

The Denver Recorder Society

A Chapter of the American Recorder Society

September, 2015



SEPTEMBER 20, 2015 MEETING: *Music from Coast to Coast*

DATE: Sunday, September 20, 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: **THOMAS L. RIIS**

President's message

It's September! What better way to celebrate the turning of the Aspen leaves than by starting a new season of the Denver Recorder Society. I hope everyone has had a good summer. It went too quickly for me.

I hope you can make it to our September meeting. Joe Wilcox, our program director, has put together another exciting lineup of guest artists to lead our meetings. Janet Handmaker has assembled a schedule of members to lead our monthly Newbies sessions. Now all we need is for you to come and participate! As always, we will start collecting our annual dues in September. The dues have increased slightly to \$22.00 this year, due to an increase in the rent we pay Unity Church for use of the facilities. Our annual expenses have been going up for many years without an increase in dues. I hope you will agree this is still a bargain.

Please complete the form at the end of this newsletter to register for membership. Remember, you may also pay your annual ARS dues through our chapter if you wish. Mail your checks to RoseMary Glista (address on the enrollment form) or bring payment along with the completed enrollment form to the next meeting.

Jon Casbon

...so much music, so little time!

Editor's Message

I welcome feedback as I continue to learn about newsletter editing, the software, and as I make changes to format and content. This is your newsletter, so please speak up with any feedback!

My email is sbollesmusic@gmail.com.

Sharon Bolles

To open our 2015-2016 season, our leader will be Dr. Tom Riis, Professor of Musicology and Director of the American Music Research Center at the College of Music at University of Colorado in Boulder.

We're calling his program "Music from Coast to Coast" because he has recently returned from musical expeditions to both coasts, and the varied program he has planned for us covers that span and more. Here's what he says about it:

"The program will include a few familiar Renaissance favorites along with contemporary settings by Rhode Island composer Will Ayton of old time Appalachian melodies and spirituals, as well as Ayton's set of three pieces, *Salish Sea Images*, which were inspired by his visits to Puget Sound and British Columbia."

Those of you who played in (or heard) our Chapter's Renaissance Band for the Play-the-Recorder-Month performance at Tattered Cover may remember that we performed Will Ayton's *Porque Llorax*. Ayton's compositions are always wonderfully fun and idiomatic for recorders, and they often re-interpret traditional musical materials in a contemporary style. You won't want to miss this program because it will, indeed, include Ayton's musical portrayal of America from coast to coast.

Joe Wilcox

Our Leader for This Meeting



Thomas L. Riis, the Joseph Negler Professor of Musicology at CU, earned his degrees from Oberlin College and the University of Michigan. Dr. Riis is a specialist in Musical Theater and writes and lectures on many topics in 19th and 20th-century American music. His published books include *Just Before Jazz* and *Frank Loesser* (which has just come out also in paperback), a volume in the Yale Broadway Masters series. As a Fulbright Senior Scholar, he taught in Lueneburg, Germany in 2005-2006, and he was elected President of the Society for American Music in 2009-2010.

While his research and publications mostly focus on African American music and musical theatre, his other interests include medieval song and historical performance practice. He has played the viola da gamba since 1977, and he performed with the Ann Arbor Consort of Viols between 1979 and 1981, directed the Collegium Musicum at the University of Georgia between 1982 and 1990, and, during the same period, founded and directed a Renaissance chapel choir, Voix Fort Cleres. Riis remains active as a choral singer, viol player, and cellist.

Joe Wilcox



Our Coming Season

We have interesting programs and challenging music in our 2015-2016 meeting schedule. Warm up your instruments and make room on your calendars.

September 20, 2015

Tom Riis

Music from Coast to Coast

October 18, 2015

Anne Peterson

The Triumph of Nepotism – Andrea & Giovanni Gabrieli

November 15, 2015

Evanne Browne

Seicento & The Baroque Tradition

December 20, 2015

Chapter volunteers

Holiday Grab Bag

January 17, 2016

Woody Colahan

A New Age of Melody: The Music of Guillaume Dufay

February 21, 2016

Mike Grace

Adrian Willaert: A Versatile Genius Arrives in Venice

March 20, 2016

William Adams

The Joy of Renaissance Ornamentation

April 17, 2016

Ann Marie Morgan

The Stateliest Families: Viols & Recorders

May 21-22, 2016

Rotem Gilbert

Auraria campus workshop

All meetings, September through April, are on third Sundays of the month.

