



# NEWSLETTER

of

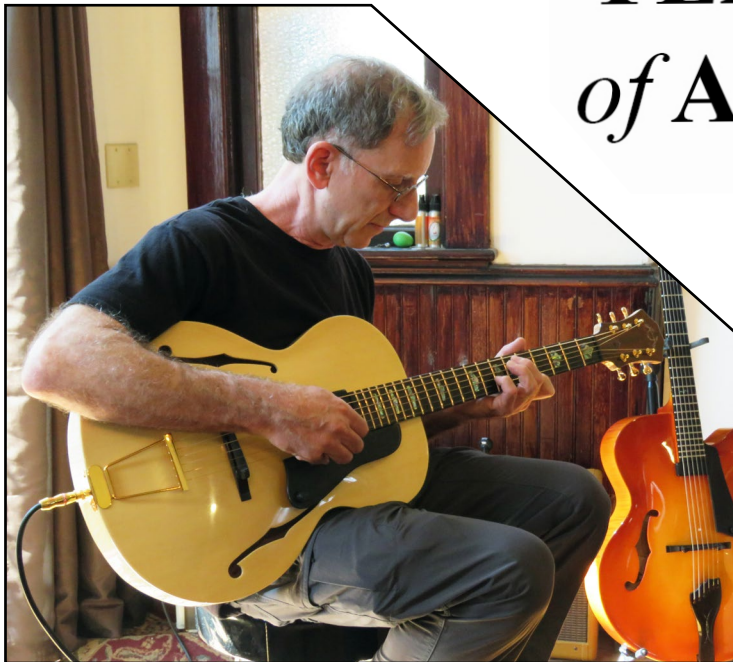
## *The American Musical Instrument Society*

VOLUME 53, No. 2

SUMMER 2024



# 50 YEARS of AMIS



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## NEWSLETTER of the

American Musical Instrument Society

ISSN 2374-362X

**Sarah Deters, Editor**

**Núria Bonet, Assistant Editor**

**Lisa Beebe, Reviews Editor**

The Newsletter is published two times per year for members of the American Musical Instrument Society (AMIS). News items, photographs, and short articles or announcements are invited, as well as any other information of interest to AMIS members.

Contributions to the Newsletter and correspondence concerning its content should be sent to:

[amisnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:amisnewsletter@gmail.com)

Address changes, dues payments, requests for back issues of AMIS publications, and requests for information on membership should be sent to:

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## A Message from the Editor


Dear colleagues,

It is a great pleasure to present this 50th anniversary edition of the *Newsletter of the American Musical Instrument Society*. I hope you enjoy discovering the history of our newsletter, reading the wonderful memories sent in by our members, and browsing through the many images that have been collected over the last five decades. Putting this issue together has been challenging, not because of the lack of content, but because of the opposite! There is a wealth of images that have been meticulously scanned and saved over the years and deciding what to include in this issue was a fun struggle. I tried to include images from a variety of times and places and I hope this inspires you to take your own trip down memory lane, or to visit the digital NAMIS archive available on our website.

My sincere gratitude goes out to all those who sent in articles, memories, and reminiscences. Your contributions are what makes this edition so personal and touching. A running theme throughout the submissions is the welcoming nature of AMIS and the importance this organization has had on the lives of its members. From lifelong friendships, professional opportunities, to the sparks of romance, AMIS has had a significant impact on so many. It is a tribute to the nature of this society that in its history, its members can continue to look back fondly over their experiences and to look forward to coming back year after year.

Over the years Aurelia Hartenberger and Susan Thompson have tirelessly taken photographs during our annual meetings and I have liberally included their images throughout this edition. Thank you both for sharing your photographic talents with the society. I would also like to thank Jim Kopp for his help in putting this issue together—I really could not have done it without him. Additionally, my thanks go to all the previous editors of *NAMIS*. We all know the struggle of putting out the newsletter, but without your tenacity and perseverance, we would not be celebrating our 50th anniversary this year.

As always, we welcome short submissions (maximum 500 words), as well as short articles (maximum 2,500 words). Email all submissions and suggestions to: [amisnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:amisnewsletter@gmail.com)

 Sarah Deters  
Editor



# BIRTH AND PROGRESS OF THE AMIS NEWSLETTER

## James Kopp

During fifty-three years of existence, the American Musical Instrument Society has published a newsletter, although not always as *Newsletter of the American Musical Instrument Society*. The first three newsletters appeared under different titles while the society's name was debated, as Carolyn Bryant explained in the society's Journal in 2007.

An early name discussed for the new organization was The Historical Musical Instrument Society. But through an error, the first newsletter issue (November 1971) omitted the word "instrument" (cruel irony!) and was called *Newsletter of the Historical Musical Society*. Despite the historical focus of the young society's inaugural name, the one photo in the first issue showed a "pad-less flute" experimentally made by Selmer (Elkhart) "some years ago."

## Newsletter Of The Historical Musical Society

After the second issue's nameplate simply and correctly inserted *Instrument*, the third issue (June 1972) finally reflected the current name of the society, as revised in a meeting of April 1972.

Until June 1976, the newsletter's page size was 7 x 10 inches, while the length varied between four and eight pages. Alongside perennial society business (elections, conferences, dues, etc.), books of interest were noted or reviewed, readers contributed comments or queries, and expository articles of substance appeared. In early years, a column of classified advertisements frequently offered instruments for sale or trade, in effect a semi-public channel for interested collectors.

