



Notes

February, 2025

washingtonrecordersociety.org

From the President:

Dear WRS Readers,

We have made it to February! Here is the winter newsletter filled with recorder-related activities and musical contributions to so many different communities. I hope to see many of you at our meetings and upcoming workshops.

Monica

In-person meetings are held at St. Columba's Episcopal Church, 4201 Albemarle St. NW, Washington DC 20016. The closest Metro stop is Tenleytown on the Red Line. Online sessions are held on Zoom. You will receive an invitation and music after registration.

WRS 2024-2025 Schedule

Date	Type	Schedule	Group
Sat, 03/08	In person	10:00-10:30am 10:30am-12:30pm	Meet and greet Play music with David McGown and Adéla Balima
Sat and Sun, 03/15-16	Amherst Spring Break Workshop		St George's Episcopal
Sat, 04/12	In person	10:00-10:30am 10:30am-12:30pm	Meet and Greet Play music with David McGown and Adéla Balima
Mon, 04/21	Online	7:00-7:30pm 7:30-9:00pm	Virtual Happy Hour Session led by Frances Blaker
Sat, 05/10	In person	3:00-5:00pm	Recital
Mon, 05/19	Online	7:00-7:30pm 7:30-9:00pm	Virtual Happy Hour Session led by Anne Timberlake
Sat, 06/14	In person	10:00-10:30am 10:30am-12:30pm	Meet and Greet and Annual Business Meeting Play music with David McGown and Adéla Balima

Holiday Out and About Recorders

On Christmas Eve, the children of **St. Mark's Church on Capitol Hill** performed *The Christmas Story* by Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman. The music was written with four recorder parts requiring soprano, soprano, alto, and bass instruments. While the children had been practicing their songs and speaking parts, the recorder players were not recruited until a couple of weeks before Christmas. Jeff Kempse, director of music at the church, contacted a



WRS board member in early December seeking four people to cover the parts. Gabe Johnson, Rachel Isaacson, Dave Mann, and Judy McGraw agreed to participate. They had played at a Christmas service together in the past. The songs in the pageant were sung by the congregation's children's choir, conducted by Judith Rautenburg. Speaking parts were performed by older children, but many young children also participated, most in costume. The recorder players were joined by some musicians from the congregation: a cellist, a keyboard player, and a teen playing Orff percussion. The full group rehearsed immediately before the service for the first and only time. The performance lasted about a half hour, and was charming.

Here is the link to the service: <https://www.youtube.com/live/HWfHsxHPzt4?si=-CBIK1BTaZPbkhkr>

—Gabe Johnson and Judy McGraw

Monica Boruch was asked to contribute to the Christmas Eve service at **Rockville United Church** by playing a recorder medley of Christmas carols accompanied by the organist and music director Jim Levy. The choir and congregation eventually joined in to sing the carols. The service also included a trumpeter and violinist and ended in everyone singing and playing "Silent Night" by candlelight.

—Monica Boruch

In December, the Ingleside Recorder Ensemble (an SATB quartet) played its third annual carol sing-along at **Ingleside at King Farm** (senior community) in Rockville, Maryland. They used Will Ayton's *Carols for Recorders or Viols* and provided lyrics for two verses of 18 carols. This was followed by a solo bass-played-as-soprano caroling session at their Memory Support Assisted Living. Everyone enjoyed these events and the players' headgear: medieval caps and Santa hats.



—Cathy Roha

WRS members, Mary Anne Espenshade, Eric Schwartz, Anne Erickson, Margie Odle, and Marge Weissberg played two concerts with "The Village Early Music Ensemble" at **Riderwood Senior Living** in Silver Spring. VEME was founded by Marketa Ebert, an alumna of Consort Anon. and WRS member. What started as a recorder quartet now is 20 vocalists and 9 instrumentalists (some of whom are also vocalists). The hour-long program had Christmas and Hanukkah music, both instrumental and vocal. The vocal pieces were in English, Spanish, Hebrew, Latin, French, and German. A first for the public was the debut of a theorbo.

