

# Recorder Reporter

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

Chicago Chapter & the West Suburban Early Music Society

February 2023

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## Chicago Chapter News

The Chicago chapter welcomed Lisette Kielson back for the first meeting of 2023, on January 15, offering French music. We had a crowd, 17 musicians following Lisette, and started with a work by Francis Poulenc (1899-1963), *Suite française* from 1935, an orchestral work arranged for recorder. The work felt like a modern variation of something much older, and in fact it was, inspired by Renaissance dances by Claude Gervaise (1525-1583). We worked on creating shape in notes and phrases. This involved adjusting the length of repeated quarter notes, and taking a small breath after each measure for Renaissance works, to change the rhythm of the piece.

We also experimented with using alternate fingerings to provide dynamics. Dynamics is supposed to be for singers and pianos. Recorders lack a dynamic range; if you blow harder to try to make the notes louder, the instrument simply goes sharp instead. But sometimes alternate fingerings can allow a recorder player to offer more breath pressure on a note. This technique allows a player to approximate dynamic markings in sheet music, like forte or fortissimo, especially for more modern works transcribed for recorder.



*Primary and alternate fingering for C on soprano*

Speaking of music notations, the piece ended with a Sforzando, which I had never seen before. A sign of my ignorance of music theory. The Sforzando tells the musician to play the note with sudden, strong emphasis:

***sfz***

I thought the term sounded more like “Schwartz-e-and-o” instead, pretty cool, actually, and certainly German. A rather Mel Brooks touch. But I was corrected.

Lots of great music celebrated in another fine day of music making. We particularly enjoyed *Doulz Amis* by Guillaume de Machaut (1300-1377), arguably the leading composer of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and a Baroque work by Louis-Antoine Dornel (1680-1757), *Sonate en Quatuor*. We closed with a fine piece by Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1634-1704), *Le Malade Imaginaire*, from his *Ouverture*, that we liked so much we plan to play it again in February.

Lisette complimented our tone when playing, noting that sometimes if we get anxious about playing a piece, the tension can be felt in the music itself. But not in January.



*An excellent crowd for our first meeting in 2023*

Lisette will direct February’s meeting with dances by Attaignant, a fantasy by du Caurroy, Contrapunctus I from Bach’s Art of Fugue, another shot at Machaut’s

Doulz Amis from last month (because who can capture medieval music in a single session?), and the Charpentier work, a contender for the chapter to play in our May concert. Join us on February 19!

### West Suburban Early Music Society

Members of the West Suburban Early Music Society were delighted to welcome Laura Osterlund as their new director at their January 8 meeting.



Laura Osterlund leads WSEMS as their new director



Laura led and encouraged us in music that included works by Claude Gervaise (1550), including Pavane & Gaillarde “Vous qui voulez”, Pavane “La Venissienne, and 8 dances “Huit Bransles de Poictou.” We also played *Twas in the year that King Uzziah* died, arranged by A. St. Pierre, and

*Murphy’s Hornpipe*, an Irish dance arranged by Richard Kram. Following a break, we divided into two breakout groups, the Alternate Altos and the Da Capo group.

Please plan to join us on February 12th at 2 PM at the Friends Meetinghouse in Downers Grove. Members will receive an email regarding returning with some of the music that we didn’t have time to play at the January meeting.—Kathy Hall-Babis

### Chicago Chapter Workshop

The Chicago chapter welcomes Anne Timberlake for our 2023 workshop on April 22 at our regular meeting place, Covenant Presbyterian Church, starting at 9 AM. The fee is \$75 for ARS members who pre-register and includes workshop materials, continental breakfast, and lunch.

You can register online at our website, <https://chicagorecorders.org/chicago-chapter-april-workshop-with-anne-timberlake/> or print the form provided on the same web page and mail it to us with your payment. Please plan to register by March 15. Newcomers, join us! We offer a workshop every two years, and it is always a fine way to improve your skills as a player while making a lot of great music.



### Whitewater Early Music Festival 2023

Whitewater returns, Friday, June 2 through Sunday, June 4. Last year was wonderful! We only drew 40 musicians but we had a great time making music. So I hope I can encourage you to join us for the next event at the campus of the University of Wisconsin, Whitewater, about 100 miles or two hours from the north side of Chicago. Classes range from intermediate to advanced levels for all sizes of recorders, renaissance double reeds, strings and voices. This is a fine way for new recorder players to gain experience playing in a group, and excellent instruction.

For more information visit the web site, <https://www.whitewaterearlymusic.org>. The schedule isn’t ready yet, but it will be soon.