The newsletter (*NAMIS*) settled into a pattern of three issues per year. During the paleo-digital years 2003 to 2007, a supplemental fourth issue offered a roundup listing of English-language articles concerning musical instruments published during the preced-



ing two years. It was compiled from more than seventy journals and databases by the tireless Christine Wondolowski Gerstein.

During more than a dozen redesigns over the decades, a second color appeared in 2006, gracing the nameplate and AMIS logotype. To minimize expenses, printing in only two colors continued, even as the black-and-white photographs included had begun life in digital full color. Beginning in 2009, the newsletter appeared twice a year, except for 2018, when three issues appeared.

Distribution of the newsletter on paper gave way to electronic publication and full color in 2013. With the emergent ubiquity of email, the AMIS List, and social media, the content of the newsletter contained fewer and fewer ephemera, such as conference registration forms, dues notices, and classified ads.

The newsletter does not edit itself, it bears mentioning. The following painstaking editors of *NAMIS* deserve our enduring thanks:

James M. Swain (1971–73)  
William J. Maynard (1973–76)  
André P. Larson (1976–94)  
Harrison Powley (1994–99)  
William E. Hettrick (1999–2003)  
Barbara Gable (2003–06)  
Dwight Newton (2007–09)  
Kelly White (2010–12)  
Edmond Johnson (2013–17)  
Emily Peppers (assistant, 2016–18)  
Sarah Deters (2018–present)  
Núria Bonet (assistant, 2019–present)

Beginning in 2004, book review editors were named. They often doubled as review editors for the Journal:

Janet K. Page (2004–06)  
James B. Kopp (2007–10)  
Albert R. Rice (2011–23)  
Lisa Beebe (2024–present)

Beyond a superior knowledge of substance and style, our editors' attributes have always included a heroic persistence in extracting contributions from overworked or forgetful members. The handsome and invaluable record of society business is now visible in our digital newsletter archive: <https://www.amis.org/newsletter-archive>. (Online photos are reproduced in full color when available, beginning in issues of 2003.)

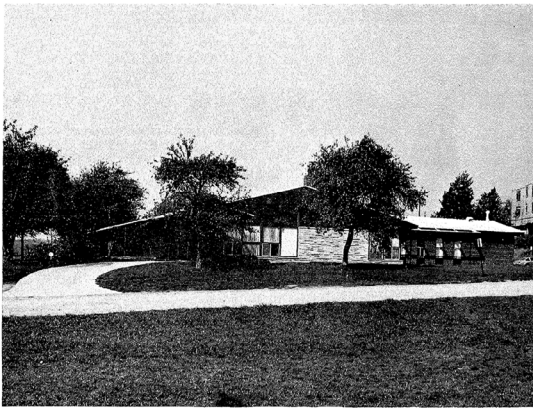
# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PAST

**NAMIS finds its footing and its style with articles highlighting upcoming events, research, and a very affordable membership fee.**

## NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN MUSICAL INSTRUMENT SOCIETY

Vol. 3, No. 1

March, 1974



OUR COVER depicts the Stearns Building, which is the new home of the Stearns Collection of Musical Instruments at the University of Michigan. Located at Baits Drive and Broadway on the North Campus of the University, this building also provides faculty office space and a medium sized concert hall.  
(Continued on page 2)



JAVANESE GAMELAN TO APPEAR AT AMIS MEETING

Of particular interest in recent years at the University of Michigan is the growth of activity in the area of ethnomusicology under the direction of Professor William Malm. He has been almost single-handedly concerned not only with providing intensive classroom studies of nonwestern music, but also with providing opportunities for performance of this music by the Gamelan and the Javanese Music Study Group.

### AMIS DUES REMINDER

Treasurer Linda Tauber has asked us to remind members that dues for 1974 are due. Five dollars (\$5.00) should be sent to Ms. Tauber at 807



## NEWSLETTER

Of The

## American Musical Instrument Society

Vol. XIII, No. 2

June 1984



The musical instrument collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, were moved in May 1982 from deplorable conditions in the basement of the building to this modern study-storage gallery near the Huntington Avenue entrance.

### INSTRUMENTS AT BOSTON MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS ENJOY NEW FACILITIES

The musical instruments at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, including the Leslie Lindsey Mason Collection, the Edwin M. Rain Collection, the Rowland-Searles Collection, and the Stuart-Coolidge Collection, are enjoying the new study-storage facilities which have been their home since May 1982. According to D. Samuel Quigley,

Curatorial Assistant, the gallery shown above in a photo taken in August 1982 remains basically the same today, except that there now are three-inch platforms under the keyboard instruments, covered with the same carpet as is the floor, and plexiglass covers for the keywells.

There are 364 instruments on view in the gallery, organized by families and types, then by date, geographic origin, and voice, according to Barbara Lambert, Keeper of Musical Instruments, writing in the introduction to the Checklist of Instruments on Exhibition

published in April 1983 (and available from the Museum for \$3.00). Visitors must refer to the checklist for details about the instruments in the display cases and on the walls; only the instruments on the gallery floor are provided with labels.

The foundation of the Museum's collections in the Leslie Lindsey Mason Collection of approximately 800 instruments, two-thirds of them Western and one-third non-Western. Mr. and Mrs. William Lindsey purchased the major portion of the collection as

(Continued on p. 2)



# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PAST

As the society grows, younger scholars are supported with the Gribbon Award and AMIS makes its mark as an international organization.

