

# NEWSLETTER

Of The

## American Musical Instrument Society

Vol. 3, No. 3

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*Journal of the  
American Musical  
Instrument Society*



VOLUME I · 1974

**OUR COVER** is a reproduction of the cover of the new Society Journal. Featuring the AMIS logo, the two color cover in black and slate blue is printed on buff paper. Available only to members, the Journal is scheduled to appear early in the coming year. In this Newsletter, editor Thomas Kelly describes this project in detail.

The NEWSLETTER is published three times yearly — June, October and March. All correspondence should be directed to THE NEWSLETTER Editor, William Maynard, 17 Lincoln Avenue, Massapequa Park, New York 11762. Photos and short news items will be welcome.

Requests for membership in AMIS may be submitted via the Editor's office.

**AMERICAN MUSICAL INSTRUMENT SOCIETY  
(AMIS)**

**Officers and Board**

Robert Rosenbaum .....	<i>President</i>
Arnold Fromme .....	<i>Vice President</i>
William Maynard .....	<i>Secretary</i>
Linda Tauber .....	<i>Treasurer</i>
Dale Higbee .....	Barbara Lambert
Frederich von Huene .....	Edwin Ripin
	Cynthia Hoover
James Swain .....	<i>Membership Chairman</i>

**COVER STORY (Continued)**

**A REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE SOCIETY'S JOURNAL**

The Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society needs to respond to the membership of the Society in two seemingly conflicting ways: it must reflect the interests of the members that is, like a commercial magazine it should be geared to a specific readership while avoiding flashy and temporary appeal. On the other hand, the Journal should be an expression of the ideals and a record of the achievements of the Society — and in this sense must be a document preserving materials which are the backbone of serious study in the field. However, we still need to be a bit more amusing than the *Congressional Record*.

The Journal will also be one of the chief ways, besides the influence of individual members, in which the Society faces the world — both the world of amateurs and that of experts; and in both cases, we want to be proud of what we have to show.

Having decided that the Journal should express what is best in American quality and knowledge, the task ahead became a twofold one: brainpower and horsepower; finding a group of experts willing to give competent advice, and choosing a printer willing and able to produce the quality we want at a price the Society can afford.

A group of authorities in various fields — teachers, scholars, museum personnel, and collectors — have generously given their expertise, time, and influence to oversee the quality of the Journal, and hence to ensure its success. Their names are printed on the masthead, and also on a new flyer of the Society with which all members will soon be familiar. This Editorial Board is made

of people whose commitment is a real sacrifice of time and effort, and they deserve the resounding thanks of the Society at large; they also have the smaller satisfaction of knowing this editor sleeps better for their generosity.

The Stinehour Press, selected as publishers, ought not to be called a printing plant. They are more like a small instrument workshop, where a limited amount of first-class work is done in an unobtrusive fashion, which nevertheless achieves a wide reputation by word of mouth. Situated in an old barn which gradually grew wings, in Lunenburg, Vermont (which is about as far North as you'd care to go), they are a group of dedicated people who care as much about the quality of good printing as some of our members do about violins, and who take as much trouble in producing the final products as a surgeon does with a heart transplant. They have agreed to be our printers, and so the basic quality of our Journal, as regards format and appearance, is assured. In addition, Stinehour will have offset printing done by the Meriden Gravure Company, whose reproduction of drawings and photographs is so good that they have achieved an international reputation.

Many members will have seen a mockup of the first issue of the Journal at the Ann Arbor meetings of the Society. A picture of Stinehour's cover design is reproduced in this Newsletter.

The first issue of the Journal, which should appear in early 1975, includes material of interest to collectors, scholars, those who want to keep abreast of developments elsewhere, and those who simply like to look at pictures of beautiful objects.

Here are some highlights: Laurence Witten has expanded his elegant paper on the origin of the violin, combining a collector's expertise with unparalleled knowledge of printed sources to produce some striking new ideas (as well as some wonderful pictorial evidence). Professor Shelley Davis of the University of Maryland has written a fascinating study of the use and organization of instrumental music at a specific eighteenth-century nobleman's court, and discusses instrument collections, program contents, and details of eighteenth-century orchestra management.

