

ARS NEWSLETTER

A Supplement to American Recorder for the members of the American Recorder Society

Spring 2021



NEW DESIGN FOR AN OLD FAVORITE: YOUR AMERICAN RECORDER MAGAZINE REIMAGINED

Maybe you just noticed? With the Spring 2021 issue, your *American Recorder* magazine looks different.

After a redesign process involving the hiring of a professional magazine design specialist, *AR* offers new fonts and layouts to make reading it even easier. New headings for sections of the magazine help readers find articles of interest to them. In short, the magazine got a makeover. Here's what changed and what to look for in your magazine.

Cover. Because a 2019 survey of our readers showed a preference for our current types of covers for *American Recorder*, not much has changed on the cover. A combination of museum artwork, photographic representations of the recorder, and original artwork featuring the recorder will continue to be featured.

The main difference is that the revised masthead emphasizes the words "American Recorder" with the issue and volume numbers, ARS website, and date of publication appearing in the masthead stripe rather than overprinted in the vertical layout. We hope this relatively minor change will make it easier to find or cite a particular issue.

Table of Contents. Listings in the Table of Contents now appear in the order in which items occur in the magazine, rather than Features first. The name of each of the magazine departments has been updated to make each name more descriptive of the reports or articles you will see in that section. For instance:

- **NEWS & NOTES** contains the following subsections.
 - short submissions from readers, called "Voices"
 - ARS items, called "American Recorder Society"
 - happenings and short news items about the recorder itself, called "On the Record(er)."
- **FEATURES** are longer articles of significant importance, usually with photos.
- **LISTEN & PLAY** contains reports of recorder concerts, as well as the annual listings of upcoming workshops, festivals, conferences and opportunities for certifications related to the recorder.
- **LEARN** contains how-to articles about recorder playing or practicing, which could appeal to beginning recorder players all the way up to professional players. The magazine aims for a balance of these articles, if not in each issue, at least in a year's time.
- **CRITIQUE** replaces the separate departments of reviews of recorder music, recordings or books.

New Article Layout Templates. Each article has a subtle banner at the top so you always know what kind of article you are reading. Most articles also begin with a few phrases

that tell readers what the article is about. The master formats use two or three columns for easier reading. Photos with the articles are well-organized with appropriately-sized captions connected to the photographs described. Occasional white space will make the copy more accessible and not overwhelming.

Advertising. The magazine still relies on ads as an income source, of course, but those appear in blocks outside the articles, so there is less likelihood of confusing an ad with the content of an article. The ads are presented so that they stand out on the edges rather than being embedded in an article.

Process, and the Future: The AR redesign started with preliminary Board discussions in April 2019, followed by Board consensus approval in October 2019 to begin the process of hiring a designer. After gathering information from similar publications starting in November 2019, a Communications subcommittee of ARS Board members wrote a request for proposals in May 2020, then interviewed and hired a magazine designer—all done virtually during the pandemic.

We interviewed three finalists on Zoom, examined the portfolio of work each had produced for other magazines, and selected one of them to complete the new design.

Several revisions occurred in the fall and winter months, with the final design approved by the Board's Executive Committee in December 2020. The designer observed: "The interest, excitement and work that goes into every one of these publications is evident from cover to cover. The passion every member, contributor and staff has for this instrument and organization radiates from the pages."

We invite your feedback on the new design, especially on whether you find the magazine easier to read. Send your comments to editor@americanrecorder.org. Maybe your letter will be chosen to appear in the next issue ... in Voices.

Carol Mishler, ARS Board

DIVERSITY COMMITTEE FORMED

The ARS has formed a Diversity committee, comprising two current Board directors, four non-Board ARS members and the ARS Administrative Director. As stated on our website:

The ARS has an overarching goal: to build a strong, vital and inclusive community of recorder players with membership from many different ethnic, socio-economic, racial, and educational backgrounds. We support an inclusive environment, denounce racism and are proud to welcome everyone to our membership, as well as to all our affiliated groups. We pledge to create and maintain an environment where each member feels embraced as an integral part of the blended music that we all make together as a community.

A three-point short-term mission has been established, and an action plan is being developed for each point below:

- Ensure that ARS and its chapters are welcoming to a racially and ethnically diverse membership
- Increase the diversity of current ARS membership
- Increase the diversity of the Board.

“WHY I GIVE MONTHLY TO THE ARS”

By Jennifer Carpenter, Monument, CO

2020 has seen the beginning and the end of many of our traditional activities. For me, it was the end of in-person teaching and traveling to workshops. I experienced an abrupt end of weekly rehearsals, performances and informal musical gatherings with fellow recorder players.

But it was also the beginning of something, too. We saw our early music communities come together quickly and fiercely to support our brethren professionals, both financially and otherwise. Workshops, local ARS chapters, and early music organizations, like the American Recorder Society, began offering online courses, virtual private instruction, and much-needed general support to both professionals and amateurs. We saw classes forming with people from all over the world. What an opportunity for virtual learning and gathering this has brought!

2020 also saw the end of my eight-year term with the ARS as a member of the Board of Directors. And more importantly, it was the year I began donating monthly to the ARS.

