

The Denver Recorder Society

A Chapter of the American Recorder Society

October, 2015



MEETING: *The Great Gabriellis*

DATE: Sunday, October 18, 2015

TIME: Newbies 12:45 to 1:45; General Meeting 2:00 to 4:30

PLACE: Unity Church of Denver, 3021 S. University Blvd,
Denver

CONDUCTOR: *Anne Peterson*

Anne Peterson has led our meetings on a number of occasions. We're always glad to see her because her meetings are fun, and because she gets our best music out of us. Prepare to be amazed at how good we will sound.

Mostly by accident, several of our meetings this season feature music that's associated in some way with the city of Venice. (Even last month's meeting, although mostly American music, included some chorales by Hans Leo Hassler, who trained in Venice and developed his style there.) Anne Peterson's program about The Great Gabriellis is the keystone of that group. For nearly 50 years, the two Gabriellis were arguably the most influential musicians in Europe.

Here's what Anne says about how we'll explore this music:

“Andrea and Giovanni Gabrieli, uncle and nephew, epitomize the grandeur of Venice and its cathedral, St. Mark's, in the 16th century. They both held the position of organist at the cathedral and composed music for its services, but they also produced secular music such as madrigals

and ricercare. We'll play some smaller 4- and 5- part works as well as a few double choir pieces.”

Our Leader for This Meeting



Anne Fjestad Peterson has been teaching recorder in Boulder since 1975 and performing with the Boulder Renaissance Consort since 1980. She has a BA in music education from Concordia College, Moorhead, MN, and a MMus in music history from CU. Anne reviews music for the American Recorder magazine and has taught at the Denver chapter's Rocky Mountain workshops. At Grace Lutheran Church in Boulder she sings in the choir, subs as organist and choir director, directs the recorder ensemble, and is the proud founder of the Cookie Project.

President's Message

"There is no season when such pleasant and sunny spots may be lighted on, and produce so pleasant an effect on the feelings, as now in October."

— Nathaniel Hawthorne

"I'm so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers."

— L.M. Montgomery, *Anne of Green Gables*

I was trying to think of something to say about playing recorder and the month of October. Nothing came to mind except a question: "When is the best time of year to play recorder?" Answer: any time! So much for philosophy...

I hope our monthly meeting is not the only opportunity you have to play the recorder. There is so much music (and so little time!), and so many ways to play it, whether playing solo, duet, or small ensemble. Each offers a unique way to enjoy the pleasures of our favorite instrument. Of course I hope you will come to our monthly meetings as well, since we have such excellent leaders and such good company. This month will be no exception, as one of our local favorites, Anne Peterson, will present what I'm sure will be a great selection from the Gabriellis. And of course, our Newbies program will allow you to play some great music in a smaller group setting.

Have you ever visited the American Recorder Society facebook page? I'm not a big social media user, but I keep the ARS pinned to my main facebook page. If you go to facebook, search 'American Recorder Society' and click on "join group." You will be able to view outstanding performances, get the latest ARS news, and participate in interesting discussions. You don't have to be an ARS member to participate... but why aren't you a member? (smile)

Speaking of members, don't forget to pay your chapter dues. Complete the attached form (or download from our website) and bring to the

meeting with your payment or mail it in. I hope to see you at the meeting. In the meantime, Happy October!

Jon Casbon

...so much music, so little time!

Group



Corner

Four Winds Recorder Ensemble (Colorado Springs): After a fairly slow summer we had a nice gig at the weekly Downtown Sunday Market sponsored by the Colorado Springs Downtown Partnership. We played mostly popular music, mostly from the 1950s & 60s (Hey Good Lookin', Tumbling Tumbleweeds, Cool Water, Beatles tunes, Beach Boys, Mr Postman, Windy), but we snuck in a few classics from the Renaissance, Baroque and Classical eras as well: Branles, Il est bel et bon, Mouret Rondeau, Mozart. Now members are taking a little time off before we go back to our roots and start working on some serious arrangements.

Jon Casbon

...so much music, so little time!

Your **StopTime Recorder Jazz Band** held its annual (give or take) review at the Mercury Cafe on June 13 and entertained 40 or so friends and family members. We hope you won't miss these concerts, that's when we show off our new pieces for you. And it's free.

In both June and July we entertained seniors in retirement homes. We love those opportunities and the residents show us a lot

of appreciation because we play popular music from their earlier days.

In August and September, we mostly worked on new arrangements, which is one of our most fun things to do.

The StopTime members:

Dick Munz recorders, Janet Handmaker recorders, Erin Bell vocals and recorders, Philip Belefski electric guitar, soprano saxophone, vocals and recorders, Steve Caminer trombone and recorders, Gary Gregor drums, and Steve Walker our new electric bass and solo electric guitar player.

Dick Munz

The Highland Chamber Orchestra

Highland Chamber Orchestra plays Saturday and Monday. The Saturday session starts at 10 am, the Monday session starts at 9 am. We have also started a string quartet group. We do have room in the Monday group. Call me if you are interested in playing in the Monday Group. Bill Conklin [303-918-9816](tel:303-918-9816)

Bill Conklin

October Newbies

Bruce Nelson, a Denver chapter member since 1990 will host October's Newbie group. Bruce, who plays soprano, alto, tenor and bass recorders as well as tenor and bass krumhorns has been a member of the Denver chapter since 1990. He has served on many Denver chapter boards as newsletter editor. He plans to play the following pieces:

L'ultimo di de maggio

El Grillo e Buon Cantore

Laet Varen alle fantasie

Dilla da l'acqua

Il es bel et bon

Please bring a music stand if you own one.