An important recent discovery of three-thousand-year-old Chinese instruments in a almost-perfect state of preservation is reported, with drawings and pictures, by Mr. Fong Chew. Professor Martha Maas of Ohio State has beautiful pictures and discussion of the ancient Greek phorminx, showing details of its construction and use. A discussion of the distribution of American Indian instrument families by Richard Haefer of the University of Illinois serves as a model for future studies by ethno-organologists.

(Continued on page 3)

An interesting transitional stage in the development of brass instruments is explored by Robert Eliason in his illustrated study of brass instruments with both keys and valves. Charles Kaufman's study of instrument makers in New Jersey is a thorough exploration of localized production; he includes pictures of instruments, discussion of specific makers and their work, and a comprehensive list of makers and their dates.

These and other articles, along with reviews, book lists, and other materials of interest to the membership of the Society, constitute the first issue. We should all be proud of the scope and variety of the first issue, and hope that it will set a precedent for a long and useful future.

Thomas Kelly  
Editor

### IMPORTANT ADDRESS CHANGES

Members should note these address changes of two officers of the Society:

Ms Linda Tauber, *Treasurer*  
3500 Milam St. Apt. J 205  
Shreveport, LA 71109

James M. Swain, M.D. *Membership Chairman*  
116 Leathbridge  
Williamsburg Apts.  
Shreveport, LA 71105

### AMIS FOURTH NATIONAL MEETING

The fourth national meeting of AMIS will be held in New York City, April 4-6 with the Department of Music, New York University as host. Full registration material including hotel reservation forms and program details will be sent to all members in February. Elsewhere in this issue of the Newsletter is presented a call for papers for this meeting. In addition, a card is enclosed which should be filled out and returned to the Program Chairman, Edwin Ripin.

The format of the New York meeting is planned to be as follows:

#### Friday, APRIL 4 – *Pre-registration Events*

Special tour of the Andre Mertons Galleries for Musical Instruments, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Bus Tour of Two New York Private Collections—Cocktails and Buffet (Note: This event will be open only to pre-registrants. Participation will be limited.)

#### Saturday, APRIL 5

Registration at New York University

Panel on "Instruments Restoration"

Papers and Musical Interludes

Banquet and Evening Concert

#### Sunday, APRIL 6

Panel on "Mechanical Musical Instruments"

Papers and Musical Interludes

Business Meeting

Throughout the duration of the meetings, the exhibit COLLECTORS' CHOICE: MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FROM AMERICAN PRIVATE COLLECTIONS will be featured at the Museum of the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center.

Members planning to attend the meeting are asked to fill out the card which accompanies this Newsletter and return it to the program chairman as soon as possible.

### CALL FOR PAPERS – AMIS NEW YORK MEETING

Under the Chairmanship of Edwin Ripin, the Program Committee of the Society asks all those interested in presenting a paper, or an appropriate musical performance, to submit notice of their intention to the Program Chairman. To be considered, papers must be submitted in abstract form with complete title and name of the person presenting. Those interested in performing should indicate the instrument(s) involved and the material to be performed. Presentations may not exceed 20 minutes duration. The *deadline* for receipt of this information is January 15, 1975, addressed to:

Mr. Edwin Ripin, Program Chairman,  
Dept. of Music, 268 Waverly Building,  
New York University,  
Washington Square,  
New York, N.Y. 10003

A card is enclosed with this Newsletter and should be filled out and returned to the Program Chairman. If you wish a paper to be considered, please return the abstract with this card.

## EDITOR'S COLUMN

\*\*\* In 1856 the French bandmaster Sarrus patented his invention the Sarrusophone. Does any member know the first name of this man?