Finding a community where my support can be felt and needed is important to me. I am so proud of our recorder community! I have felt embraced by it since I first picked up a recorder back in 1996. Since then, I have been surrounded by local ARS communities throughout my undergraduate and graduate studies in various parts of this country. I quip that the Dallas (TX) Recorder Society helped “raise” me, as they saw me through the ups and downs of getting my graduate degrees in early music performance practice.

With all that has happened this year, I had no doubt that I wanted to provide continued, monthly support to the ARS. I know the passion, the dedication, the sheer love for this instrument and the people it brings together that this community has for one another. As a working musician, a monthly donation is easier to budget and it gives me a way to give a more



substantial amount spread throughout the year.

The programs the ARS provides; the personal, chapter, and educational grants it funds; the support among the recorder community it fosters—these are the reasons I am so proud to be a part of this community and why I want to help financially. A recurring monthly donation to the ARS is easy to set up and I encourage you to do it today!

ARS ANNOUNCES ITS NEW LIBRARY OF PLAY-ALONGS

The ARS website team has been hard at work and is pleased to offer this opportunity for recorder players to play the missing part in these selections of music, offered by professional and teaching members of ARS as “Play-alongs.” Visit <https://americanrecorder.org/playalong>.

We know most members are not able to gather to play with friends these days, so we’re offering these “Play-alongs” as a way to keep going until the pandemic situation improves.

If you’ve never tried play-alongs before, this is a good chance to try—this library includes some familiar Renaissance repertoire, including easier pieces. For each piece, you will find multiple recordings. For instance, you may play the soprano line while listening to a recording of the alto, tenor and bass parts. Scores/parts are provided.

If you have never used play-along files before, or if you’ve encountered frustrations, see our related articles with tips.



TIPS FOR PLAY-ALONGS

Nothing is more fun than playing live music with a consort! When that’s not possible, play-along music files can be a reasonable substitute. Besides allowing you to hear all accompanying parts, playing with a recording presents excellent practice opportunities and challenges. Here are some tips for getting the most enjoyment from these “minus-one” type files.

The most important tip is to make sure that you are playing the music file loud enough that you can hear the other parts, even while you’re playing your own part. This applies not only for play-along files, but also for any classes offered over the internet, such as via Zoom. The Winter 2020 *American Recorder* article on the ARS music libraries and the December 2020 *ARS NOVA* eMag (<https://americanrecorder.org/playalongtips>) both make some suggestions.

Dr. Kelly Kazik, Fredericksburg, VA, contributor to the ARS “Play-Alongs” library, offers this advice:

1. Use good external speakers, not headphones, and if possible, not the laptop internal speakers.
2. Practice your parts on your own and not just in ensemble. Learning your parts during ensemble rehearsal is a bad habit—this will cure you!
3. The metronome is your friend. If you have had problems keeping a steady beat or using a metronome, playing with recorded files can be good practice.
4. Don’t be afraid to slow the audio down (or change pitch.) My studio was using some more proprietary programs including AmazingSlowDowner, Audacity, and SmartMusic to do this at first, but it was expensive and time consuming. Finding AudioSpeedChanger has been a game changer: www.audiospeedchanger.com.

CHAPTERS, CONSORTS & RECORDER ORCHESTRAS CHECKUP

ZOOM INTO SPRING WITH PLAY-THE-RECORDER DAY, MARCH 20

March is Play-the-Recorder Month (PtRM), when we celebrate with lots of playing, and a time when we extol to the world the virtues of recorders. The pandemic brought out the resilience, adaptability and creativity of our community. We dug deep, and seized the opportunity to improve our own playing, and join virtually with even larger groups. We have plenty to boast about, and even more music to play!

This year the PtRM centerpiece is the commissioned work by Boston (MA)-based composer Melika Fitzhugh, *Transparent Letters Across the Sky*. ARS members received the music for the piece in the mailing bag of the Winter issue of *AR*. It is also available to members on the ARS website: www.americanrecorder.org; play-along files are also posted on the website.

On March 20, Play-the-Recorder Day, “meet” Fitzhugh in a live-online webinar, as she discusses her inspirations, composing styles, and the use of extended techniques in her recorder works. After the interview, grab your recorder, and join in the en masse performance of *Transparent Letters Across the Sky* with Fitzhugh directing.

The webinar and playing session are free to members; registration is required to receive the links beforehand. Event times will be announced on the website and via email.

In addition to these special events, check out the growing library of music on the American Recorder Society website, including the new “Play-alongs” library, with over 100 pieces from which ARS members may choose.

As we begin to tiptoe out to take a whiff of springtime air, and dare to dream of playing in person again, we’d love to hear what other activities and challenges you try during PtRM.

- Perhaps you and your group could make a recording together, and engineer your own video.
- Maybe you can record yourself, and send friends a musical greeting.
- If you are really adventurous, challenge yourself to play all of the “Play-Alongs” on the ARS website!

We would love to know how our members and groups mark the occa-



sion—by playing the PtRM piece by Melika Fitzhugh (*above*), or by holding a special Zoom playing session, or any other creative ways to celebrate our favorite instrument. Do write and tell us. Let us know by emailing your story to director@americanrecorder.org.