The faculty includes a lot of old friends, James Chaudoir, David Echelard, Clea Galhano, Lisette Kielson, Laura Kuhlman, Mona Mann, Gayle Neuman, Phil Neuman, Patrick O’Malley, and Karen Snowberg, and Jean Olson will be present with her store, Honeysuckle Music. Registration opens mid-April.

## Music and More

**Janet Fitchuk** offers a Mollenhauer tenor recorder for sale, pear wood, with a C/C# key, and played very little due to the owner's problems with arthritis. \$500 or best offer, photos available on request. Call 630/202-1675 or email [jjfitchuk80@gmail.com](mailto:jjfitchuk80@gmail.com).

Saturday February 4 at 7:30 PM, at the 5<sup>th</sup> floor ballroom of the German American Cultural Center at 4740 North Lawrence (*Deutsch Amerikanischer National Kongress*, or DANK haus) join **Andrew Schultze** for a concert of music by Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms. Andrew Schultze will sing with Svetlana Belsky at piano. Free parking is available in the lot at Western & Gunnison, and the DANK haus is across the street from the Western Avenue stop on the Brown line L train.

The **Chicago Recorder Trio**, Lisette Kielson, Mirja Lorenz, and Patrick O'Malley, perform on Sunday, February 12 at 3 PM at St. John's Episcopal Church, 3857 North Kostner Avenue in Chicago. The performance features instruments from soprano to sub great bass recorder and music from 14<sup>th</sup> century sacred works from Spain to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and from suites and sonatas to jazz. Join the CRT as they span centuries, styles, and five octaves. Music by JS Bach, Mattheson, Williams, Pete Rose, Patrick O'Malley, and more! Free admission.

The **Boston Early Music Festival** returns June 4-11. I was last there in 2013, and it was amazing! Wall to wall Renaissance music, and in some of the most beautiful venues I've ever seen. I hope to return this summer. This event, the best Early Music Festival on the planet, is well worth a trip to Boston. And in fact Boston is well worth a trip to Boston. The festival offers seven days of a regular concert schedule and dozens more of fringe concerts (in 2013 I went to 11 concerts in three days!), besides a vast exhibition, the biggest early music trade show in North America. I remember a banquet room full of harpsichords. Visit this web site for more details, <https://bemf.org/2023-festival/>.

The University of Chicago **Folk Music Festival** returns with a day of free music workshops on Saturday, February 11 at Ida Noyes Hall, 1212 East 59<sup>th</sup> Street in Hyde Park. We won't be offering a recorder workshop this year, but attend the 63<sup>rd</sup> annual gathering anyway. Jamming in the stairwells, folk dance, classes on old time music forms.

Visit <http://www.uofcfolk.org> to learn more. Plenty of free parking in the area along the Midway, and Ida Noyes is easily accessible by the CTA, Jeffrey Express Bus #6 from State Street downtown, or by Metra Electric to 57<sup>th</sup> street.

Chapter members might enjoy the offerings of the **Silent Film Society of Chicago**. Many times I have delighted in wonderful films made in the 1920s with live organ accompaniment, played at surviving vintage movie palaces across the region. Susan and I saw Lillian Gish in *The White Sister* (1923) at the Arcada Theater in St. Charles (built 1926) in the summer of 2018, and a variety of films at the Pickwick Theater in Park Ridge. I once watched the World War I epic *Wings* (1927) at the Gateway Theater, the audience featuring all of the World War II veterans in Chicago, my two young sons, and me.

Most often we would bike to the Portage Theater on Milwaukee. Alas, this 1920 theater gem has been closed since 2018, while the owner tries to raise millions of dollars for repairs. Lately the Pickwick Theater has been struggling too. Keeping these wonderful movie palaces working at all—let alone paying the bills with the select crowd that turns out for silent films—has been hard since the 1960s, and the pandemic did them no favors.

I went to a lecture about America's historic movie theaters some years ago where the scholar noted that "not one in 100" of these once ubiquitous theaters that survive today are still used as movie theaters. Many of them were torn down. Those that avoided demolition were largely converted to concert halls, community centers, and churches. With the development of television and suburban sprawl in the 1950s, their reason for existing vanished. A sadly fast decline, too, packed and celebrated in the mid-1920s, and facing the wrecking ball barely 30 years later. The enormous Uptown Theater, at 46K SF the biggest theater in the country, closed its doors in 1981. At least it still stands, but renovations stalled yet again in 2018. Some \$75 million was provided for repairs, but people who know about these matters suggest twice as much cash will be needed before the Uptown can reopen.

