



## December 21, 2014 Meeting: *The Holiday Grab Bag*

**DATE:** Sunday, December 21, 2014  
**TIME:** 2:00 to 4:30 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Unity Church of Denver, 3021 South University Blvd.,  
Denver  
**CONDUCTOR:** Volunteers from the Denver Chapter

In December, our Denver Chapter of the ARS recorder Society traditionally enlists volunteer leaders to bring us short program segments for our monthly meeting. Each leader chooses music about which he has some special curiosity or expertise, and we usually get an interesting and eccentric mix. Here's the lineup for this year:

### *A Medieval Christmas*

**Ruth Neubauer** is a psychotherapist, photographer, writer, and recorder teacher. She has been playing recorders and krumphorns since the 1970's when she "fell in love with the sound of the soprano." We will play pieces from the 13th & 14th century.

### *The Care & Feeding of Your Instrument*

**John Orth** is a professional maker and repairer of many kinds of musical instruments. He is the author of the exciting new feature in our newsletter, a column in which he shares insights about recorder construction and maintenance. He practices his craft at Orthwest Studios in Golden. For his presentation in our Grab Bag program, he'll give us a face-to-face demonstration of some of the principles that his column explores, and we'll have the opportunity to try some of those principles by playing actual live music.

### *Early English Carols*

**Joice Gibson** is Senior Lecturer in Music at Metropolitan State University of Denver. She earned her Ph.D. in musicology at C. U. Boulder (under the guidance of our old friend Tom Riis) doing her dissertation on English comic opera, and one of her important areas of expertise is transcultural musical influences. Joice has unearthed some delightful English carols that should be fun and seasonally appropriate for our December program.

### *Two Obscure Fantasias*

**Joe Wilcox**, our program director, has stumbled onto two fantasias by English composers you may never have heard of: John Okeover and Richard Dering. In the late 16<sup>th</sup> Century and throughout most of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, the English fantasia was a kind of free-flowing instrumental imitation of the vocal motet. Most fantasias did not specify precise instrumentation, but they were probably mainly intended for consorts of viols, which were very popular among amateur musicians at the time. They often work well on recorders too.

### Presidents's Message:

The Holidays are upon us! I hope everyone had an enjoyable Thanksgiving. Please join us for our annual Christmas "Grab Bag" meeting on December 21st. It is always a fun event. Planning for Rocky XI (May 15-17) is progressing well. Our "headliner" guest faculty will be Anne Timberlake, who was one of the featured artists/faculty members at Recorderfest in the West. Our local faculty will be the ever popular Mark Davenport and new local Jennifer Carpenter. More info will be coming soon. " Mark your calendars!

Jon Casbon

### Group Corner

**Colorado Recorder Orchestra** will have an open rehearsal on December 6th at 9:30 AM at St. Ambrose Episcopal church, 7520 South Boulder Road, Boulder (actually close to Louisville) in the basement. All players are welcome to come and read with us some Baroque considered for concerts in April. We just celebrated our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, and we are beginning now to prepare for the future. Please come join us. For information or directions, please call 303-847-3020, or email [jiterada@comcast.net](mailto:jiterada@comcast.net)

**Four Winds Recorder Ensemble** (Colorado Springs): Four Winds is gearing up for the holidays, with our annual Christmas Carol performance at the Air Force Academy medical clinic on December 17th. We'll be playing at the Monument Community Handbell Choir concert on December 13th...this will be an "expanded" Four Winds, with Jennifer Carpenter and Gretchen Goldberg substituting for Mike Richard and Paula Olmstead, who have a separate gig that evening. Our theme will be Christmas Old and New, and we will be playing "Gaudete," "Greensleeves," "Christmas Time is Here," and "Sleigh Ride," along with traditional carols. Finally, Four Winds is scheduled to play more holiday favorites for brunch at the Margarita Restaurant on December 21st. Make a reservation...they have a great brunch! By the way, are you looking for a great arrangement of a medieval Christmas carol? Check out Gaudete, arranged by Marton Jakobey on the choral Wiki web page, [http://www2.cpd.org/wiki/images/9/9d/Gaudete\\_Christus\\_est\\_natus.pdf](http://www2.cpd.org/wiki/images/9/9d/Gaudete_Christus_est_natus.pdf). It has great syncopation and harmonies.

**Marylebone Garden Players** meets on Saturdays, we spend one hour on Renaissance Music and one hour on Baroque Sonatas and Concertos. We currently have fifteen players including recorders, wooden flutes, gambas, violin family and harpsichord. Our Monday group meets twice a month and we concentrate on a large collection of trio sonatas.