Alice Derbyshire, ARS Board,
Member Benefits Committee

NEW ON THE ARS WEB SITE: ARS REP CHAT

The ARS recently launched the new **ARS Rep Chat** message board for chapter, consort and recorder orchestra representatives. Replacing previous groups hosted over the years on Yahoo or Google, this message board provides group leaders with a forum to exchange ideas, information and best practices relevant to managing an ARS-affiliated recorder group.

Leaders are already utilizing the message board to discuss ARS Session Grants, the ARS Music Libraries, and how they are playing music during the pandemic, as well as to make information available about Zoom playing opportunities that the individual groups are hosting. Contact the ARS office to be added to this group chat. Submit emails to the discussion using arsrepchat@americanrecorder.org.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ARS AFFILIATED GROUPS WITH MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES IN 2021

According to ARS files, these groups are celebrating anniversaries of official affiliation with ARS. Thank you for all you do to keep our recorder community going strong!

45 years (1976)

Dallas Recorder Society (TX)
Kalamazoo Recorder Players (MI)

40 years (1981)

Aeolus Recorder Consort (AR)
Birmingham Chapter (AL)
Metropolitan Detroit Chapter (MI)
Santa Fe Recorder Society (NM)

35 years (1986)

Brandywine Chapter (DE)

30 years (1991)

Hudson Mohawk Chapter (NY)
Fort Collins Recorder Society (CO)
Rio Grande Chapter (NM)

25 years (1996)

Albuquerque Chapter (NM)

10 years (2011)

Greenville Recorder Society (NC)
Lowcountry Pipers (SC)
Orlando Consort (FL)

5 years (2016)

Columbia Recorder Collective (SC)
Cowtown Recorder Society (TX)
CPCC Early Music Consort (NC)
New Hampshire Recorder Consort
Recorder Orchestra of Oregon

NEW FROM THE AMERICAN RECORDER SOCIETY ONLINE

- Technique tip videos from recorder professionals
- ARS YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/americanrecordermag (recently added: a 28-minute video by recorder maker Thomas Prescott on recorder care, plus Michael Lynn’s series on ornaments).
- Free beginning recorder classes (available to anyone) at <https://americanrecorder.org/beginnerclasses>; also “Second Level” classes only for ARS members

COMING THROUGH THE STORM

By Lucie McNeill, Vancouver, BC

After over nine difficult months of COVID-19 (at the time of this writing), our North-American recorder community is in surprisingly good health. This is an unexpectedly upbeat tale starring our plucky, resourceful community, which is thriving despite the challenges of the pandemic. It's all the more surprising, given that playing together in enclosed spaces is no longer possible for most of us.

This piece is excerpted from one that appeared in the British Columbia Recorder Society (BCRS) newsletter Toot Sweet, where editor Lucie McNeill found that people are making the best of this tough year. Amateur musicians enthusiastically sign up for Zoom sessions, recorder societies' memberships are up, and event organizers now envisage a post-pandemic future that could retain the best features of the virtual universe.

In need of a pick-me-up? Read on!

The COVID storm hits

Spring 2020 seems like another epoch, but cast your mind back to early March, when very few among us were predicting COVID-19's terrible toll. Because the pandemic was a little late making its way to Canada, Toronto's Early Music Players Organization (TEMPO) met in person that month. "We played madrigals," recalls president Elan Dresher, "and it was lovely."

In Montréal (QC), the near-100-strong recorder society met for a special event the day before the province brought in its stay-at-home order on Friday, March 13.

British Columbia Recorder Society (BCRS) members also met in Vancouver the first Thursday of March, and president Andrea Macdonald remembers vividly the apprehension she felt. "We were all sitting quite close to each other, some people even shared instruments," she said. "I knew this could not go on, it was too risky."

In Washington state—one of the first areas in the U.S. to register COVID-19 cases—Vicki Boeckman, music director of the 85-member Seattle Recorder Society, made the decision to cancel the March monthly meeting as well as their recorder orchestra's first rehearsal of the winter session. "That was a tough call to make at the end of a tense week," she said. "We're so relieved we did."

Shortly after, a March 17 choir rehearsal in nearby Skagit County (WA) became one of the pandemic's

first superspreader events on the continent—one person transmitting the disease to dozens.

Through the long, anxious weeks of that early spring, recorder societies large and small were suspending operations indefinitely. "It was like a house of cards collapsing," says well-known recorder teacher and performer Frances Blaker. "Really frightening for professionals like me. Our schedules were imploding."

Amateur players who belonged to thriving societies were experiencing a different kind of shock: Montreal to Denver (CO), Dallas (TX) to Southern California, Boston (MA) to Vancouver. Says Greta Haug-Hryciw, president of the San Francisco (CA) Recorder Society (SFRS): "Everybody was lamenting the loss of camaraderie and not being able to play together. People were quite adrift, completely at a loss."