Newbies Meet:

Sunday, October 18, 2015 12:45 to 1:45

Unity Church of Denver

3021 S. University Blvd., Denver

Enter South door. Meeting room is on the second floor.

Do you know of anyone who might enjoy playing with the Newbies? Please spread the word. There is no charge for the session. For more information, contact Janet Handmaker at (303) 221-6066. Drop-ins are welcome!

Janet Handmaker

Losing the Metaphor

To rest or not to rest, that is the question. Well, it's not really a question. It's more of a theme, one in which the context is fraught with opinion and conjecture. And so it shall remain, however, with one minor addition... my opinion.

Here is the problem: If we want to begin a discussion on the thumb rest as a necessary part of the recorder, or incorrectly assume it is an unnecessary support mechanism merely invented in the modern era, we must begin by asking the proper questions to debate, not start with a negative bias in a loaded title like "Losing the crutch." On the surface of the argument I could hardly care less whether or not someone chooses to use a thumb rest, but in a deeper discovery of evidence based on experience and historical example I think we could all agree the subject is not so simple.

A few months back a new, rather biased, thread appeared in one of the many recorder forums regarding the use of thumb rests. It was not so

much that the thread formulated a bias, but that it defined the bias in the title. "Losing the Crutch" became a popular running thread for many months cajoling the bloggers to opine on the side of "crutch." I can't honestly remember reading any entry in support of the rest. It is basic human psychology to conform, as in the forum, so let's do just that for a very brief moment.

The argument typically takes a singular path, that of historical example. Little or no historical evidence exists for early use of thumb rests. No iconography, so far as I am aware, contains examples of thumb rests in use or indeed even on mere display. If historical examples show no use of the thumb rest then its use by contemporary players must be nothing more than that of support for improper form and its use should be discouraged by all players young and old.

I have a difficult time finding any validity for this line of reasoning. As a luthier of nearly 25 years, I cannot recall a single argument over the use of chinrests on violins, straps on guitars, or endpins on cellos, to name just a few examples. As techniques, genres, or even the instruments themselves change, they adapt and evolve with each generation. Violinists developed the chinrest, and accompanying shoulder rest, to free the left hand from a supporting role so as to have unrestricted access to the entire fingerboard. While some choose to not use one for many reasons both historical and personal, the vast majority of violinists use one for its many added advantages. I would argue, if persuaded, that the recorder thumb rest fills the same role, and not an anachronistic one. If the recorder player is free from actually holding the instrument the sky's the limit for technique.

Over the last century entire fingering systems have been developed to support the recorder while playing. Many examples can be found of such fingerings and I have yet to hear a heated

debate over their use. We are basically searching out the Occam's razor of the recorder world; the simplest solution is probably the correct one.

For those who choose not to use one there are many techniques available to make playing comfortable and with little or no handicap with regards to dexterity. Tilting the head up and playing the recorder in a more horizontal position, where the recorder is simply balanced over the thumb, places both the head and hands where, one could easily argue, they should be for both projection of sound and comfort in the wrists. For historical performance, one might choose to forgo the thumb rest so as not to upset the historical instrument gods, yet the problem remains... we simply do not know if they were not used in the distant past, nor do we have any evidence to show that they were.

The definition of a crutch, if we insist on using the term, is both negative and, in this particular case, derogatory. It is however also a positive. A crutch also braces and supports. So I would argue that "losing the crutch" is more a matter of semantics than any actual notion of a problem, certainly no tangible one. The thumb rest fills a need for many and is considered unnecessary by many others. It can be as simple as that.

My name is John. I am an instrument builder, obsessive recorder player, and a lover of history, and easily bothered by unnecessary conjectural discussions on subjects about which I care deeply. I would be happy to answer any questions regarding the care and maintenance of your instruments. Feel free to contact me at Orthwest@gmail.com or directly by phone 772-321-1498. I await your call.

John Orth

Orthwest Studios, LLC
Golden, Colorado

Other Notes



Denver Chapter Members/Friends in good standing as of September 2015:

Louise Adler, Marlys Butler, Bill Conklin, Keith Emerson, Nancy Fey, Judy Fritz, Joice Gibson, RoseMary Glista, Janet Handmaker, John M. LeVett, Lisa McInnis, Mary Sloan, Bill Urban, Diane Wagner, Trudy Wayne.

We are collecting dues for the September 2015 to May 2016 season. Dues for the Denver Chapter are \$22 and are due by November 15, 2015. 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.

ENROLLMENT FORM

DENVER CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN RECORDER SOCIETY (ARS)

Name:					
Address:					
City:		State:		Zip:	
Home Phone:		Cell Phone:			
Email address:					

Are you a National ARS member? Yes _____ No _____

Please specify your interests by circling any of the following that apply and adding your other skills:

Recorders played: Sopranino Soprano Alto Tenor Bass GB CB

Skill level: Beginner Advanced Beginner Intermediate Advanced Intermediate Advanced

Other instrument or voice skills:

DUES

Denver Chapter dues for 2015-16 season:

OPTIONAL: Donation to the Denver Chapter (fully tax deductible):

OPTIONAL: ARS National dues for twelve months, individual @ \$50:

OPTIONAL: New! ARS electronic membership*, 1 year @ \$45:

Standard delivery of monthly Newsletter is via website, preferred and free

OPTIONAL: Postal delivery of monthly Newsletter @ \$6:

Total:

\$22
\$0

*No hard copy of American Recorder magazine, Newsletter or Members' Library.
The publications are available for download.

Make checks payable to:

Denver Chapter ARS

Mail to:

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8936 Miners Drive
Highlands Ranch, CO 80126