We do have room in the Monday group for another player.  
Bill Conklin 303-455-0837

**StopTime** had a slow month in November due to Steve Caminer's complete fracture of his left arm humerus in a bicycle accident. Broken arms make trombone playing awkward. So we were coolin' it, waiting for the healing process. Worked on some new arrangements. Booked our annual concert at the "Merc" (Mercury Cafe.) for Sat., Feb. 21. Steve is back to rehearsals now, so we have a small nursing home booked in December. Sorry, we can't invite you to that one because you're too healthy.

### **There are lots of options for local recorder players in December—playing, partying, performing.**

The **2nd Friday** gathering is on December 12 at 7 PM (not the usual 7:30) and will be hosted by Johannes and Seraina Gessler at 3205 Shore Road off Highway 1 in north Fort Collins. We'll combine our usual playing opportunity with a Christmas party. Bring a small sweet or savory or treat of your choice to share after we play. Please let the Gesslers know if you plan to come at [jgessler36@q.com](mailto:jgessler36@q.com) or 484-0647. And do bring your copies of the Christmas music Jane will be sending out sometime soon.

On Saturday, December 13, at 10:30 AM we will **perform Christmas music at the Good Samaritan Water Valley Senior Living**, 805 Compassion Drive in Windsor, CO Many thanks to Jane who has taken the lead in making arrangements for this. Jane's directions are below:

(1) Take I-25 south from Fort Collins to exit #259, Crossroads Blvd. Go east on Crossroads for 6.5 mi to a traffic circle. Take the 4th exit from the traffic circle onto 7th St. Go 1.1 mi north on 7th St (down a big hill) to New Liberty Rd. Turn right, and then right again (through another traffic circle) to 805 Compassion Dr. Good Sam Water Valley is the BIG facility on your right as you come down the big hill. You can't miss it.

(2) Park out front and enter through the doors under the big overhang. Take the elevator or stairs up one floor to the lobby. Please register at the concierge desk (on your left) and then go up the elevator to the 2nd floor chapel. The chapel will be around to your right as you get off the elevator. The Chapel will be open any time after 9:30 or so on Saturday, Dec. 13. The program will start at 10:30 a.m. Jane's cell phone number (in case anyone gets lost) is [970-581-3207](tel:970-581-3207).

**Our monthly gathering for ARS** falls on Monday, December 22, at the usual place and time—7:30 PM at the Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church on Taft Hill Road. Do let Jim know if you plan to be there: [jtfmartin@yahoo.com](mailto:jtfmartin@yahoo.com) or 303-377-4293.

### **November Newbie News**

Bruce Nelson led seven newbies in November, two of whom had not attended previously. After a bit of a shuffle because some had not brought music stands, they settled down and did quite well at playing most of the music. They got off to a good start, getting their notes and keeping time with Buffoons and Robin. The Bach was a bit of a challenge, but it repaid some extra effort by turning out well. On Parole (13th century) had a strange sound to their ears so they dropped it, and finished their session with Pastime. Bruce's goal was to get everybody listening to each other and playing together and he believed they did well at that.

### **December Newbie**

Brief bio: Elaine Granata learned to play recorder from Carla Sciaky, Janet Handmaker and Karl Reque, but claims to absolve them all from any responsibility for inabilities on her part. She joined the Denver Chapter in the early 80s when she began to take lessons and took her turn at being chapter president. Music for the newbies will include colonial tunes from A Rollick of Recorders—The Lass of Patie's Mill, Drive the Cold Winter Away, and Amaryllis; Greenbranch by Jeanne Brush; and three seasonal carols, Coventry Carol, The Boar's Head Carol, and Lo How a Rose Ere Blooming.

Sunday, December 21st, 2014, 12:45 to 1:45 pm,  
4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Classroom, second floor  
Unity Church, 3021 S. University Blvd, Denver  
Enter South door.

Are you a Recorder Newbie?

1. Do you know some recorder fingerings?
2. Can you read a little bit of music?
3. Have you wanted to play the recorder but never gotten around to it?
4. Are you already a recorder player but new to the Denver chapter?

If you've answered yes to any of these questions, you will want to attend the Newbie Playing Session sponsored by the Denver Chapter of The American Recorder Society. The Newbie Group gives players new to the recorder or new to the Denver Chapter an opportunity to play small ensemble music in a safe setting. Session is free of charge and open to the public. Drop-ins welcome. Please bring a music stand if possible. For more information, contact Janet Handmaker at [recorderteacher@comcast.net](mailto:recorderteacher@comcast.net) or call 303-221-6066.