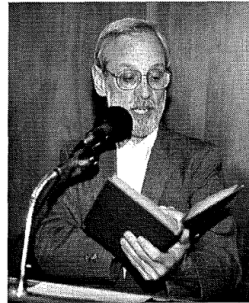
## HORNIMAN MUSEUM OPENS NEW GALLERY IN LONDON



Photo by Neale Atkinson  
One of the many school children who visit the Horniman Museum in London explores the Museum's interactive video about the hand horn.

## A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR . . .

The **AMIS Journal** publishes scholarly articles about the history, design and use of instruments in all cultures and from all periods. The **AMIS Newsletter**, on the other hand, is designed specifically to be a vehicle for communication between all AMIS members, with or without scholarly pretensions. All AMIS members are invited to submit materials for publication, including information about their personal activities dealing with musical instruments. Black and white photos of particularly interesting instruments are also invited.



Auctioneer Laurence describes a "priceless" organological text he is about to auction to the highest "bidder."

## Membership Categories

Regular	\$35
Regular (non-U.S.)	\$40
Student	\$20
Student (non-U.S.)	\$25
Spouse	\$5



## NEWSLETTER

Of The

## American Musical Instrument Society

Vol. XXIII, No. 1

February 1994



Photo by Simon Spoor  
Among the 58 Conn instruments and related objects that will be on exhibit at the Midwest Museum of American Art, when AMIS members meet in Elkhart, Indiana, May 18-22, are a silver-plated (satin finish) soprano saxophone in B-flat, ca. 1929, acquired by the Shrine to Music Museum in Vermillion in 1993 from the collection of John Powers, Carbonade, Colorado; a silver-plated cornet in E-flat, ca. 1860, from the Shrine to Music Museum (Arne R. Larson Collection, 1979); a bust of C. G. Conn, donated to the Shrine to Music Museum by the Conn family in 1991; a gold-plated trombone, engraved over its entire surface by J. H. Gardner in 1888, one of several instruments on loan for the exhibition from the Interlochen Arts Academy, and a silver-plated tenor saxophone, acquired by the Shrine to Music Museum in memory of Grace L. Beede in 1991, engraved over its entire surface by Julius Stenberg about 1916.

### AMIS MEETS IN ELKHART, INDIANA, MAY 18-22

AMIS members will enjoy a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to view more than fifty of the most superb instruments produced by the C. G. Conn Company of Elkhart, Indiana—shown together for the first time, from the collections of the Shrine to Music Museum, the Interlochen Arts Academy, the Metropolitan Museum of

Art, and a private collector—when they travel to Elkhart for the 29th annual international meetings, May 18-22.

Many of the instruments, almost all of them either gold or silver plated, were lavishly engraved by such masters of the art as J. H. Gardner and Julius Stenberg.

Organized, designed, and installed by The Shrine to Music Museum in Vermillion, Elkhart's Brass Roots: An Exhibition in Honor of the 100th Anniversary of C. G.

Conn's Birth opened in Vermillion on February 4, where it runs through May 8. It opens at the Midwestern Museum of American Art in Elkhart on May 13, where it will remain until July 31. Funding was provided by the City of Elkhart and the NBD Bank. The exhibition catalog was written by Margaret Banks, who curated the exhibition. The installation was a team effort, led by John Koster, conservation, Joseph R. Johnson, case and mount construction. (Continued on p. 2)



Photo by John Koster  
Jeannine Lambrechts-Douillez, recipient of the 1993 Curt Sachs Award, speaks to AMIS members following the banquet in Nashville on May 15.

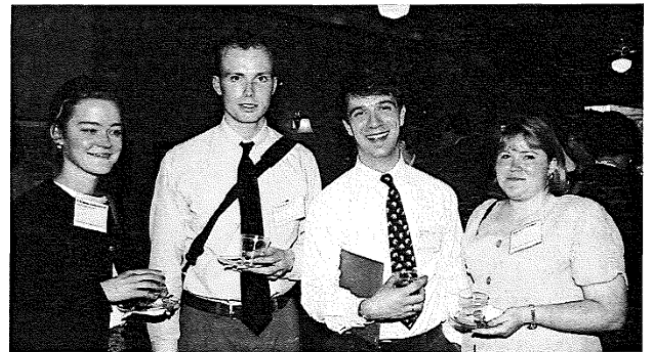


Photo courtesy of Roger Widder  
Gribbon Award recipients. Left to Right: Christina Linsenmeyer, Christopher Borg, Phillip T. Young III, and Susan Cleveland.

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PAST

NAMIS readers welcomed the advent of color, even as black ink continued as a workhorse of storytelling.



Tromba in D, late 19th cent. Italy

**AMIS Needs You!**

- Become a Member
- Recruit a New Member
- Renew an Existing Membership
- Join a Committee
- Write an Article
- Do Something

Call (781) 397-8870 for an application or write: American Musical Instrument Society  
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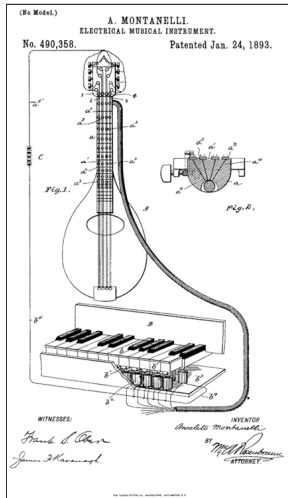


Fig. 1. Patent 490,358 granted to Anacleto Montanelli for a hybrid of a piano and plucked string instrument.