\*\*\* The following is a quote from the Long Island daily newspaper NEWSDAY: "A brass band has just been formed to recreate an American band from the era of 1840. Volunteers play antique brass instruments, which were coming into vogue 135 years ago. The musicians are using sheet music from the Library of Congress, and their uniforms are designed after the military costumes of the period. The band will perform at the Old Bethpage Restoration on weekends and holidays."

\*\*\* On August 13th the NEW YORK TIMES reported that the firm of Rembert Wurlitzer, Inc. will soon go out of business. The owner, Mrs. Lee Wurlitzer, said her decision was triggered by the expiration of the lease on the firm's headquarters. "I'm tired. I want to retire. I love the old-fiddle business and I want to dispose of the instruments in a civilized way, with integrity..." The collection, some 1,400 objects, has been insured at \$1-million.

\*\*\* The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Department of Musical Instruments has announced the availability of technical drawings of certain instruments in the collection. Drawings of recorders, flageolets, oboes and cornetti are ready for reproduction, and may be ordered by mail or in person from the Book Shop, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fifth Avenue at 82nd St., New York, N.Y. 10028. From time to time new drawings will become available. An up-to-date listing with prices (mostly below ten dollars) may be obtained from the Book Shop or from the Dept. of Musical Instruments. Builders will be interested to know that many instruments have been x-rayed to show internal details; contact prints of x-rays can be made to special order from the Instrument Dept. at the above address.

\*\*\* A very interesting letter was received from Mr. J. Richard Haefer of the Archives of Ethnomusicology, University of Illinois. In his letter, Mr. Haefer mentioned that the EP GROUP OF COMPANIES had under consideration a reprint of the Victor Charles Mahillon *Catalogue Descriptif et Analytique du Musee Instrumental du Conservatoire Royal de Musique de Bruxelles*. A query to the EP Managing Director, Mr. Brian Lewis, brought forth the following: "We would be most happy to hear from any of your members who may be interested and if there are sufficient then this may well encourage us to proceed rather more rapidly than we have been doing to date." Interested members can write to Mr. Lewis at the EP Group of Companies, Bradford Road, East Ardsley, Wakefield, Yorkshire WF3 2JN England.

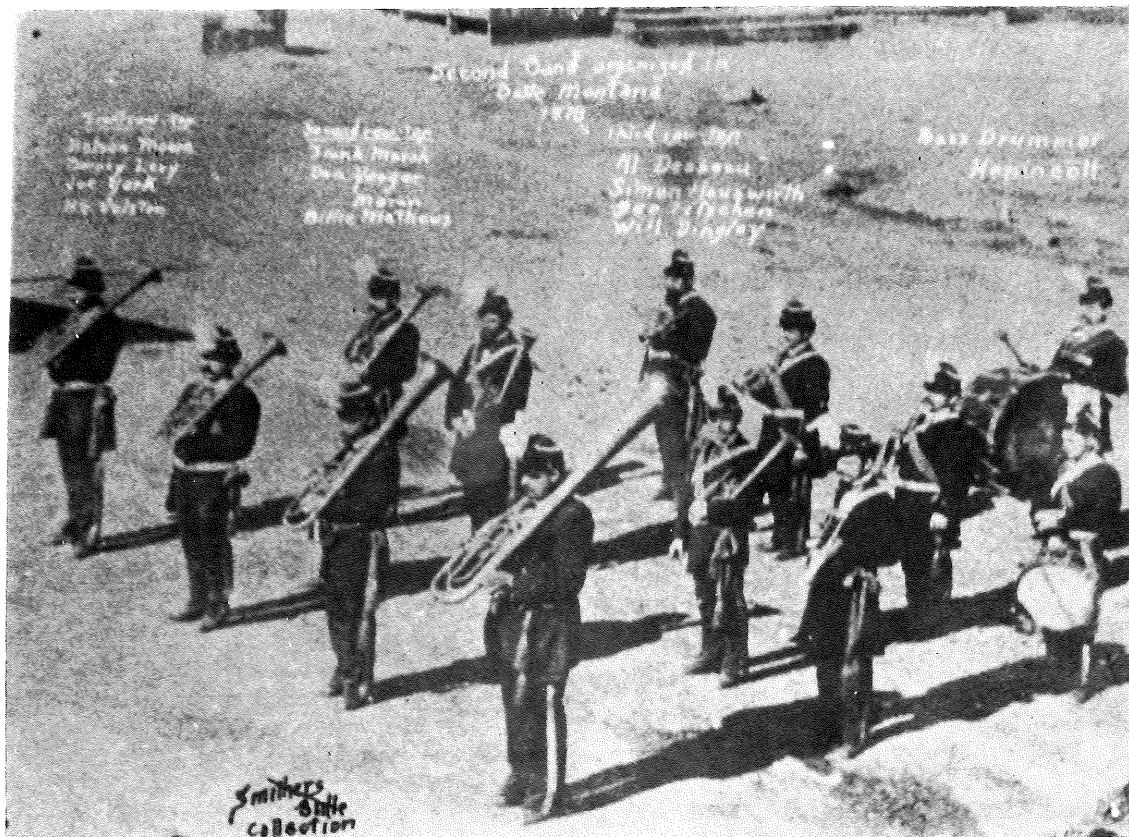
\*\*\*On Wednesday, July 31st, we were delighted when we serendipitously turned our radio to WQXR's Listening Room hosted by Robert Sherman. Mr. Sherman's guest for the morning was Mr. Harry Moskovitz who treated the listeners to an hour of talk about the history of the flute, and punctuated his remarks with many superb examples of flute playing on flutes from his collection.