### **The Littlest Sardinian: The Resurrection of the Picco Pipe**

It is a simple minstrel's instrument, long since forgotten, carrying the tone of a pastoral life, whispering like an ethereal wind, and born from the mountains. Or, it is a child's toy, shrill and sharp, and had once been played on the concert stages in London by a genius. I was intrigued from the very first moment I learned about this confounding little instrument. Very little is known and published sources are scarce. The entire popular history of this tiny instrument occupies a very small window of the nineteenth century and seemingly disappeared as quickly as it was discovered by concert audiences across Europe.

The piccolo pipe is, as far as I can tell, the smallest ever member of the recorder family. It measures only 3 ½ inches tall, similar in size to the head joint of a soprano recorder. It is played with one thumb hole and two finger holes for the left hand, and the little finger of the right hand placed inside the bore to vary the pitch. It is an awkward instrument and absolutely adorable. It was little more than a plaything found in the hands of Italian children until the accidental discovery of a Piedmontese shepherd's son, blind from birth, who reputedly possessed the virtuosity of the greatest European musical performers on this simple little pipe.

Joseph Picco [Angelo Picchi], for whom the pipe is named, was celebrated throughout Europe. Beginning in 1854 at the theater of La Scala, he went on to travel all of Italy, then Paris where his reputation had long since preceded him. He awed the audiences with masterful skill many had doubted. One writer described his doubt as having begun with a simple description of the instrument, "a mere child's toy of the rudest construction, about three inches long, and so minute that, while he was playing, it was almost hid by his fingers." But then, like many, found the skill with which the instrument was handled overwhelmed and captivated all audiences. Most contemporary writers I have found quickly point to the inadequacies of the little pipe, as with the lack of low notes or its shrill attack in the upper register, but then gracefully pass them off as easily forgotten incidental nothings in the hands of one so skilled as Picco. "He plays the most rapid flights, the most complicated chromatic passages, the most brilliant arpeggios, with as much fluency and certainty as the finest violinist could do." The story would appear almost mythical, like the man himself, if it were not for so many such statements published across Europe and as far away as Australia. And then, as quickly as he appeared, in 1857 the story seems to end... until now.

My interest in the piccolo pipe began with a desire to recreate one, to challenge a history which had so easily forgotten it and resurrect a tiny piece of the past once held, however briefly, in high esteem. I scoured the internet and all published sources I was able to find to collect any credible evidence as to its size, tonality, range, etc. For external dimensions I was able to scale beautiful photographs provided by the both the Library of Congress and the University of Edinburgh. For internal dimensions, I estimated them based on wall thicknesses and windway sizes I could glean from the photos until one of the curators from the University of Edinburgh took pity on my requests and generously measured them. The photo shows the first scaled and finished piccolo pipe based on the accurate dimensions of one held in the

University's collection. Is this the first piccolo pipe created in the last century and a half? I have no way of knowing for sure. But I will continue to pursue this passion until this little bit of history once again finds its place in our hearts... or at least is properly cited on Wikipedia... whichever comes first.

(The full article with construction photos, diagrams, full citations and published references will be available online at [orthweststudios.com](http://orthweststudios.com) in January).

My name is John. I am an instrument builder, obsessive recorder player, and a lover of history. I would be happy to answer any questions regarding the care and maintenance of your instruments. Please submit any repair and general recorder questions to [Orthwest@gmail.com](mailto:Orthwest@gmail.com) or contact me directly by phone 772-321-1498. I await your call.

John Orth  
Orthwest Studios, LLC  
Golden, Colorado



### **Denver Chapter Members/Friends in Good Standing as of November 2014:**

Karen Anderson, Sharon Bolles, Paul Brunson, Marlys Butler, Jon Casbon, Bill Conklin, Barbara Fahey, Judy Fritz, Joice Gibson, RoseMary Glista, Elaine Granata, Pamela Grotegut, Janet Handmaker, Lynn and Diana Hoepfinger, John M. LeVett, Maureen Liegl, Lisa McInnis, Lori Murphy, Dick Munz, Bruce Nelson, Gerrie Olthof, Susan, Osborn, Margaret Peterson, Karyn Pocernich, Justine Romero, Miriam Rosenblum, Virginia Schlieker, Mary Scott, Pat Selby, Mary Sloan, Victoria Taylor, Rose Marie Terada, Mary Treska, Bill Urban, Gerrie Vendegna, Diane Wagner, Trudy Wayne, Joe Wilcox and Richard Wood. We are collecting dues for the September 2014 to May 2015 season. Dues for the Denver Chapter are \$20 and are due by November 15, 2014. We also accept payment for ARS National Dues if you would like us to process the national dues for you. Please complete the Dues Form under "Join" on the website and submit the form with the dues.

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