**Preview of Coming Attractions**  
The Guitar Workshop at the National Music Museum - see it in May 2006 at the AMIS Conference



Audio mixers and processors in a studio at the Audities Foundation.

**AMIS**  
NEWSLETTER  
of the  
American Musical Instrument Society

Volume 33, No. 1 Spring 2004

**American Musical Instrument Society, 33rd Annual Conference  
Winston-Salem, May 19-22, 2004**

The 33rd annual conference of the American Musical Instrument Society will take place May 19-22, 2004, in Winston-Salem, NC. Hosts for the event are Old Salem Inc., Wake Forest University Department of Music, and Duke University Department of Music, with assistance from the Salem College School of Music and the Moravian Music Foundation.

The conference commemorates the life and career of American organ builder David Tannenberg (1728-1804) on the 200th anniversary of his death. The organ Tannenberg built for Home Moravian Church in 1800, recently restored by the firm of Taylor and Boody, Staunton, VA, is a central feature of the conference.

Conference activities May 19-21 will be held in the historic restored village of Old Salem, located near downtown Winston-Salem. The conference begins on Wednesday afternoon, May 19, with a tour of early instruments in historic Old Salem and a visit to the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts.



The newly restored Tannenberg organ (Photo courtesy of Paula Locklair, Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts)

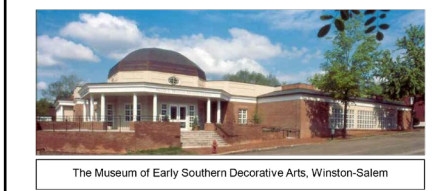
Formal paper sessions will be held Thursday morning, May 20, in the Old Salem Visitor Center Auditorium, and Thursday afternoon through Friday afternoon, May 20-21, in the nearby Auditorium of the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts. Items for our traditional silent auction will be on view Thursday and Friday in the latter venue.

Organist Kimberly Marshall will present a recital on the restored Tannenberg organ on Friday evening, May 21. The conference program will be posted on the AMIS website and is included in this Newsletter, as is a separate registration form and mailing envelope.

On Saturday, May 22, the attendees travel to Durham, NC, to view instrument collections at Duke University (Eddy Collection) and Vince Simonetti's Tuba Exchange. Maria Isabella Rose will present a recital Saturday afternoon on a restored 1805 Clementi piano from the

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The Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem


**AMIS-HKSNA JOINT CONFERENCE**  
30 MAY - 1 JUNE 2013  
COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG, WILLIAMSBURG VIRGINIA



Tomoko Sugawara demonstrates the ancient angular harp.

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PAST

50 years on and NAMIS is still going strong with news, announcements, and reviews—now available digitally.



## NEWSLETTER

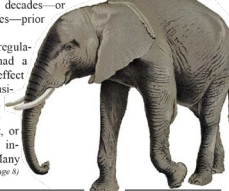
of  
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Volume 43, No. 2  
Fall 2014

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### POLICIES INTENDED TO PROTECT ELEPHANTS MAY INADVERTENTLY ENDANGER MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

On February 11, 2014, United States Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell announced a new and unprecedented federal ban on the commercial trade of African elephant ivory, enacted in answer to an executive order related to wildlife trafficking issued by President Barack Obama the previous July. In announcing the ban, Jewell cited the “record high demand for wildlife products that is having a devastating impact, with species like elephants and rhinos facing the risk of significant decline or even extinction.” The Department of the Interior has estimated that as many as 35,000 elephants were killed by poachers in 2012, with the U.S. believed to be second-largest market for illegal wildlife products after China.



While the importation of elephant ivory has been regulated in the U.S. since the late 1970s, the new ban makes it significantly more difficult to transport items that contain even a small amount of ivory into the country, even when the ivory is an integral part of objects that were created decades—or even centuries—prior to the ban.

The new regulations have had a significant effect on both musicians and others who study, collect, or sell musical instruments. Many

*(continued on page 3)*

#### AMIS Members Meet in Huron, Cleveland, and Oberlin

From May 28-31, 2014, a group of AMIS members gathered in northern Ohio to share research, see and hear instruments, and enjoy each other's company. The forty-third annual meeting of the Society was held at the Sawmill Creek Resort in Huron, Ohio, with excursions to both Cleveland and Oberlin. The Local Arrangements Committee consisted of Joanne Kopp (chair) and Barbara Lambert, while the Program Committee was staffed by

Christina Linsenmeyer (chair), Robert Green, and Matthew Hill.

The conference kicked off on the evening of Wednesday, May 28, with an opening reception held alongside a landscaped creek, after which the members of the Society's Board of Governors held their annual meeting. The following morning, the formal portion of the conference began with remarks from AMIS President Albert Rice welcoming participants, followed by a presentation by Jim Henke, the former Vice President for Exhibitions and Curatorial Affairs at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. Henke gave an overview of the founding of the Hall and discussed the challenges involved in collecting and subsequently curating its collections.

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The late 17th-century guitar pictured above, attributed to Giacomo Ertel, is made of spruce with elaborate decorations in a variety of materials, including ivory, bone, ebony, fruitwood, and mother-of-pearl, all of which are materials that are either restricted by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) or easily mistaken for materials that are. The guitar is in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum (Acquisition no. 1984.225) and the image is used in accordance with the OASC Initiative ([www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org)). The image of the elephant is taken from a 1901 chromolithograph by Pierre Jacques Smit.