—Mary Anne Espenshade and Eric Schwartz

Where to Hear Early Music

Look for Announcements Online for 2024-2025 Season

Washington Bach Consort <https://bachconsort.org/calendar/>

Folger Consort <https://www.folger.edu/performances-events>

Tempesta di Mare <https://tempestadimare.org/>

Capitol Early Music <https://capitolearlymusic.org/>

Piffaro—The Renaissance Band <https://www.piffaro.org>

Becoming a Better Player

Amherst Early Music Spring Break Workshop

for recorders, voices, viols, and lutes

The Sacred and Profane: Exploring Sacred and Secular Music from the 15th to the 17th Centuries and Beyond

March 15-16, 2025

St. George's Episcopal Church, Arlington VA

The Recorder Program with

Rainer Beckmann, Letitia Berlin, Wendy Powers

Immerse yourself in playing divinely inspired and devilishly profane Renaissance and Baroque music in recorder classes. Explore consort music written by Charpentier and Purcell in 1680, Giovanni Gabrieli's works for 8-10 parts, Willaert's and Dufay's sacred motets and secular songs, Telemann's fantasias and Bach's chorale preludes, and more! Tutti sessions with the lutes, viols, and chorus include Monteverdi's "Ave Maris Stella" from the *Vespers of 1610* and Guerrero's *Duo Seraphim*.

Tuition \$240, Work-Study \$180

Details and Registration: <https://www.amherstearlymusic.org/workshops/spring-break-workshop>

Madeleine Moore Answers *Whence Recorder* Questionnaire

Do you have a musical family? I did not come from a very musical family, but my father played violin in his youth with his cousins.

Did you sing or play other instruments before you took up recorder? When I was about 7 years old, my father decided that I should learn to play the violin. I took lessons for a few years and played violin in the junior high and senior high orchestras. After high school, I went to The George Washington University in DC. At the time, they had no orchestra. I did play some in the NIH Community Orchestra.

When did you start playing the recorder?

My first exposure to the recorder was on a visit to Colonial Williamsburg. As we entered the shop to buy tickets, I heard a lovely sound. After investigating, I found it was a recording of early music being played over the sound system. I was hooked.

Do you have a teacher?

Returning home, I found beginning recorder lessons offered in a Montgomery County Center with a teacher, Kay Jones. I joined and learned to play. Kay formed our group into "The Meadow Lane Consort." We performed in a number of elementary schools that had recorder classes. Over the years, I have played SATB recorders, treble viola de gamba, octave violin, SAT cornemuse, penny whistle, and a few other odd wind instruments. During the time I was a member of the WRS, Kay Jones led the beginning recorder class, Ferd Baer led another class, and there were several other classes. George Payne and his wife were very active in running the society. Carol and Nick Rogentine were members at that time.

Do you have any good stories about meetings, recitals, or other group activities over the years?

A known recorder performer, Shelly Gruskin, usually came once a year for a workshop all day Saturday, and some on Sunday. One Sunday, he gave a great workshop on tuning and caring for our double reeds---crumhorns, etc. There was another player, Wes Olar, who organized some of the summer get-togethers, usually a picnic followed by playing sessions. These sessions were primarily for those who wanted to try something on some instrument that they felt not good enough to play at the final recorder concert. I had made 2 gemshorns from real horns---a soprano and an alto. A friend and I performed on them.

Do you play with a group?

Through the years, I have played in a number of groups. I have also enjoyed going to the Mountain Collegium workshop for a week in Cullowhee, NC at Western Carolina University. This workshop offers numerous classes and playing sessions in which they offer both "early and folk." For some time now, I have been a member of the New Dawn Consort led by Carolyn Lincoln. I also attend a Friday Zoom session with a group in Virginia led by Neale Ainsfield.

Is there a performer—solo or group—that has inspired you throughout your recorder-playing life? I am particularly fond of Medieval, Renaissance and early Baroque music. Over the years, I have enjoyed hearing this kind of music performed by some local groups as well as by Scott Reiss and Tina Chancey. I enjoy any music played by these two performers and others like them when they perform in this area.

If you were a castaway on a desert island, which one of your recorders would you like to have with you? If I were to pick a recorder to play on a desert island, it would be the soprano.

All About Consort Anon.

A local recorder ensemble together for 45 years? Yes, indeed--Consort Anon. This small recorder group began in 1980, and some original members continue to play with them today. Their name is short for their favorite composer, Anonymous, but it is also a play on words. Pronounced one way, it is **Con**sort (an ensemble of musicians) Anon (short for Anonymous), but, with the emphasis on the second syllable, it becomes **Con**sort, or to associate with haste.