A glimmer on the horizon

Amherst Early Music (AEM) executive director Marilyn Boenau found herself at a critical juncture in early March, with Amherst's Spring Break Workshop a week away. "We thought, we can't do this live, with everything closing down all around us," she says. "But we figured it might be possible to go online. We gave it a try, and it worked—first on Skype and then on Zoom."

AEM, based near Boston (MA), is one of the most important organizers of festivals and workshops, serving amateur and professional musicians, mostly recorder players. Blaker had been booked by Boenau for AEM's March event and was among the first recorder professionals to go fully virtual in the "new normal." She credits the experience she and frequent collaborator Tish Berlin have gained over recent years, teaching faraway students via computer. "Of course, having online lessons is not like being in the same room together. The sound quality is not as good," she admits. "But it's way better than not having the lessons."

AEM's bold foray onto the Zoom online platform proved an early hit with amateur players. "We had no idea people would take to it," says Boenau, "but we scheduled one, then another. The response has been so good that we've just kept going." AEM has had over 5,400 people register for online sessions, many more than the usual in-person attendance. For AEM's faculty and collaborators, the weekly activities have meant regular honoraria—a welcome boon during these lean COVID times.

AEM, as well as the San Francisco Early Music Society and the ARS, are widely credited with galvanizing the North American recorder world to make the transition online.

ARS itself quickly rallied to support its membership, offering free virtual beginner classes and technique videos, and distributing clear instructions on how chapters could take their playing meetings online by optimizing the Zoom platform and adjusting critical sound settings. The website's Playing It Safe page and the email blasts kept the scattered and now confined community up to date on the rapidly growing list of diverse online lessons, workshops and lectures.

As Denver Recorder Society president Sharon Bolles readily admits: "Without the ARS's support, encouragement and publicity for all of our events, we would have been in a world of hurt right now." The group had its first online meeting in April 2020, having canceled its March meeting.

ARS Board president David Podeschi was an early Zoom adopter. He tried the platform to conduct the organization's April Board meeting, little realizing it would prove a game-changer for his own Dallas Recorder Society, where he serves as treasurer. "That Board meeting was so successful that I contacted the rest of our Dallas Chapter to suggest we adapt this to our own playing meetings," he recalls. "We started the first Saturday in May and have been doing it ever since."

Many recorder societies had similar "Eureka!" moments and boldly ventured onto Zoom, an application that few had even heard of before March. In certain cities such as Seattle, Toronto, Vancouver and San Francisco—where early spring had been sadly silent—virtual meetings were launched after only a short hiatus.

For BCRS, virtual monthly meetings started in June and have continued uninterrupted through the customary summer break; workshops have been programmed until May 2021. The BCRS website's Staying Home resource page provides chapter members with regular updates on the latest virtual offerings from a wide range of organizations. Says president Andrea Macdonald: "We were determined to keep our members connected and engaged. We really felt there was a need for this."

An unexpected offshoot has been increased membership from the rest of Canada, the U.S. and even Hong Kong. "It was the best decision we could have made," she says.

The migration onto Zoom

Several groups took a little more time to make the transition. The challenge for the Orange County (CA) Recorder Society was primarily membership acceptance and concerns about the future, according to president Win Aldrich. "We were hesitant to commit," he said, "until I realized it would be possible to combine our efforts with others. I also belong to the Southern California Recorder Society [SCRS] and they agreed in mid-August to join our efforts." OCRS/SCRS have been co-hosting joint monthly Zoom meetings since September, with sessions drawing a large contingent from their own membership, as well as "orphan members" from nearby recorder societies that decided to suspend activities this year.

Similarly, Toronto's recorder society is taking a recess this year, but its members were welcomed by TEMPO. California's Sacramento Recorder Society joined forces with San Francisco, and back in Washington state, Seattle teamed up with nearby Moss Bay Recorder Society. "I was surprised how quickly people got on board with Zoom," says Seattle's music director Boeckman.

Conductors and teachers who were early Zoom adopters, such as Blaker, soon found themselves in high demand. Blaker led the first Zoom playing meeting in Toronto, to the delight of TEMPO president Dresher. "Zoom has simply wiped out distances and made all this possible."

Without glossing over the obvious limitations of playing online and the deep sense of loss at not being in the same room with other players, players of all abilities have found the advantages far outweigh the virtual platform's shortcomings. Organizers don't have the usual headaches of trying to match participants in identical groups. "More advanced students can add difficulty through ornamentation," says AEM's Boenau, "and those for whom the class is a stretch can toot away without embarrassment."

Everyone gets the music ahead of time so they can practice, and some instructors share visuals on their screens or play recordings, greatly enhancing the experience. And everyone loves the short commute, especially on dark and stormy nights!

But not all recorder societies have pivoted to online platforms.

Like the Sacramento and San Diego groups in California, and Toronto's recorder society in Ontario, the large and well-established Montréal Recorder Society (MRS) has not offered

Héloïse Degrugillier (center) leads members and friends of the Denver (CO) Recorder Society during a December 2020 Zoom meeting



a full 2020-21 season to members. President Gabrielle Soucy indicates a survey during the summer found little interest for the virtual dimension. "Their preference was to have live meetings," she says, explaining this was no doubt due to the average age of members and the avalanche of online offerings from other music and cultural organizations. The MRS website reflects the present stasis, with most pages seemingly frozen in the pre-pandemic, "before" times.