AMIS members pose on the grand staircase of USD's Muenster University Center during the Society's 45th Annual Meeting (Photo courtesy of the University of South Dakota)

### MEMBER NEWS

Jane Schatkin Hettrick's recent publications include the articles: "Problems in Church Music in Late Eighteenth-Century Vienna and Their Relevance for Catholic Church Musicians Today," in *Sacred Music*, winter 2014; "In the Beginning Was the Word: The Subversion of the Christian Message" (review feature of Malcolm C. Doubles, *The Seduction of the Church* and Martin Mosebach, *The Heresy of Formlessness: The Roman Liturgy and its Enemy*), in *The American Organist*, Oct. 2013; book chapter "The Holy Spirit and Music" in *Holy Spirit: Unfinished Agenda*, ed. Johnson T. K. Kim (Singapore: Genesis Books and Word N Works, 2015); and the paper, "A Lutheran Contribution towards Understanding Mozart" presented at the conference "Luther and the Classics" (Concordia Theological Seminary, Oct. 2014).

## Celebrating Sax at the Metropolitan Museum of Art

Above: The Metropolitan Museum of Art's special exhibition of instruments made by the Sax family, seen with curator E. Bradley Strauchen-Scherer.

Left: Cynthia Hoover reads these remarks at the annual banquet. Right: Susan Thompson presents Hoover with the award certificate. (Photos: A. Hartenberger)

## AMIS Newsletter Digitization Project Complete

Above: John Brombaugh op. 25 meantone organ (1981) in Oberlin College's Fairchild Chapel (Photo courtesy of Flickr user La Sequencia)

NAMIS - VOLUME 53/2 2024

7

# PLAYING

A selection of musical





# AROUND

treats from annual meetings



As a member of AMIS for most of the Society's existence I have accumulated a host of memories of AMIS collegiality, not least through participating in many of the annual meetings (from Boston 1985). Each has had its own character, but all have achieved a good mix of airing research findings and striking up friendships with kindred spirits. I have, I hope, repaid some of my debt to AMIS by taking the lead in the organisation of the two meetings held in the United Kingdom (in 2003 and 2017), and I had the privilege of serving on the Board of Governors from 2010 to 2013 as the first international appointee. I appreciate that without even leaving home I can learn from the scholarship of the Journal and keep up-to-date with AMIS-L and the Newsletter. As President of the Galpin Society I congratulate the sister Society on 50 years of achievement, and wish AMIS all success in the coming decades.

**Arnold Myers  
Edinburgh, UK**

Finding out that AMIS existed, when I was around 25 years old, was one of the most gratifying experiences at the beginning of my career as a conservator and organologist. At that time, I began to work on research and conservation projects of musical instruments in Mexico City and I needed to share my experience with colleagues who were in my field, as well as to learn about their work and particular challenges. Being a recipient of the Gribbon Award allowed me to attend my first meeting and to exchange ideas with a group of prominent musicologists, luthiers, and organologist. Through AMIS I began to learn about the enormous possibilities that exist in the study of musical instruments; this motivated me to delve deeper into my own projects and to be more critical of theoretical decisions about the complex tasks involved in preserving musical instruments. Over time, AMIS gave me great friendships and colleagues. I am very happy that this unique Society celebrates its first 50 years and that it continues to be a friendly, professional, and inclusive place for people from all over the world and at any stage of their professional life.

¡Feliz aniversario, AMIS!  
**Jimena Palacio Uribe  
Mexico City, MX**

Although the name of our organisation includes “American,” the membership of AMIS is a global affair. Here are some reminiscences from a few of our international members.

AMIS meetings had a strong influence on my life as a researcher. At these conferences I met scholars and collectors not only with the same field of interests but also with an inspiring enthusiasm for musical instruments who are always willing to share their knowledge. So, I always got a week full of interesting talks about a wide choice of topics, as well as conversations outside the agenda. AMIS meetings are also a place to discuss research hypotheses with colleagues and friends. Moreover, my plans to apply for a fellowship at the Metropolitan Museum of Art were certainly influenced by colleagues I met at AMIS, what a fruitful international exchange!

**Heike Fricke**  
**Berlin, Germany**

I have attended every AMIS meeting since 2015 in Boston, MA, when I was a fresh-faced PhD student at the start of my organology journey. Every meeting has been special in its own way but the 2016 meeting in Vermillion, SD, stands out because it introduced me to many new experiences. One of the papers introduced me to the suona, a Chinese shawm which grabbed my attention simply because it resembled the instrument I was studying, the Catalan tenora. This discovery led me down a rabbit hole which resulted in a field trip to China and Hong Kong in 2018, various publications, and a regular column in a Catalan music magazine. However, AMIS meetings are also much more than the papers. That year, one of the conference dinners was held at the Vermillion Eagles Club where I enjoyed bison meat and mac and cheese. While the delegates scarpered slowly at the end of the polka band's set, Lidia Chang and I decided to stay in the main lounge and enjoy a Friday night with a difference. In Vermillion I was introduced to soft-tip darts, country music karaoke, the suona, and biscuits and gravy, and became part of the organology family.