Their first gig was at the Oakland Mills Village Festival in Columbia, MD in May of 1980. They sent a cassette tape of that performance to the then 4-year-old Maryland Renaissance Faire in Crownsville, Maryland. Much to their surprise and delight, they were hired. For decades, they have played there annually. They have also played at weddings, schools, holiday performances, local Shakespeare productions, the National Archives when the Magna Carta was displayed, and for two White House holiday celebrations.

While they play primarily Medieval, Renaissance and early Baroque, they also have played early American, arranged jazz, and Victorian music repertoire. They produced two recordings, one cassette and one CD, in the 1990's. Past and present WRS and ARS members include: two members who have been with Consort Anon. since its beginning: Mary Anne Espenshade and Eric Schwartz. Other members were Carolyn Thompson, Chuck Norris, Leo Showalter, David McGown, Marketa Ebert, and Kevin Gilson, who is now the President of the Ann Arbor Recorder Society. Current members are Helen-Jean Talbott, Mary Anne Espenshade, Eric Schwartz, Talia Chicherio, Rachel Isaacson, and Monica Boruch.

Congratulations to this extraordinary ensemble for their wide musical contributions and longevity!

American Recorder Society

WRS is a chapter of the American Recorder Society. ARS provides many resources for all recorder players, including its own YouTube channel, which has many free videos and information. The ARS site also has free music and play-alongs. The web site address is <https://americanrecorder.org/>. The initial membership fee is \$25, with an annual charge of \$55 thereafter, for access to many resources. Consider joining.

Website

The WRS website, <https://www.washingtonrecordersociety.org/>, has lots of useful information. The main page provides an introduction to the organization and the latest news. The footer has links to the meeting schedule and newsletters. The menu and the buttons both take you to more detailed information such as links to handy websites. Check out the Members Only section for a directory of members and the Roger Morris Collection of recorder music. Email carolyn.lincoln@verizon.net, if you need a password for the Members Only section.

OBITUARY

Susan Louise Morrisson—1948-2024

Sue, the loving wife of Robert (Bob) Morrisson for 49 years, passed away on Christmas day 2024. She is survived by her husband, their sons Matthew and Michael, and her sister Janet Tunney.

Sue loved animals, trains, airplanes, cooking, and playing music. She had one of the first in-home word processing services in the area, where she helped many post-graduate students to complete their theses and dissertations. She worked with several authors preparing books for publishing. She especially loved creating flyers and newsletters, adding her artistic touch to them.

She was the first paying passenger on the Washington, DC Metro on March 29, 1975, and the first lady streetcar operator at the National Capital Trolley Museum in Silver Spring, Maryland.. Bob and Sue operated streetcars there for more than 20 years.

Sue had a passion for playing recorders and flutes, and for Baroque and Renaissance music. She was a member of the Palisades Players and played with her church praise band. As a WRS member, she helped find a new home for the regular meetings at the Church of the Atonement in Silver Spring. She also worked on several recording projects.

On Saturday, January 25, a memorial service was held at her church.

Classified Advertising

The Classified Advertising Section can help you with your musical projects.

You can:

- Form a consort and/or seek additional players
- Seek recommendations for music for an occasion or a topic
- Sell or give away music or an instrument
- Advertise an upcoming concert
- Seek recommendations on where to purchase a recorder or related item
- Pass along items of interest to recorder players

To submit an ad, contact Marge Hogarty at margehogarty@verizon.net

WRS In-Person Meetings—Revised COVID Policy Modified 11/20/22

WRS leadership will stay informed and cautious about COVID-19 risks. We will make every effort to keep the membership updated about COVID-related changes in our schedule or plans. The WRS Board recommends that members follow current CDC guidelines for vaccination. In addition, participants in WRS in-person meetings must:

- Be free of COVID-19 symptoms.
- Have no recent exposure to individuals known to be infected with COVID-19
- Play only their own instruments during sessions.

Board of Directors

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Judy McGraw
Gabe Johnson
Carolyn Lincoln
Marge Hogarty
Adéla Balima
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