Still, Soucy heard that members were seeking playing opportunities with other organizations. "Some people even joined a group of recorder teachers in Italy who organized lessons," she marvels. Although MRS offered free membership renewal for this playing season, Soucy says membership dropped to "about 60 to 70" from the pre-COVID level of just under 100. She acknowledges that with the pandemic stretching well into 2021, no organization can afford to remain dormant. She says MRS is set to announce two or three online playing meetings, which will allow organizers to gauge the membership's appetite for additional events.

Silver linings of the dark COVID clouds

Something quite unexpected has happened since recorder societies have ventured into this strange new world. While it's too early to really breathe a sigh of relief, there are several encouraging trends reported by the ARS and the organizations contacted for this story:

- ARS membership is enjoying a significant pandemic bump. There are 271 new members since March 1—a 75% increase over the same period last year. ARS president Podeschi muses this may have been nudged in part by the ever-popular Sarah Jeffery, who praised the ARS (as well as the BCRS!) in one of her YouTube segments for Team Recorder. More fundamentally, Podeschi thinks the organization's

solid financial situation, effective communications, and timely initiatives such as the Recorder Artists' Relief Fund have increased the value of the ARS to members—though he expresses surprise that only half of the ARS's 100 affiliated groups have applied for grants to hire online conductors.

- As BCRS has found out, recorder societies that offer a virtual season are all noticing a rise in membership, due in part to people seeking additional playing opportunities and in some cases signing up in multiple groups. Podeschi has been happy to welcome back to his Dallas chapter virtual meetings former residents who had moved away—while in Denver, a large number of new participants and old friends are zooming into meetings from both coasts and in between.
- Going online has allowed organizers to recruit well-known professionals who were previously out of reach. Members have appreciated getting to know new conductors, experience different approaches and delve into fresh repertoire. SFRS president Haug-Hryciw commented, "People we bring in are definitely a draw," pulling in players from even Taiwan and Hawaii.
- Local events have definitely taken on an international flavor. When BCRS presented a workshop hosted by London virtuoso Piers Adams of early music group Red Priest, a fan from Hong Kong registered for the session, despite the brutal 15-hour time difference. OCRS/SCRS regularly welcomes a Brazilian aficionado to its monthly meetings, and, adds president Aldrich: "We love having a regular contingent of BCRS members from Canada at our meetings. It's fun."
- There is considerably more "visiting" from one chapter to another, which is generating a growing sense of community. *(continued overleaf)*

"It's wonderful the way people have stepped up and worked together," says Blaker. "I see this among teachers as well—people are no longer working in isolation, there is more collaboration and communication." Anyone attending the early December BCRS Festivus for the Rest of Us playing meeting enjoyed the warm fellowship of recorder society members from Edmonton, Calgary, St. Louis (MO), Orange County, San Francisco, Seattle and others.

A brave new hybrid world, post COVID?

Yes, everyone looks forward to playing together again, though the severity of the second wave was sobering. Thoughts of in-person events for summer 2021 are fast giving way to the realization that music making will probably have to remain virtual for many months yet.

Indeed, most recorder societies had online programs booked into late spring 2021, "until we know it's really safe," says San Francisco's Haug-Hryciw.

Beyond that, programmers admit to being daunted by the erratic course of the pandemic. "We tend to plan a month ahead and are not making major commitments," says AEM's executive director Boenau. This is particularly challenging for signature events involving complex arrangements and significant funds—events such as AEM's two-week festival in July, and Seattle's Port Townsend Early Music Workshop. Boenau says AEM is starting to consider a hybrid summer festival, with simultaneous live, small-scale events in a number of locations, and including some virtual components. "We fear re-opening is going to be messy and expensive," she says. "We don't foresee planning a full-scale in person event until 2022."

But like all storms, COVID will eventually abate—and most likely leave a legacy in its wake. Already some of the advantages of virtual playing sessions have programmers and boards thinking in new directions.

Professional recorderist Blaker is convinced that "some people will do more long-distance teaching and studying, virtually. This is all feasible now." The present experience has shown that online participation has made events accessible to people who find in person attendance too expensive or too daunting for a host of reasons. "People in retirement communities, people who can't afford to travel, can still join in, play and see their friends," says Boenau. "I think there will be a place for this after we're back to normal."

At BCRS, organizers are also hoping to retain the option to bring in, virtually, top U.S. or European talent—people who are otherwise out of reach for financial or logistical reasons. "We've seen a huge increase in engagement," says president Macdonald. "We're now thinking of keeping online meetings as a part of our offerings once COVID is behind us."

Denver's Bolles is hoping the bonds that are now growing among the far-flung chapters will be sustained post-COVID. "I would like to find ways to keep this larger look, feel and [the] contacts going." She adds: "Out of this whole mess, and lots of sorrow and angst, it would be nice if we found a little sunshine."