**Núria Bonet**  
**Plymouth, UK**

# AUCTIONS AND AMIS

## Carolyn Bryant traces the history of this annual tradition

The long history of AMIS auctions, for decades an annual attraction, has roots in the predicaments of many AMIS members during the early, pre-digital era: many were collectors of musical instruments, but eBay and other online auctions lay in the future. In 1988, a Show and Sell Subcommittee was part of the planning for the annual meeting, which would take place at the Kenneth G. Fiske Museum in Claremont, California. Board minutes from March 1988 reported success in obtaining “material” for an “entertainment” auction to follow the closing banquet. The June *Newsletter* reported that “Vice-President Libin served as auctioneer for some musical delectables donated by the membership. A total of \$2,118 was contributed by those present.” Proceeds went toward a high-income bond fund expected to yield “in excess of \$200,” to be used to fund travel fellowships for students to attend future meetings.



*Laury Libin as auctioneer during the 1988 meeting.*

The program for the 1989 New York City meeting listed the Saturday banquet as being “followed by the Annual Auction, Gene Bruck, presiding.” A picture in the June 1989 *Newsletter* shows members studying a silent auction exhibition in place during that meeting. Oversight of the proceeds shifted to the Scholarship and Grant Committee, and in 1990 the fund was named The William E. Gribbon Memorial Scholarship Fund, in honor of his kindness and helpfulness to students.

In 1991, the Bethlehem program concluded with the customary banquet and awarding of several prizes, followed by the auction, with Libin presiding. In 1992, a silent auction was open during the mornings of Wednesday through Saturday. During the Saturday evening cocktail party, the successful bidders in the si-

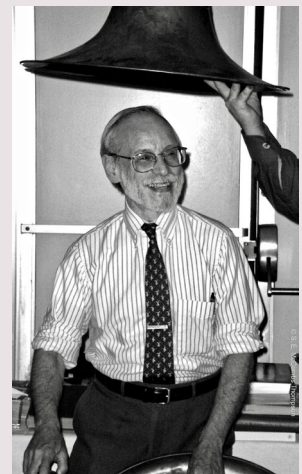
lent auction were announced, and the banquet ended with “AMIS Live Auction, Laurence Libin, Auctioneer.”

Holding dual auctions, with Libin conducting the live auction, became the norm for most years through 2004. During the joint meeting with the Galpin Society in 2003, Libin took the live auction on the road, to Edinburgh, where many old-world colleagues joined in the spirited bidding, amused all the while by a hectoring auctioneer.

Probably because fewer items were being donated, the silent auction eventually ceased, and live auctions were the rule from 2006 through 2011. During these lively, not to say raucous, events, auctioneer Libin encouraged and sometimes even ordered various members to bid on items, some of which were of dubious value. The auctions could only be as good as the items donated to be sold, and as more and more online searching, buying, and selling took place, the AMIS auctions became less effective as fundraisers.

For the New York City meeting of 2012, however, the silent auction was revived, and the BoG minutes noted that “due to variables beyond AMIS’ control, there is no live auction this year.” (Logistics were always a consideration, especially in cities where parking was scarce, and auctions were sometimes viewed as raffles, impermissible in some municipalities or institutions.) This evidently marked the end of the live auction. Subsequent programs show the banquet as followed by other activities, such as “a special musical treat” in 2014, or in 2016 an “AMIS Story Hour” (at which, if memory serves, only a few brief stories were told).

But for the 2017 Edinburgh meeting, attendees were encouraged to bring items for a silent book auction to Reid Concert Hall. A silent auction was also held at the 2018 Bethlehem/Nazareth meeting. As previously, these were billed as fundraisers for the AMIS William E. Gribbon Student Travel Award. After the unsettling challenges of Covid, no auctions have been held since 2018.



*Some interesting selling techniques as Laury auctions off a sousaphone at the 2004 meeting.*

# AN AMIS MEMORY

## Darcy Kuronen

I've had the pleasure and privilege of attending over thirty annual meetings of AMIS and cannot overstate how useful they have been in terms of learning new things about musical instruments and networking with colleagues. I would have never guessed that today I would still be in touch with some of the AMIS members over forty years later.

My very first AMIS meeting, in 1983, took place at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan, organized by Robert Eliason, who was then curator of the museum's instrument collection. I had just begun graduate studies at the University of South Dakota, for a Master of Music degree with a concentration in the history of musical instruments, a course of study administered by the National Music Museum, then called the Shrine to Music Museum. With the museum's director, Dr. André P. Larson, I drove over 800 miles from Vermillion, SD, to Dearborn in his light blue Ford Pinto, accompanied by Dr. Margaret Downie Banks, a curator at the NMM. The last stretch of driving into Dearborn was a bit harrowing, as we were on a two-lane road in heavy rain. (The less said about André's driving, the better.) During the long drive across Iowa, Illinois, and Michigan, André filled me in a bit about some of the people I was going to meet at the conference, which was very useful. But here too, perhaps the less said, the better.

Upon arrival, André had to attend the AMIS board meeting, so I was left to explore the Henry Ford Museum on my own. It was eye-opening to see the vast building housing so much technological history: automobiles, of course, but also locomotives, airplanes, and a huge, still-functioning steam engine. And yes, some important musical instruments as well; they are sadly less evident in the Museum's displays nowadays. At the Education Center, I encountered my first two AMIS friends, Laurence Libin and William Hettrick. Their suits, wire-rimmed glasses, well-trimmed beards, and Bill's trademark bowtie created an urbane and scholarly demeanor. Their disparity in height created a sort of "Mutt and Jeff" pairing: Bill's height plus his ever-present fedora, Laury temporarily minus his shoes, which were wet from the rainstorm. I got the vague sense that the people I'd be meeting in the field of organology might be a bit "different" from regular folks, and I've embraced my own differentness. André and I stayed the night at Bob Eliason's house, and with that I met yet another life-long friend and colleague. Bob sported a beard but no mustache, making him look like Abraham Lincoln, something I think he knew and enjoyed.