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## AMIS NEW YORK EXHIBIT

In a separate mailing sent to all members, the Program Committee for the 1975 AMIS meetings in New York, to be held at New York University, announced the establishment of a special exhibition of Western Art Musical Instruments. To be called COLLECTORS' CHOICE: MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FROM AMERICAN PRIVATE COLLECTIONS, this exhibit is sponsored jointly by the Society and the Museum of the Performing Arts in Lincoln Center. The inclusive dates are from March 20 to June 20, 1975. The Museum of the Performing Arts will mount the exhibit with design and construction of the exhibit area by professionals on the museum staff. Full 24 hour security and climate control will be provided. An *ad hoc* exhibit committee is currently working, chaired by Jacques Francais, internationally known violin dealer and string expert who himself organized a highly acclaimed exhibit on French string instruments at Lincoln Center two years ago. In addition to Mr. Francais, members of the exhibit committee include: Laurence Witten of Connecticut and Friedrich von Huene of Boston with Edwin Ripin, Program Chairman and Robert Rosenbaum, AMIS President as *ex officio* members.

There appears to be a large number of musical instruments of quality and interest in American private collections, but nobody really knows just how many. No such exhibit has been held in this country, at least in recent times, although a quick, private survey suggests that AMIS members could provide exhibit material to mount a show equal in quality to that of any of the fine public collections both here and in Europe. Considering the exhibit space available and with due regard to esthetics, the exhibit committee will probably choose from 100 - 125 items out of those submitted for consideration by AMIS members. A cross-section of wind, brass and stringed instruments, desirable because of historical, technical and artistic quality, will be aimed for. A catalogue of the exhibit is planned.



This very interesting photograph of the "Second band organized in Butte, Montana" was sent to us by Mr. Robert M. Hazen. Mr. Hazen noted that the first two rows of musicians are playing over-the-shoulder instruments. This picture, taken in 1878, was supplied by Mr. David Johns, President of the World Museum of Mining, Butte Montana.

## AMIS DUES

Enclosed with this issue of the Newsletter is an envelope dues notice for all AMIS members. By vote of the membership, dues have been increased this year to \$12.50. This amount, in addition to covering the cost of three annual Newsletters and all special announcements, will include subscription to the new Journal. Members are asked to please remit their dues by January 31, 1975. This is to enable us to plan the season, adjust mailing lists and records, etc. Your Society is growing and the cost and complexity of its operation is also growing. Regretfully, we shall be forced to cancel mailings if dues are not received by the deadline.

