

Newsletter

The American Musical Instrument Society

VOLUME 2

MARCH, 1973

NUMBER 1



NEW YEAR

With this issue of the *Newsletter*, a second volume begins, a new year commences, and many plans for future activities are being announced. The major thrust of this issue will be the first compilation of members to be issued in permanent form. Many members have asked for this and it is certainly an important part of this publication. It is expected that an annual list of members will be forthcoming in future years to note additions, record our mobile population and the changes of addresses, and perhaps to correct the errors that inevitably creep into any such roster.

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

As many of you will recall, an original query was made to each asking what information you would or would not wish to appear in the roster. After receiving and noting the responses, it was felt by most of us that the information should probably error on the side of too little rather than too much detailed information. Therefore, the roster with this issue is limited to name, address, main interest, and a simple notation as to whether the member has instruments. The question of collection and the size or extent of the collection is not included in this list. Some members wished anonymity on the question of their collections; others are delighted to exchange details about their collections and even have lists of their collections (even illustrated) which they pass out freely to all who inquire. Perhaps at a later date the larger (and accessible) collections will be listed separately. In spite of a very determined effort to exclude mistakes, these will most likely appear. We hope that any errors will be mentioned to us so that they will not be perpetuated in future issues. An errata sheet will be issued later if this is thought advisable. Distribution is limited to our membership.

The membership list includes all who paid dues for 1972 and those who have joined for 1973 and is current through March 1, 1973.



PROPOSED SCHEDULE FOR SECOND ANNUAL MEETING, AMIS, APRIL 27-29, 1973

Friday, April 27 (Place to be determined)

- | | |
|------------|---------------------------------------|
| 4:00-6:00 | Meeting of Board of Governors |
| 6:00-10:00 | Registration |
| 8:00-9:30 | Concert by Jane Bowers and Peter Wolf |

Saturday, April 28 — Museum of Fine Arts

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 9:30-10:15 | Registration |
| 10:15-10:30 | Welcome (Lambert, Rosenbaum) |
| 10:30-12:00 | Session I: American Instruments |
| 12:00- 1:15 | Lunch |
| 1:30- 3:30 | Session II: Early Strings and Performance Practice |
| 3:30- 3:45 | Break |
| 3:45- 5:15 | Session III: Collectors Hour |
| 5:30- 7:00 | Concert by the Camerata, Museum of Fine Arts |
| 7:30-10:00 | Reception and dinner (place & price to be determined) |

Sunday, April 29 — Museum of Fine Arts

- | | |
|-------------|------------------------------------|
| 9:00-10:00 | Business Meeting |
| 10:00-12:00 | Session IV: Keyboards |
| 12:00- 1:00 | Lunch |
| 1:00- 2:15 | Session V: Instrument Makers Forum |
| 2:15- 2:30 | Break |
| 2:30- 4:30 | Session VI: Wind Instruments |

MAKE-UP OF SESSIONS

Session 1: American Instruments, Robert Eliason, Chairman

- Charles Kaufmann: New Jersey Instrument Makers, 1796-1860
- Samuel Ogden: Abraham Prescott, Maker of Umbrellas, parasols, and bass viols
- Paul Gifford: The Hammered Dulcimer in the United States.

Session II: Early Strings, Performance Practices, Arnold Fromme, Chairman

- Narcissa Williamson: Instruments of the Jongleurs in Romanesque Sculpture
- Lawrence Witten: Discovering the Early History of Violin Making
- Jane Ambrose: Three 18th Century Flute Treatises
- Eugene Enrico: Instrumental Performance in San Petronio at the Time of Giuseppe Torelli

Session III: Collector's Hour, Robert Rosenbaum, Moderator

- Subject: Philosophy of Collecting

Session IV: Keyboards, Ed Ripin, Chairman

John Shortridge: Late 17th and Early 18th Century Fretted Clavichords

Sheridan Germann: Masters of the Fat Arabesques — Identifying the Hand of Soundboard Painters on Flemish Harpsichords

John Fesperman: The Renaissance in American Organ Design, 1933-1961

Walter Burr: The Work of B. Stehlin, Harpsichord Builder

Session V: Instrument Makers Forum

Session VI: Wind Instruments, Dale Higbee, Chairman

James M. Swain: X-Ray Examination of Instruments

Michael Zadro: Aspects on the Restoration of Woodwind Instruments

Robert Rosenbaum: Nationalistic Flavor in the Design and Construction of the Oboe

Andre Larson: Seven Instruments by Charles Pace.

DUES

The Board of Directors determined that the dues would remain at \$5.00 for 1973. Please use the enclosed envelope in which you may also include the ballot.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee (William Maynard, Edwin Ripin, and Frederick Selch) met on March 4, 1973 and proposed the following slate of officers:

Secretary — William Maynard

Treasurer — Linda Tauber

Space is provided on the enclosed ballot for write-in candidates. No other officers are to be elected at this time.

NEW PUBLICATION

Notice has been received of a new publication, *Early Music*, edited by J. M. Thomson, and published by Oxford University Press, Press Road, Neasden, London, NW10 ODD. It is devoted to every aspect of pre-classical music; instruments, voices, repertoire, performing techniques of the time, performance problems today, historical background, and so on. It hopes also to provide a clearing-house of information about: Instruments available, suitable music, players and groups looking for local contacts.