At the time I was gaining interest in the history of the flute and so I was eager to attend three back-to-back talks about flutes. I staggered away from that session a bit off balance; I had a hard time following all of the terminology

about key systems, bore analysis, and embouchures. John W. Coltman's acoustical discussion made me wonder if I was in a bit over my head. But in informal chats between sessions, the other two flute presenters, David Shorey and Peter H. Bloom, talked me off my ledge.

Another memorable talk was given by Beverly Ervine about Francis Hopkinson Smith's Grand Harmonicon (musical glasses made in the 1830s and '40s). This was quite a new topic to me, made memorable by Bob Eliason's brief musical demonstration of a set of musical glasses from the museum's collection.

Without a doubt, the highlight for me was the Saturday evening banquet, followed by some truly fun and participatory entertainment. Henry Ford, founder of this museum about nineteenth-century American history, was especially keen on contradancing. The ballroom he had built on the museum's grounds is rumored to have a "spring-loaded" dance floor. After the banquet, many of us took to this dance floor with musical accompaniment from Glen Morningstar and the Ruffwater String Band, which is still in existence. As I recall, this consisted of a couple of fiddles, a double bass, a hammered dulcimer, and possibly a guitar. Morningstar himself called out the steps for each dance, and some of us relived our grade-school struggles of learning to square dance. I found this social interaction a wonderful way to end the meeting, dispelling the somewhat academic atmosphere that can creep into a conference like this. When I organized the AMIS meetings in Boston in 2002 and 2015, I was keen to include evenings with dancing, from the Renaissance period the first time and a traditional Scotch-Irish céilidh at the latter meeting.

This first encounter with AMIS and its members served me well when I began work a few years later with the musical instrument collection at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and for many years afterwards. The engaging experiences in Dearborn, the things I learned about instruments, and the great people I met made it almost tolerable to ride back to Vermillion in that little blue Pinto.



*Ceilidh dancing at the 2015 Boston meeting.*

# FRUITION OUT OF FRUSTRATION

## William Hettrick shares a benefit from the sometimes frustrating role of being the newsletter editor



*Hettrick presenting at the annual meeting in Bethlehem, PA in 2018.*

My AMIS presidency concluded during the annual meeting at Vassar College in June 1999, when, in effect, Harrison Powley and I switched jobs: he became president and I took on the editorship of the Society's newsletter. In those days this publication appeared three times annually in issues identified with specific months (February, June, and October), a procedure perhaps designed to keep editors on schedule. I changed the designations to the less restrictive Winter, Summer, and Fall.

A practical problem I encountered early in my five-year editorship was that my attempts to encourage members to submit reports of their activities to the newsletter were not always successful. Consequently, to produce a suitable amount of content, I had to resort to searching for appropriate "filler" material. In the course of my own musicological research at the time, I had already taken advantage of the resources of the New York Public Library, Performing Arts Division, at Lincoln Center. Working there one day (actually at the temporary location in a warehouse at midtown on the west side), I came upon a treasure that would prove most valuable to my professional work in the future: the library's extensive collection of print copies of music-trade journals, mostly documenting the American piano industry.

Over the following decades, these historical publications supported my research on nine related but distinct topics. First was Harry Freund's enthusiastic account of his Great Square-Piano Bonfire at Atlantic City in May 1904, presented in his journal, *The Musical Age*. I excerpted several colorful portions of his text in the Newsletter ("On the Beach," 2000), and that led to my AMIS paper on the subject (2003), which led to my expanded article in our Journal (2004), which, further expanded, found its way into my recent book (2020). Similar projects gleaned from trade journals and other sources were my studies of the piano-supply industry, Joseph P. Hale, piano factories in Harlem and the Bronx ("Movin' On Up," culminating in a guided tour during our annual meeting in New York City in 2012), piano advertising, the mandolin attachment, and the sad life of the obscure piano manufacturer John J. Swick—and, more recently, the cabinet piano-player and a rags-to-riches saga (currently underway) chronicling the eventful career of a leading piano manufacturer in Chicago.

In hindsight, I can say that I owe all these fruitful projects to those AMIS members who forgot to send me news of their activities during my newsletter editorship.

# FRIENDSHIPS FORGED THROUGH AMIS



# THE GRIBBON AWARD: SUPPORTING STUDENTS





# NO MATTER THE LOCATION, THE GROUP PHOTO IS A MUST!



Calgary, 2008: Members made their way to the Canadian west in this conference at the Cantos Music Foundation.



Boston, 2015: Beantown (or was it the MFA?) attracted a lively group of attendees.



Bethlehem, 2018: A trip to the Martin Guitar Company was a highlight for many during this conference.