In May, we're hosting a workshop (Saturday & Sunday) led by Rotem Gilbert. She is on the faculty at the University of Southern California, and is known internationally as a performer and workshop leader. This is a rare and special opportunity.

Joe Wilcox

September Newbies

Sharon Bolles will host the Newbie September session. Sharon is the Newsletter Editor of our Denver chapter. Her musical background is primarily in French horn. She received a Bachelor of Music Education, which was when she received her introduction to recorders. Although she dropped playing recorder several years after graduation, she began playing again about two years ago. She is now enjoying playing with a duet, a trio, and Bill Conklin's Monday Highland Chamber Orchestra. Sharon will lead the Newbies in selections from various medieval and Baroque music pieces. This will be an enjoyable session for all.

Newbies Meet:

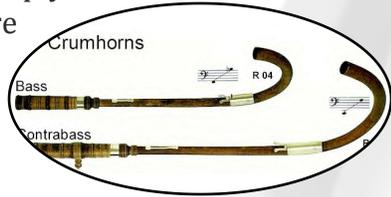
Sunday, September 20, 2015 12:45 to 1:45
Unity Church of Denver
3021 S. University Blvd., Denver
Enter South door. Meeting room is on the second floor.

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



Late Renaissance Anatis: Improving on Perfection

The crumhorn is familiar to most recorder players, and since many of us use either own or play them regularly, I thought it would be fun to explore them a bit. Historically speaking the Crumhorn is simply amazing. They are not only still being played but they are still being played in roughly the same



unaltered design since being introduced to Europe nearly 500 years ago. Not only can most instruments not make that claim, but its distinctive reedy tone and lung-crushing quasi-musical playability combine to create an instrument most of us have come to love, loathe, or respect. The typical krumhorn experience caresses the player's soul with the cheek-destroying difficulty of powering the reeds to musical heights. Let's face it, most of us are left with pain in our face and chest, which is numbed only temporarily by the lightheaded dizziness which accompanies even the shortest piece. We laugh and joke while we languish in the musical pity of the relatively simple medieval manuscripts, instead of the more appropriate Renaissance works, for some odd reason. We take every opportunity to crack even simple jokes between phrases, and they all fall away as we struggle to breathe and resist the urge to faint.

While I'm not necessarily kidding, it is disturbing that most of you understand what I

mean, and it does not have to be that way. It is possible to have an easy playing, sweet sounding krumhorn with only a little work and care. The Krumhorn's simple construction means that very little can usually go wrong, but if care had not been taken during construction then most of the problems you might be facing will be simple fixes, but not necessarily fixes you can accomplish at home.

The most common problem I come across in my shop is an instrument not speaking clearly as a result of the reed being misaligned, incorrect length, too thick, or a combination of the three. Learning to adjust the reed properly is essential to proper playability. Across the

vibrating part of the reed is a staple that changes the shape of the opening in the reed. A slight pinch either across its width or length will change the concavity of the aperture through which you blow. Often the reed will move imperceptibly but can change drastically in playability, so experiment slowly, and call me if you have any trouble...



The keywork on Crum horns is often of simple construction, usually bent brass pierced by a simple pin axle. Check to make sure the pads of the upper keys, and lower keys as on a bass krumhorn, are well seated across the tone hole; you might even find that the pad is missing which is a common complaint. The keys will bend flat if played, often reducing the ability to cover the upper tone hole. Take great care in bending back either the pad or finger end, as only slight pressure will return it to its proper placement; any excess pressure and the key could snap. Bring it to someone for servicing if you are worried about doing this yourself.



