the Suez Canal and the Red Sea and stopped in Mombasa, Kenya, on its way to Cape Town and then to Brazil. A southern Atlantic crossing was a common method in those days to avoid German submarines. She took a few days to explore New York City with a shipmate and then caught a bus to Chicago to find her family, whom she had not seen since she left Germany in October of 1937.



*Teaching children at Murray Elementary School, Chicago*

Much of what I know about Hilde's background comes from a letter she sent me 13 years ago, "banged out on an old sick typewriter with a new ribbon." Esther Schechter met her through a notice seeking recorder players posted

on the bulletin board of the Hyde Park Co-op over 40 years ago. Hilde caught a ride with Vi and Earl Manning to the first Early Music Festival at Milton College in Wisconsin in 1961, and she helped launch the composing career of Glen Shannon, who was a winner in the chapter composition competition in 2002. "Hilde has always held a special place in my heart as the visionary who helped me share my music with so many others," Glen said.

In Chicago Hilde worked for many years at Statistical Tabulating Company doing their bank reconciliations. She taught herself how to play the recorder with the help of a Griffabelle, a fingering chart, and a patient pianist friend. Soon she started a recorder group in Hyde Park that would meet in members' homes, or in the local Hyde Park Co-Op grocery store.



*Playing at the Hyde Park Co-Op Grocery Store, 1960s. Hilde is the third from the right.*

Hilde loved music, the arts, and travel. In Germany she had been a track star as a teenager, but the German government would not allow her to compete for a chance to run in the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games because she was Jewish. That was a disappointment for her for the rest of her life. She loved to read, and her husband Dominic did as well, so that led to a rather bookish romance. Their apartment was crowded with books, and they met at a book group, the Great Books Leader Training Course, at the Peoples Gas Building in downtown Chicago. Eventually they noticed each other, and Hilde started talking to Dominic. They were married on December 22, 1962. Dominic was Catholic, an accountant, and born in Chicago of Lithuanian immigrant parents. He died in 1998.

Hilde was active in the League of Women Voters and in the Independent Voters of Illinois. She also evidently volunteered for the Medical Education Department of the University of Chicago Hospitals. Hilde introduced Dominic to the recorder; his first impression was to tell Hilde that her instrument looked like a bedpost, but he developed into a capable player in his own right over time, with maybe too much encouragement from his wife. Later on he would join Hilde, Rosalie Guttman, and Esther Schechter in playing in the Hyde Park ensemble. “She would push him to keep up.” Rosalie recalled. “Hilde had a strong personality, and Dominic was a typical bean counter type person, shy and sort of retiring.”

Hilde and Dominic lived across the street from Rosalie and her husband in Hyde Park. Around 1970 Rosalie and her husband took a trip to England to visit relatives. As it’s not a good idea to just leave a car sitting around unused for weeks at a time, they offered their keys to Dominic and Hilde and said they could use it (Hilde never owned a car). Rosalie figured they would just tool around Chicago a bit, to pick up groceries perhaps, and keep the oil circulating. Instead, when the Gutmans returned from England, they found that Dominic and Hilde had put 6,000 miles on the vehicle, driving to California and points west. “They had a really good vacation, actually,” Rosalie said.

The 1967 membership directory for the Chicago chapter includes 69 people, including Louise Austin, Howard Mayer Brown, Dave Fitzgerald, the Mannings, the Kroesens, Roberta Sweet, and Hilde Staniulis. When Hilde became president of the chapter in 1988 she set out to draw more members to the chapter and encourage composers to write for the recorder.

To that end she started the bi-annual Composition Competition in 1989, and it continued until 2008. Local winners included Dick Eastman, Phyllis Buchanan, Alice Maguire, and Patrick O’Malley. Hilde also regularly brought recorder outreach programs to Murray and Funston Elementary Schools in Chicago, visiting weekly to offer recorder lessons to fifth graders.

The competition helped to launch the composing career of North Central College professor Dick Eastman, and in later years the event drew entries from across the country and around the world.

Hilde was also active in organizing recorder playing and teaching sessions in local elementary schools, and she also sought to recruit players personally, as with Mary Snyder. “I was at the Museum of Science and Industry to play a union pick-up gig, a flute trio. We were to play ‘dinner music’ and leave immediately after,” Mary remembered. “As we were packing up, a lady came up

and asked if any of us could play the recorder. The guys rolled their eyes, but I said that I did. And she said ‘Oh good! You have to come to our recorder meetings. I’m Hilde Staniulis. I’ll write down everything for you.’ Since we were being shooed away, Hilde literally followed me to the doors to give me her info, the address of the church on LaSalle and the time and date of the next meeting.”

In recent years Hilde has not been able to join our monthly chapter meetings, but she has remained a friend, alert, generous and interested in our activities, and working to make sure that the Chicago chapter would continue to meet and make music long after she was no longer with us. For us to do that is the best compliment we can offer to Hilde Staniulis in return.