## **Edmond Johnson shares why he keeps coming back to the AMIS conferences year after year.**

While I had first joined AMIS in 2002, it wasn't until 2006 that I was able to attend my first meeting. By that time, I was in my second year of grad school and my experience with academic conferences had been limited to the sort of massive affairs where it was all too easy to feel lost in the crowd. The AMIS meeting I attended that year in Vermillion was something else entirely. That year I was fortunate to be one of a dozen students to receive funding to attend and it was an amazing experience to be part of a cohort with wonderfully diverse interests and perspectives. Of course, the presentations were compelling and the performances were top-notch, but it was the people that really set AMIS apart from anything else I had experienced. More than a dozen AMIS meetings later and I am still struck by the collegiality, warmth, and generosity of the AMIS membership. It's what keeps me coming back year after year.



## **Previous AMIS president Jayson Dobney remembers his first meeting.**

My first AMIS meeting was in 1999 at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York. As an undergraduate college student who had barely left the Midwest, it was an eye-opening experience! I even got to visit New York City for the first time and visit the collection of musical instruments on that trip with other students from the University of South Dakota. At that first meeting, I met Ted Good and Cynthia Hoover who recruited me to apply for an internship at the Smithsonian. Thanks to them, I was able to spend a summer in Washington D.C. and be a part of the Piano 300 exhibition there in 2000. Over the years, AMIS has given me the opportunity to see so many great collections and institutions in the United States and beyond. I'll never forget the incredible joint meeting with the Galpin Society in 2003 that traveled across the U.K. from Oxford, to London, to Edinburgh for an entire week. I have many other great memories from meetings in Ann Arbor, Calgary, Phoenix, and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Through AMIS, I've met so many mentors and friends that have had a profound impact on my career—and on my life. Now that I am a professional working with one of the most important collections of instruments in a museum, AMIS gives me the opportunity to give back, to help the next generation of researchers in our field.



# REMINISCENCES

## **Margaret ("Peggy") Downie Banks interrogates NAMIS about its future.**

Happy 50th anniversary, NAMIS! Your pages date back to 1974—the equivalent of a technological dinosaur-age—when your earliest editors had no options other than to outsource your type-setting and printing. In 1981, the AMIS Membership Office (at the National Music Museum in Vermillion, SD, 1978-1994) entered the nascent personal computer age by purchasing the popular TRS-80 PC with 4K of RAM and a 5.5-inch floppy drive. Using a program called DataStar, AMIS members' names and addresses were input into a database for greater ease, speed, and accuracy in printing. The World-Wide Web—though still in its infancy—was beginning to open up to the public in the early 1990s. The concept of personal websites didn't begin to develop much before the mid-1990s, but in short order, AMIS.org appeared on the horizon. NAMIS, today all your issues—archival and current—are offered to the public electronically—a concept not even thinkable at the time of your origin in 1974. Yet you have remained flexible and adaptable to the technological challenges and possibilities that AMIS has encountered. And now one can only wonder how technology might affect you in the future. AI—or not AI—will that be the next question, NAMIS?



## **And walk he did: Stew Carter remembers Jeremy Montagu.**

Unsurprisingly, most of my fondest recollections concerning AMIS involve our annual conference. When AMIS met in Oxford in 2003, I visited Jeremy Montagu's home. Every surface, vertical or horizontal, on the main floor of his house was covered with musical instruments. And of course, Jeremy loved to talk about them. When Jeremy was honored with the Curt Sachs Award at our 2010 conference in Washington, D.C., Jeremy asked me how he could get from his hotel near the Library of Congress to the conference site, at the Smithsonian. "The best way," I told him, "is by bus or taxi." "No, no," Jeremy, then 82 years old, retorted. "I'll walk. I just need to know what route to take." And walk he did.

# AMIS AMOR

Sometimes it is more than musical instruments being examined at our annual meetings!



I attended my first AMIS conference in 2016 as a Gribbon scholar, right at the beginning of my journey into academia (I would start a PhD program in musicology that same year). I couldn't have known then that the very next year the joint conference with the Galpin Society in Edinburgh would change my life in the most wonderful and unexpected way—that is where I met and fell in love with the man who is now my husband, Sebastian Kirsch! Eight years later, we are so happy to attend our first AMIS conference together (on the other side of the pond!) with our young son, Emanuel, who is also quite fond of musical instruments. **Lidia Chang**

I joined AMIS around 1975 in order to engage with the collector community, and Kathryn joined around the time we married, in 1988. More than a special-interest group, AMIS has been our nexus for close friendships, notably with President Cecil Adkins, whom I served as VP, and with Bob Lehman, AMIS's long-time Secretary. It's been inspiring for us to observe tight connections among older AMIS couples such as the Abels, Eliasons, Hettricks, Hoovers, Powleys, and Selches, and a joy to see new relationships formed around our harmonious pursuit. **Laury Libin**



While a master's student at the NMM, I was given the opportunity to attend and help at the 2006 meeting in Vermillion. This experience was one that would change my life in many ways. At that meeting, I met people who would become life-long friends, colleagues, and mentors; I heard papers that opened my eyes to the many facets of musical instrument research; I gained experience driving a sixteen passenger van on countless airport runs to Sioux City and Sioux Falls; but most importantly, I met the man who would become my husband. We met in the basement (or "offices") of the NMM. He was a Gribbon student and on a tour of the facilities. We hit it off and quickly became great friends. For the next few years, we looked forward to seeing each other at the annual conference. Eventually that friendship developed into something more and Jonathan and I will celebrate our tenth wedding anniversary in September. It just goes to show, you never know who you will meet at our annual meetings. **Sarah Deters**