But the Silent Film Society continues to improvise in finding venues, and continues to delight audiences, though the best way to watch Lillian Gish or Richard Barthelmess or Clara Bow would be in a theater built for them. Most recently, the Silent Film Society offered *Seven Chances*, possibly Buster Keaton's best work, at the Des Plaines Theater. In this film the Great Stoneface spends the last third of the movie being chased across town and country by a mob of enraged women, all wearing wedding dresses.

To learn more visit <https://www.silentfilmchicago.com>. And if you are interested in the subject, look into the Theater Historical Society of America, once found in local Elmhurst, until it moved to Pittsburgh in 2018. They have a strong archive of historical theaters and publish an excellent magazine. Visit <https://historictheatres.org/>.

The **Handel Week Festival** of Oak Park returns next month, with each of the three concerts held on a Sunday at Pilgrim Congregational Church, 460 Lake Street in Oak Park. The church is a reasonable walk from the Ridgeland Avenue L stop on the Green line and the Oak Park Metra station. Sunday February 19 includes favorite Handel arias (3 PM). The concert on Sunday February 26 is at 7:30 PM, and features the Intimate Handel, works for soprano, harpsichord, recorder and cello. For Sunday March 5, 3 PM, the festival offers orchestral works, Handel's *The Foundling Hospital Anthem* and Purcell's *The Indian Queen*. Visit [www.handelweek.com](http://www.handelweek.com) to learn more.

**Bach Week** returns in 2023, for their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Another exceptional tradition for Chicago area lovers of fine music. Concerts in 2023 include:

- April 28, 7:30 PM. Anderson Chapel
- April 30, 3 PM, All Saints Church, Chicago (free)
- May 12, 7:30 PM, Nichols Concert Hall
- May 12, 10 PM, Candlelight, Nichols Hall lobby
- May 14, 3 PM, Nichols Concert Hall

Anderson Chapel at North Park University is at Foster and Spaulding in Chicago, the 3200 block of Foster.

Nichols Concert Hall is at the Music Institute of Chicago, 1490 Chicago Avenue in Evanston.

All Saints Church is in Ravenswood in Chicago, at 4550 North Hermitage, near Wilson and Ashland.

All of these venues are easy to reach on public transit.

The **Fox Valley Folk Fest** returns Labor Day weekend, September 3 and 4 in Geneva, Illinois. A terrific two days of storytelling, folk music, and blue grass jamming. The festival grounds are an easy walk from the Metra train station in downtown Geneva. The festival has struggled in recent years first from the pandemic and then with the death of the founder of the Folklore Society, Juel Ulven, last August.

Visit <https://foxvalleyfolk.com/FVFSfestival.html> to learn more. The festival could use some volunteers, too.

The **Extinct Monsters** blog features an article about the Brachiosaurus that once stood as a monument in a plaza outside the Marshall Field Museum in Chicago:

<https://extinctmonsters.net/2022/12/18/ernestine-lives/>

What does this have to do with recorder playing? Well, nothing, but, hey, its dinosaurs.

## Chapter Information

Our chapters are open to anyone, regardless of musical training, who wants to cultivate appreciation of the art, history and use of the recorder and related instruments. Our

meetings, programs and publications help members to come together with 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 as well as this newsletter. The *Recorder Reporter* is published monthly, September to May by the Chicago Chapter & the West Suburban Early Music Society.

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

President	Mark Dawson
Vice President	Lynette Colmey
Secretary	Jenifer Buckley
Treasurer	Cheryl Kreiman
Facebook	Hyacinth Egner & Cheryl Kreiman
Web site	Larry Johnson & Peter Beck
Members at Large	Ruth Dunnell
Chapter Representative	Larry Johnson
Music Director:	Lisette Kielson <a href="mailto:lisettekielson@gmail.com">lisettekielson@gmail.com</a>

You can contact the chapter through our web site.

Like us on Facebook: 

<https://www.facebook.com/ChicagoARS>

**Chicago Chapter meetings:** The third Sunday of each month, September through May, 1 PM, at Covenant Presbyterian Church, 2012 West Dickens, Chicago. Enter either door of the parish building west of the church and go to the large fellowship hall.

### West Suburban Early Music Society ([westsubems.org](http://westsubems.org))

Convener/Chapter Representative:	Kathy Hall-Babis ( <a href="mailto:kathy.hallbabis@gmail.com">kathy.hallbabis@gmail.com</a> )
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**WSEMS meetings:** Second Sunday of each month, September through April, first Sunday of May, 2-5 PM at the Downers Grove Friends meeting house, 5710 Lomond Avenue in Downers Grove. 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](http://chicagorecorders.org)

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