AUCTIONS

A question often asked collectors of musical instruments is, "How do you find these antiquities?" Serious collectors are familiar with the auction houses here and abroad which specialize in the sale of collections and individual instruments. For those not familiar with this, a word may be in order.

For a nominal fee one can obtain a catalogue or list of instruments to be offered at a subsequent auction sale directly from the auction houses. Some of these are available on a subscription basis for an annual fee. In addition the auctioneers will often provide an "estimate" of the value of each item to be sold so that the prospective buyers can determine the range of their own bidding.

Mail bids are accepted from those who are unable to attend the actual sale and the mail bids are handled as if the bidder were, himself, at the sale during the active bidding. Each mail bid is entered up to the maximum indicated by the buyer. Buyers who wish to remain anonymous or who have agents may use agents for bidding, or may even ask the auctioneer to act as a bidding agent. Following the sale some of the auction houses will provide lists of the instruments sold, the name of the buyer (or the agent), and the price at which the instrument was sold. The catalogues of instruments to be sold, and the subsequent list of actual sale prices are interesting in themselves and many of these catalogues have photographs of the more interesting or important instruments which constitute an important addition to any library of historical musical instruments.

As illustration of this process, a recent auction was held by Sotheby's in London, on December 21, 1972. The illustrated catalogue of this sale listed 231 separate items to be offered for sale and 38 of these instruments were illustrated by photographs. This sale included violins, violas, violoncellos, bows, keyboard instruments, wind and other stringed instruments. A fortepiano by Longman and Broderip of London made c. 1785, was offered in this sale and the final bidder paid over \$7,000 for it. A two-manual harpsichord by Jacob Kirkman of London (1767) sold for over \$14,000. A two-key flute with authenticating certificate said to have been owned by King Frederick the Great (ca 1750) went to an anonymous American collector for about \$14,000. Many other interesting instruments are also listed in this sale catalogue and the subsequent price list makes for entertaining and mouth-watering reading. Lest this sound like a pursuit only for the wealthy it should be mentioned that many items at this same sale went for \$25 to \$100.

(continued page 4)

Well-known auction houses offering this service are listed here:

Sotheby & Co., 34 & 35 New Bond Street, W. 1
London, U.K.
(U.S. affiliate of Sotheby: Sotheby, Parke
Bernet Inc.
980 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10021)

Phillips Auctioneers, Blenstock House
7 Blenheim
New Bond Street, London, U.K.

Christie,
8 King Street, St. James
London SW1Y 6 QT, UK

LIST OF MUSICAL ORGANIZATIONS:

A project that is certainly encompassed by the purpose of this Society is compilation of all instrument societies. As a start in this direction below is listed all of the known flute clubs in the U.S. A plea is here expressed for names and addresses of other instrumental societies. Some, of course, are well known (Viola da Gamba Society, American Recorder Society, etc.), but others may be less known outside of their own special area.

*New York Flute Club, Pittsburgh Flute Club,
Flute Society of Washington (D.C.), Florida
Flute Club, Long Island Junior Flute Club,
Tucson Flute Club, Los Angeles Flute Club.*

OLD VIOLIN STRINGS

The Old Sturbridge Village ("a living museum of early New England") needs help from someone, perhaps in our society. Mr. James Bump, assistant curator of musical instruments of this museum asks to hear from anyone who has information (or actual examples) of violin strings *in their original packaging* dating from about 1790 to 1840. They would like to be able to reproduce such wrappings (boxes, labels, tubes?) with or without the strings inside. Anyone having this information (or the actual strings in original packing) please contact:

Mr. James Bump
Assistant Curator, Musical Instruments
Old Sturbridge Village
Sturbridge, Mass. 01566

OVERSEAS CORRESPONDENT:

The following kind invitation was received from Mr. Jeremy Montagu, 7 Pickwich Road, Dulwich Village, London SE21 7JN, United Kingdom for inclusion in this Newsletter:

Jeremy Montagu, sometime Honorary Secretary of the Galpin Society and now honoured to be one of the foreign members of the AMIS, is always glad of the opportunity to meet fellow enthusiasts. Any fellow members passing through London, England are invited to call.

Collection numbers 1200 plus and coverage is ethnographic as well as European, with wind and percussion in the majority.

Anyone fortunate enough to be passing through London would do well to accept this interesting invitation.

VANCE GENEALOGY

The following was received in a letter from Mr. Stuart-Morgan Vance:

"I wonder if anyone in the Society could help me find out some information about my great-grandfather, Hugh McMillan Nisbet. I know he played in the 44th Ohio regimental band (Tuttle's Band) in the Civil War. He saw service in Virginia at Camp Platt. I would like to find out what instrument he played and, if he owned his own instrument, what has become of it."

Anyone with information to help should contact:

Mr. Stuart-Morgan Vance
3718 Sallee Lane
Louisville, Ky. 40222

APPRECIATION:

As a new organization, we appreciate any mention of our activities and interests in the news organs of other societies. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the College Music Society, Organ Historical Society, National Association of College Wind and Percussion Instructors, Viola da Gamba Society, and Catgut Acoustical Society.