Still, the hope that sustains our community through the darkest times of the pandemic is the certainty that one day, we will find ourselves once again among our friends—playing together without a computer interface, immersed in those rich sounds, united and uplifted by the music. "I'll never take it for granted again, being in a room with other people, playing music, when the very air is vibrating," says Blaker.

"Can you imagine how happy we're going to be?"

THE JUNIOR RECORDER SOCIETY GOES VIRTUAL, FOR REAL!

By Greta Haug-Hryciw, Montero, CA

Do you know young recorder players who would like to play music with other kids? The Junior Recorder Society could be just right for them!

With the onset of the pandemic this year, playing together in person became impossible. After feedback from families, the East Bay Junior Recorder Society (EBJRS), based in the Bay Area in California, went virtual and decided to extend the invitation to include young recorder players from other parts of the country.

Nineteen children enrolled, ages 7 through 17. Children are joining from seven states: CA, IA, IL, NJ, NY, PA and WA. Each session starts with everyone, and then participants break out into four groups assigned according to age and playing ability. The program is in addition to the children's regular lessons.

The ARS launched a pilot program for children to play together in 1992, and initially thought it would be called "The American Recorder Club." It was soon re-named The Junior Recorder Society, with two components, Classroom and Club, each of which had a booklet containing helpful teaching tools. Each was published to help jump-start recorder teaching around the country. (The Junior Recorder Society Club Program, for after-school groups like EBJRS rather than classroom teaching, was patterned after a club that Betty Ann Parker formed in Santa Fe, NM, which she wrote up in the November 1988 *American Recorder*, https://americanrecorder.org/docs/AR_Mag_November_1988_Multipage.pdf).

Just a few years later, Bay Area recorder professionals Louise Carlslake and Hanneke van Proosdij founded the Junior Recorder Society of the East Bay to help young players in their area discover the joy of playing recorder with and for their friends, just as they had done when growing up in England (Carlslake) and the Netherlands (van Proosdij). This JRS group has been going strong since 1997.

Now in its 23rd year, EBJRS teachers are Miyo Aoki, Greta Haug-Hryciw, Andrew Levy and Hanneke van Proosdij with guest teachers Cléa Galhano and Rotem Gilbert.

Initially an affiliate of the San Francisco Early Music Society, since 2007 the EBJRS has been an outreach program of Voices of Music, of which van Proosdij is co-director. The young members are encouraged to learn to play all the main sizes of recorder, and local members are able to borrow larger instruments to play in the EBJRS ensembles. (For more about the EBJRS, read a Summer 2018 *AR* article about their 20th anniversary at <https://americanrecorder.org/docs/ARsum18body.pdf>.)

The EBJRS began its Zoom season in February and will meet bi-weekly through June (time TBA). The young participants need to have the following skills:

- know low d to high g with # on soprano for Group 1
- be able to play two recorder sizes comfortably (holding a line on their own) for Group 2
- possess very strong rhythm skills and at least play SATB for Group 3.

If you know of young recorder students who are making good progress and who would like to join the EBJRS for Recorder Fun online, please email van Proosdij at listen@voicesofmusic.org for more information about the program, or visit <https://voicesofmusic.org/jrs.html>. Scholarships are available.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR ONLINE AND IN-PERSON EVENTS

Each year ARS awards scholarships and grants to students, chapters, educators and professionals—to promote the recorder and to provide resources and opportunities to our diverse recorder community. In response to the pandemic, the ARS Board has determined that online events are eligible for scholarships and grants. Funding comes from generous donor support.

- **Workshop Scholarships:** Any member who needs financial assistance to attend an in-person or online weekend or week-long workshop may apply for one of these scholarships. Deadline: **March 31**.
- **Educational Outreach Grants:** Meeting certain criteria, anyone teaching the recorder may apply for this grant. ARS membership is not required to apply. Application period: **May 1-June 15**, to be used after September 1, 2021.
- **Chapter & Recorder Orchestra Grants:** These grants are awarded to Chapters or Recorder Orchestras with 10 or more ARS members, to supplement membership-enhancing programs. Deadline: **May 15**, to be used after September 1, 2021.
- **Professional Development Grants:** Any recorder professional, meeting certain criteria, may apply to ARS for support of professional development pursuits. Primarily funding the ARS Recorder Residency at the Sitka Center for Art and Ecology (OR), applications for other venues are considered. Deadline: **September 15** of the year preceding the proposed residency or project.

Info: <https://americanrecorder.org/scholarships-grants>.

IN MEMORIAM

Joel Fazekas passed away on December 26, 2019. He was from East Northport, NY, where he was a member of the Recorder Society of Long Island, and spent winters in Delray Beach, FL. He was a member of ARS since 1988.