## CLASSIFIED COLUMN

*Members may place non-commercial ads in this space. Twenty words will cost \$5.00 for one issue. Checks payable to AMIS should be sent with copy to the Editor.*

WANTED: Copy of Nicholas Bessaraboff's out-of-print book **ANCIENT EUROPEAN MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS**. Margaret Downie, 2872 University Ave., apt. G, Morgantown, W. V. 26505.

*Back issues of the AMIS Newsletter and membership rosters are available in a complete set at a cost of \$10.00. Payment should be made out to AMIS and sent to the Newsletter Editor.*

**BOOKS: OLD AND NEW**

**MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS: AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY**, by Alexander Buchner. Crown Press, 419 Park Ave. South, New York, N.Y. 10016. 1973, \$12.50.

In his introduction Dr. Buchner states: "It is not the aim of this book to solve the scientific problems of this (musical instruments) knowledge. I have merely attempted to describe some of the extremely interesting and fascinating developments from prehistoric times to the present day, from primitive prototype to highly evolved musical instruments." Those who are familiar with Dr. Buchner's earlier (1956) work **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS THROUGH THE AGES** will note that this new book has expanded the section on the history of musical instruments, and has added a new portion discussing jazz and electronic music. The photographs of instruments and works of art that include instruments are of a much finer quality in this new publication than was found in the earlier work. The 300 photographs, 31 in color and many full page reproductions, include some old and many new additions. This is, therefore, a work which collectors will want to add to their library whether or not they own the earlier publications.

**A SURVEY OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENT COLLECTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA**. Music Library Association, 343 South Main St., Room 205, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48108, 1974 \$3.00 (approx.).

This is an excellent and important survey of approximately 572 public and private musical instrument collections in the U.S. and Canada. In this, the first survey undertaken for such information extant for any country, one is really impressed at the large amount of unstudied material in both the many smaller public and private collections. Information included covers individuals in charge, address and telephone, often very clear descriptive information relative to contents and statements as to loan, exchange or sale. Most listings also state whether any sort of catalogue, list or card file is available. Unfortunately, by its very nature, such a survey becomes out of date in some areas the moment it is begun. The Music Library Association and the compilers have overcome many of these problems and have produced a work of value for collectors and museums alike. The indices are particularly well-done.

**MAKERS OF THE HARPSICHORD AND CLAVICHORD 1440-1840**, by Donald Boalch, 2nd edition, Oxford University Press, 1974, \$31.25.

Boalch's reference work has become a classic in the area of harpsichord and clavichord study during the seventeen years since the printing of the first edition. The welcome appearance of a second edition will be a relief to those who have searched in vain for a copy of the long out-of-print original edition. Many instrument listings have been updated with additional numbers representing new discoveries and the appearance of additional keyboards. The listing of present owners has also undergone extensive reworking. The reader cannot comment critically about this work — it is so unique and beautifully presented as a labor of true scholarship. One cannot help notice the misspelling of some everyday words that were not picked up in proof — Oxford University Press should have caught them. The price is high too but there is simply no substitute.

As a matter of policy we have refrained from providing information as to antiquary book dealers who offer such works for sale that would be of interest to musical instrument collectors. However, several queries to the Editor requesting information as to where they might obtain books mentioned in the AMIS Newsletter has prompted some change in this policy. Since we do not accept ads from such dealers, the Editor is presenting a list of several dealers who have in the past offered catalogues which list books of interest to our membership.

H. Baron  
136 Chatsworth Road  
London, N.W. 2 ENGLAND

Claude Gill Books  
481 Oxford Street  
London W.1 ENGLAND

Theodore Front  
131 N. Robertson Blvd.  
Beverly Hills, California 90211

Kenneth Mummery, LTD  
9, ST. Winifred's Road  
Bournemouth, ENGLAND