*With children at a chapter concert*



*Hilde with 2002 composition contest winners, and committee. Glen Shannon is to her right.*

## West Suburban Early Music Society

Members of the West Suburban Early Music Society did some more outdoor jamming after the opening meeting for 2020-2021, with five gathering on September 22 and eight more on September 27. By playing outside, we learned to count, and to read the score carefully, and to match intonation, while also practicing putting a foot on the music stand to keep the wind from knocking it over, and waiting for a rest to shoo bees away.



Our regular October 11 chapter meeting was outside too, with 12 members and friends appearing to play on the grass. Thus more fun, though it was hard at times too. Besides the wind trying to carry away our sheet music, it also carried away our sound. We were spread out as well, so at times we found it hard to hear each other. But we kept going, members brought 16 pieces to perform, and we read through works by Archangelo Correlli, Tielman Susato, and Giles Farnaby. We played the *Holberg Suite* by Edward Grieg, *Dixit Maria*, and *Blow the Wind Southerly*, arranged by Paul Clark, closing with *LeClercq's Air* by Richard Wood.



It was a fine day for making music outdoors, and WSEMS will continue to offer Sunday afternoon

meetings until it becomes too cold to continue. Defining “too cold,” however, could be subjective. I personally think it would be great to get a photo of the members of the West Suburban Early Music Society providing a Christmas concert in December playing outside the Friend’s Meeting House in two feet of snow. Now there’s an image that would be published in the *American Recorder* magazine, and it could even become an Internet meme.



WSEMS will host a Zoom session on November 8 at 2 PM. Regular WSEMS attendees will receive an email with meeting info and links to the music. If you would like to take part email Chris (cg.culp@gmail.com) to learn more.

## Chicago Chapter Notes

For our October 18 monthly meeting, 16 members joined us on Zoom to learn about playing techniques from the French Baroque, led by Andrew Schultze. Andrew focused on trilling and accenting techniques, the use of “Inegal,” where repeated notes in a piece are given different lengths, at the discretion of the musician, and “Flattement,” or finger vibrato.

Andrew Schultze has been busy. The National Early Music Association (NEMA) of the UK plans to publish a version of his research on trilling (“To Trill or Trillo?”) in their upcoming autumn newsletter. An early version of this article is available on the Chicago chapter web site, and he presented a talk about the Trill for the National Association of Singing. Andrew has offered three online seminars for Newberry Library in 2020, on Italian opera in France, music during the time of the Influenza epidemic of 1918, and Jewish music from 1900 to 1950, and held a Zoom lecture with students and teachers at the University of Iowa about Baroque vocal techniques. A lecture for the National Association of Singing was presented virtually at their regional conference in late October.



With Flattement, the musician slightly blocks the air coming from finger holes by bringing a finger close to the side of a hole and then away again, with a fluttering motion. By shaking or tapping a finger the musician can swell or diminish the sound. Inegal, or unequal, notes are documented in dozens of French treatises from 1550 to 1810, and are described using a variety of different terms. One commentator likened Inegal fingering to how words in French are sometimes written differently from how they are pronounced. The musician might end up making the notes sound different from the way they appear on the score. We make choices as performers as to how to express these variations, depending on the nature of the music. Both methods allow the musician to make a piece personal.

After running through a set of exercises to demonstrate French Baroque ornaments, we looked at music from the period, including works by French King Louis XIII, Jean Baptiste Lully, Jean Joseph Mouret, and Michel Corrette, starting with *La Merlaison: Ballet du Roi Carneval*, written by Louis XIII in 1635. Louis XIII's mother, Marie de Medici, the daughter of the powerful Medici family, married his father, Henry IV, by proxy in Florence in 1600. Thus the Baroque era “started with a bang,” as Andrew said. The lavish celebrations included treating 4,000 guests to performances of newly composed operas, thus offering the new Italian form to France for the first time. Marie brought with her a love for Italian art and music, and introduced Italian arts to the French court.

The music we played, and ornament descriptions, are on the Chicago chapter web site under Resources/Meeting Downloads/2020-2021 Season. Also, Andrew Schultze offers two Zoom seminars, “**1720: A Year in the Life of Handel, Scarlatti, and Bach**,” November 7 & 14, 7:15 PM. Send \$40 to Andrew Schultze, 6535 North Minnetonka Avenue, Chicago, IL 60646-2722.

### Join the Chicago Chapter Nov. 15th!

Lisette will continue our story-telling theme with extended techniques, free improvisation, and descriptive duos. The session will include a review of September's techniques and Glen Shannon's Papillons as well as new techniques and musical selections by Lance Eccles, Jacques-Martin Hotteterre, and more!

### Time to prepare for our Holiday Concert

To get into the holiday spirit, please join us on Sunday, **December 20 at 2 PM**. You are welcome to perform, or just listen. This year, performers will need to be creative, perhaps playing a solo, perhaps playing with a 'music minus one' type of recording. If you'd like to perform, contact Larry Johnson at [ll\\_johnson1239@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ll_johnson1239@sbcglobal.net). We will have a general playing session afterwards, with the music available on our web site. Mark your calendars!

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