Gail Freeman died in January in Durham, NC. Born in Oklahoma during the Depression, she went on to become a licensed architect and engineer, rare for a woman of her time. Her eclectic musical pursuits encompassed singing, recorder, gamba, dulciana, and banjo, with even broader concert interests. Kind to all, generous to a fault, nearly always smiling, she also took no guff from anyone. She was brilliant, musical and reasonably fluent on all recorders and in reading arcane 14th-century notation. She studied recorder and early notation for more years than either teacher or student wanted to admit. Stalwartly withstanding health problems that would have stopped most people years before, she attended classes even when she could no longer actively participate. Asked in the fall how Gail was doing, her wife Sue Gidwitz said, "She's still telling us what to do." Gail's son Bruno Freeman and Sue lovingly cared for her at home until her last breath. She joined ARS in 2008. (Submitted by Patricia Petersen)

Carol Lefson Kronus, 78, died at her Asheville (NC) home on August 15, 2020. Born in Niagara Falls, NY, she and her husband taught at the University of Illinois, Urbana, until December 1978, when they moved to NC. After her academic career, Carol discovered her true calling in art and music, learning oriental brush and ink. When she couldn't paint anymore, due to ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), she donated her art supplies and books to the Buncombe County High Schools. She was a charter member of the Asheville Symphony Chorus, in which she sang for over 20 years, and learned to play recorders from Ellen Moore, who also became a good friend. Carol was a member of Musicke Antiqua, a local early music consort; she enjoyed her most rewarding time playing with this group. She had been a member of ARS since 2019.

Katy Morgan passed away in New York City, NY, in December 2020. A high school flute player, she switched to recorder, and it came to dominate her musical life. In her apartment, crowded with recorders, sheet music and books, she held many playing sessions with other musicians. The Wednesday morning recorder group met there for years—playing followed by lunch at a nearby restaurant. Late in life she studied violin, and joined the Downtown Symphony community orchestra in New York City. She was noted for remarkable accomplishments. She joined ARS in 2015.

Julia Mount, age 93, of Buffalo, NY, passed peacefully on October 7, 2020. The devoted church member loved music, family and friends. She joined ARS in 1987.



Monte Swartzman, a pillar of the amateur recorder scene in Montréal, QC, succumbed to COVID-19 on January 14. A mainstay at Amherst Early Music Festival, he returned each summer to feed his joy of playing music with others. Several players had the privilege of playing with him weekly for almost 30 years. He would show up with selections from his enormous collection of music; the group would play for a couple of hours and then enjoy each other's company over wine and cheese. Swartzman was almost a founding member of the Montréal Recorder Society (MRS), joining about a year after its inception. He was director of programming (arranging for conductors, photocopying music) for years, until he could no longer fulfill the position. At one time the chapter held a fall weekend workshop near Montréal. He gladly transported music, folk song books for a singalong at the Saturday party—anything needed to make the weekend a success. Swartzman's harmonica playing at these celebrations delighted all. He was a founding member of Flutissimo, the MRS advanced group. One of his quirks was that he only played F instruments: alto, bass and his beloved contra bass, dubbed "the singing pine." He would take lines meant for C instruments and adapt, raising or lowering a few notes as needed. His quiet demeanor will be missed, as well as his dry sense of humor, generous spirit and total devotion to the recorder world. He joined ARS in 1975. (Submitted by Susan van Gelder)

CHAPTERS, CONSORTS & RECORDER ORCHESTRA NEWS

Newsletter editors and publicity officers should send materials for publication to: **AR**, editor@americanrecorder.org, 7770 South High St., Centennial, CO 80122-3122. Also send short articles about specific activities that have increased chapter membership or recognition, or just the enjoyment your members get out of being part of your group. Send digital photos: 3"x4"x300dpi TIF or unedited JPG files; digital videos for the **AR** YouTube channel are also accepted. Please send news, photos, video enquiries, or other correspondence to the **AR** address above, and also to: ARS Office, ARS.recorder@AmericanRecorder.org, P.O. Box 480054, Charlotte, NC 28269-5300.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DEADLINES AND IMPORTANT DATES

March 31 - Nominations due for **Early Music America's Annual Achievement Awards**, given to three leaders in the field of early music and nominated by their peers. Info: www.earlymusicamerica.org/resources/awards/annual-awards.

April 30 - Deadline for professional recorder musicians to **apply for the 2022 Sitka Center for Art and Ecology (OR) Recorder Residency** of up to 6 weeks. Info: 541-994-5485, www.sitkacenter.org/residencies/recorder-residency. See also ARS deadlines elsewhere in this issue.

MARCH (PLAY-THE-RECORDER MONTH)

6 and 7 "**Whistle While You Dance: Sung Branles of 16th Century France/Branles of Mystery**," on Zoom. Leader: Jennifer Meller. Sing or play an instrument and dance at the same time, to delightful dances from the turn of the 16th century. Challenge your memory, balance, coordination and appetite for fun with deceptively simple and repetitive steps. All instruments/singers welcome, plus those who just gotta dance. A=440. Info: <https://sfems.org>.

7 "**A Mighty Wind—Renaissance Wind Instruments**," sponsored by Voices of Music, on Zoom. Leader: Rotem Gilbert. Lecture on Renaissance wind instruments, including recorders, in literature and iconography. Event will be recorded and available to ticket holders later if unable to attend the live event. Info: Greta Haug-Hryciw, greta@voicesofmusic.org, 415-377-4444.