If there is any one issue that most drastically alters the tone of a crumm horn it is the smoothness of the bore. If the bore had never been polished, the back pressure, caused by the rough surfaces of the wood reduces playability, makes forcing air through the bore difficult, and absolutely destroys tone. Use a finger to feel inside the crumhorn's cap in order to feel the texture. If the cap is rough, there is a good chance the maker did not polish the bore either. This is a problem not considered part of an instrument's warranty. The process is not difficult, but usually only a maker or repair tech with the proper mandrels and bore polishing tools can address the issue properly.

The tone holes are typically cut before the finish is applied and will often leave stains, oils, waxes, wood dust, etc., restricting them. If you see this may be your issue, feel free to attack the problem with a small pipe cleaner, preferably a brush type as opposed to the chenille as they will not leave a fluffy residue in the bore or on the edges of the tone hole.

I have spent many hours learning to improve, correct, and build Crummhorns, or krummhorns, or crumm horns... you pick, and I have come to understand and enjoy their idiosyncrasies. As I stated earlier, if the instrument, with all its problems and mysterious somewhat medieval tone, were not already somehow perfect, it would have evolved easily and quickly to each generation's bias. I offer that it is actually an instrument so perfect and adapted to it's environment that we take the Krumhorn for granted, so much so that we still cannot agree on how to spell it's name... if you hadn't noticed... And if at this point you are still wondering what Anatis means, it's Latin for duck.

My name is John. I am an instrument builder, obsessive recorder player, and a lover of history, and yes also a krummhorn enthusiast (my preferential spelling from both historical and contemporary sources. Krummhorn... just

feels right). 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](tel:772-321-1498). I await your call.

John Orth

Orthwest Studios, LLC
Golden, Colorado

Other Notes



From Ink to Sound: Decoding Musical Manuscripts

Travel through the history of musical notation, learning how to decode medieval music manuscripts, with this free online course. This course looks like a lot of fun, and will give you the opportunity to transcribe ancient manuscripts and listen to recordings of medieval music...what could be better? For more information and online registration, visit <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/from-ink-to-sound>. Class begins November 2nd.

Jon Casbon

The Highland Chamber Orchestra

The Highland Chamber Orchestra continues to play on Saturday mornings at 10 and Monday mornings at nine. We are playing a large selection of music that was published between 1500 and 1800. We do have room in the Monday group. For information, call Bill Conklin at 303-455-0837.

Bill Conklin

Four Winds Recorder Ensemble (Colorado Springs)

It has been a relatively slow summer for our quartet, with members taking time off and fewer rehearsals. We enjoyed playing at the Colorado Springs Salon in June, where 11 local groups prepared pieces and showed off their best for one another. Four Winds played a Palestrina ricercare, selections from the William Boyce Quartet in E minor, and Jon's arrangement of 'Anitra's Dance' from Edvard Grieg's Peer Gynt Suite. We are currently preparing for a September 13th gig at the Colorado Springs Downtown Farmer's Market at the bandshell in Acacia Park. This will be mostly a program of pop music along with a selection of heel-tapping Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, and modern hits. We'll be there from roughly 11 am to 1:30 pm...stop by if you're in the area!

Jon Casbon

Wedding Performance

On July 3 the Renaissance and Ragtime Recorder Ensemble played for the backyard wedding of Sue Peiker's daughter. Many of you know Sue, a longtime member of the Boulder chapter. Although she was otherwise occupied that afternoon (!), the rest of the group (Judy Fritz, John Geohegan, Maryann Miller, Ed Pinfield, Trudy Wayne) played some Renaissance and Baroque music but primarily songs of the early 1900s having to do with love...and "When I'm 64" for the groom's entrance.

Judy Fritz

Fort Collins ARS Chapter

Our monthly gathering for ARS falls on Monday, September 28, at the usual time and place—7:30 PM at the Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church on Taft Hill Road. Do let Jim Martin know if you plan to be there: jfmartin@yahoo.com or 377-4293.

The chapter is finalizing Second Friday hostings for the remainder of the year, with October 9 remaining open.

There are preliminary discussions between the Denver and Ft. Collins chapters about the potential for a collaborative effort between our chapters. General ideas such as co-sponsoring a workshop, and a regional get-together are among the suggestions at this point.

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.

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Denver Chapter ARS

Mail to:

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8936 Miners Drive
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