9 and 10 "**Irish Workshop: O'Carolan Tunes**," on Zoom. Leader: Debby Greenblatt. For soprano recorder and string players. Each participant (U.S. residents only) will receive a copy of *O'Carolan Fiddle Tunes for Two*, for the instrument on which workshop participant will play these Irish melodies, which were composed by the great blind 17th-century Irish harpist and poet, Turlough O'Carolan. Info: debby@greenblattandseay.com, www.greenblattandseay.com.

13 "**The Tuning and Temperament Conundrum**," seminar on Zoom. Leader: Ross Duffin. Trying to reconcile musical acoustics with the Western music scale has fascinated, aggravated and puzzled musicians for centuries. Harmonic series basics, Pythagorean tuning, Just Intonation, Meantone, irregular temperaments, and Equal Temperament will be covered. Info: <https://sfems.org>.

13 **Princeton (NJ) Recorder Society Master Classes**, on Zoom. Leader: Lewis Baratz, coaching four participants/ensembles in 30-minute time slots; auditors may observe. Info: Jere Tannenbaum, jtanne1200@gmail.com, 609-213-4684, <https://princetonol.com/groups/princetonrecorder>.

14 "**Boismortier Suite in G minor—And You're the Soloist! (A Baroque Jam Session)**," on Zoom. Leader: David Morris. Alto recorder or any treble instrument—with your leader as bass viol accompanist. Tailor music to your own abilities and taste, handle the ornaments, counterpoint and stylistic nuances ... then play. A=415. Info: <https://sfems.org>.

20 "**Madrigals of Hope and Renewal**," on Zoom. Leader: Bianca Hall. Play and sing four- and five-part madrigals and motets linked to topics of rebirth, renewal, hope and springtime, composed by late Renaissance and early Baroque greats like Marenzio, Monteverdi, Schütz and others. All levels welcome. A=440. Info: <https://sfems.org>.

20 "**We'll Meet Again: Songs of Greeting, Parting, Longing, and Hope**," on Zoom. Leader: Adam Gilbert. Renaissance songs about being apart and longing to be together again, by Henricus Isaac, Josquin Desprez, Ludwig

Senfl. In addition to lovely songs, enjoy rousing dances. Singers/players of all levels. A=440. Info: <https://sfems.org>.

20 **ARS Play-the-Recorder Day, with Melika Fitzhugh**, on Zoom. Play her special piece, *Transparent Letters Across the Sky*, with Fitzhugh directing an en masse performance online; also online webinar with Fitzhugh beforehand. Music and info: <https://americanrecorder.org/ptrm>.

23 **Nightingale Concerto** by Jamie Allen, world premiere featuring the New Bedford Symphony Orchestra with recorder soloist Héloïse Degrugillier. Info and subscription information: <https://nbsymphony.org>.

APRIL

6 and 7 "**Scottish Music Workshop**," on Zoom. Leader: Debby Greenblatt. For soprano recorder and string players. Each participant (U.S. residents only) will receive a copy of *Scottish Fiddle Tunes for Two*, for the instrument on which workshop participant will play. Info: debby@greenblattandseay.com, www.greenblattandseay.com.

16-18 **Workshop and Concert**, sponsored by Capitol Early Music Series, Washington, D.C., on Zoom. Leaders/performers: Cléa Galhano, Flying Forms. Info: <https://capitolearlymusic.org>.

More resources for online classes and ARS chapter meetings: <https://americanrecorder.org/playitsafe>. Free online classes for any beginners, offered by the ARS; register at <https://americanrecorder.org/beginnerclasses>.

- Other online seminars, workshops and master classes:
- Mini-series classes/concerts presented by the **San Francisco Early Music Society**. Info: www.sfems.org.
- **Amherst Early Music** offers ongoing weekend online sessions. Info: www.amherstearlymusic.org.
- **The Old Avoca Schoolhouse** continues its ongoing workshops with Debby Greenblatt on Zoom. Info: www.greenblattandseay.com.
- **Blokfluit Net Working Group and Tel Aviv Recorder Festival (TARF)** co-sponsor ongoing workshops and master classes on Zoom. Info: <https://blokfluit.net/tarf-online-meetings>.

REMINDER TO SNOWBIRDS

Please keep the ARS office updated with your seasonal dates and addresses so that each copy of *American Recorder* arrives in the right place at the right time.

Email your current address information to Susan Burns at director@americanrecorder.org.

SUBMITTING CALENDAR LISTINGS & NEWS

There are several ways to submit advance information about an event or to send a report on a recent event.

E-mail the basics: Date; Title of Event; Facility/City, Presenter(s)/Faculty—if a workshop; short description; and contact information to editor@americanrecorder.org (for AR) and ars.recorder@americanrecorder.org (ARS office). **Newsletter/magazine deadlines:** December 15, March 15, June 15, September 15. Plan to announce an event in an issue at least one month before it takes place.

Digital photos of events should be at least 3"x4", and at least 300 dpi in a TIF or unedited JPEG format.

Submit calendar info to the ARS office at <https://americanrecorder.org/events> (requires login); to submit chapter, consort or recorder orchestra news: <https://americanrecorder.org/communitynews> (login not required). If you do not have internet access, please mail event basics or news to *ARS Newsletter*, 7770 S. High St., Centennial, CO 80122 U.S.