

CGSUNY NEWSLETTER



The Classical Guitar Society of Upstate New York

www.cgsuny.org

P.O. Box 151 Unadilla, NY 13849 607-369-9579 #2 of

September 2020

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Paul Sweeney

SECRETARY'S REPORT FROM THE BOARD Giancarlo Sidoli

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President's Message

Greetings, preparations continue apace for our unusual 20th annual Fall Festival. We will have live Members' performances on Saturday and live Collegiate performances on Sunday (no masks required to watch from home on Zoom).

While all of my usual classroom teaching is remote this semester I am very glad that all my guitar lessons at both schools can (at least so far) take place on campus and in person. Pedagogically (not to mention acoustically) Zoom is a poor substitute for face-to-face lessons. I hope all in academia heed the lesson of SUNY Oneonta (our traditional host for the Festival), which opened for in-person classes and had to shut down and send students home because too many simply did not follow basic safety procedures. May none of us be victims to that kind of irresponsibility. Stay safe and healthy (and make sure you have a plan for being able to vote in this unusual year).

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Secretary's Message regarding 9/6/2020 CGSUNY Board Meeting

---Finalizing Membership Letter.

---Scheduling for Virtual CGSUNY Fall Festival With

-Members Performance Saturday Afternoon 1 pm,

-20 Year Featured and Regional Performers Retrospective Saturday Evening

-Collegiate Recital Sunday Afternoon 1 pm.

---Members Performance: If you want to perform and still haven't let Sal know, please email your request to Sal Salvaggio at vaggio@yahoo.com.

---Discussion and Planning for virtual annual meeting (date to be announced soon) and discussion of procedures for voting for officers and board members

FREDERICH CHRISLIP'S CONTINUING ADVENTURES Ric Chrislip

In February 1976, Tina and I were married at the Washington Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We rented the house at 95 Ford Avenue in Oneonta while the owners were on sabbatical in England. I was driving to NYC weekly for voice lessons and auditions and to teach voice at St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary in Yonkers.

In NYC I got in touch with Alice Artzt. A few years earlier in Chicago, I had performed in master classes for her as well as for John Duarte, singing and accompanying myself on guitar, receiving encouragement from both. In March 1976, Alice attended my solo recital at the Library of the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center, sponsored by the Society of the Classic Guitar.

In May I was the tenor soloist for the Dvorak *Requiem* with the Westchester Chorale with orchestra. I really wanted to be an oratorio tenor. In July I participated in a week-long oratorio workshop at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey, and received encouragement from tenor John McCullough and soprano Helen Boatwright.

In September I performed for my younger brother's wedding in southwest Missouri and did a solo voice and guitar recital at Southeast Missouri State University.

In October I received a phone call from Radi Lah at the Chicago Symphony: can you play tenor banjo? I replied that I probably could. They were doing the premiere of David Del Tredici's *Final Alice* under Sir Georg Solti the following week. (During that period of Tredici's composition, he often incorporated a "folk group" which consisted of mandolin, tenor banjo, accordion, and two soprano saxophones.) Radi had to get the music to me right away, and there were no overnight package services yet. Radi decided to send it via a service called Wings and Wheels; the package would go first to Syracuse. After a couple of days I called Wings and Wheels in Syracuse, and they said they weren't coming to Oneonta until the following Tuesday—by which time I was supposed to be in Chicago. Not having access to a tenor banjo, I borrowed a five-string banjo from a friend, tuned it like a tenor banjo, and we drove to Syracuse to pick up the music. I started learning the part in the back seat on the way home.

I flew to Chicago and rented a tenor banjo. The rehearsals and performances went well, and I was given a few more opportunities to play the piece in the next few years. That culminated in 1980 when everyone got back together to record *Final Alice*; you can find references to it via an Internet search.

Tina had moved from Boston to Oneonta in 1974 for a position as clinical dietitian at Bassett Hospital. Her job supplied the income which my music career did not, but we agreed that when our first child was born, she would quit her job and stay home. Our first child was born on December 16, 1976, so our period of financial prosperity quickly came to an end. In 1970 I quit my job teaching junior high music to be a freelance musician, knowing that I would probably be poor. As 1976 ended, I continued trying to support us on my meager, irregular music income; neither of us had a regular job again until 1981.

After reading Rics article I was curious and asked him several questions

Is stubborn a synonym for dedicated?

I would answer that dedication is the positive part. By stubbornness, I mean my resistance to people who wanted me to do something else for a living. All four of our sons joined the Oneonta Boychoir, and our second son was at the American Boychoir School and a member of that choir from sixth through eighth grade. At the end of eighth grade I suspect that he was one of the best boy sopranos in the country, but after that summer he was done with singing. Our other four children took up an instrument, but only our daughter has stuck with it (piano at church).

Are any of the children musicians?

Ric's answers follow,

We didn't have only one child--by 1981 we had three.

During high school, doing musical comedy, I thought that that was what I wanted to do. Then one day during a break in a summer-stock rehearsal, I heard the pianist playing through Schubert's Mass in G in the orchestra pit. It hit me that classical music was better and what I really wanted to do. When I filled out applications for college, I had a strong feeling that I had to write "music" in the blank for "major".

Going to music school (Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois) resulted in my joining the Chicago Symphony Chorus in my sophomore

year, where I was exposed to the highest level of professional musicians and standards. In the Symphony Chorus I received encouragement to become a choral conductor, and I began to be a paid member of the chorus. I was also getting paid to sing in church choirs. My best friend, a very talented singer, did professional folk-singing and started me on guitar. Before I left Chicago, my singer friends would hire me to accompany them on Dowland songs, and I would do folk-singing gigs. And another older friend of mine made his humble but adequate living in similar fashion. Orchestra playing paid well, just not very often. But having some success, I believed that my success could grow. I was very stubborn about it.

TRANSCRIBING AMY BEACH Sal Salvaggio

In 2012, after spending a considerable amount of time specializing on the music of the renaissance and baroque periods and learning the H.I.P. approach to playing properly constructed period instruments, I'd decided to get back to the classical guitar as my main focus. When I play Bach, I can delve into the "period" consciousness of playing his music on the lute and carry techniques over to the guitar. I've always played the guitar through it all, but my approach was more back burnerish, since my performing "gigs" were mainly as a lute player - I am also an avid sightreader - so I played a lot of shows, operas and in backlines along the way on both electric and acoustic guitars and assorted modern instruments.

I've also been involved in playing chamber music. In combinations ranging from guitar ensembles to work with harpsichord and bass as well as the rich treasure trove or 19th century works for guitar and other instruments.

I was asked to play for the Public Radio Station in Albany, NY with a duo partner. Aside from pieces we selected from the

established repertory, I found a wonderful multi movement piano work by Amy Beach entitled "Children's Album" op. 36. It seemed at first look to fit quite well on two guitars. When you approach a piece like this, you have to be ever so aware of the composer's intentions regarding phrasing and dynamics and the overall expressive qualities present in the music.

Fingerings, positions used, octave transposition, and color are only a few of the considerations that come into play. I looked back to the 16th century lutenists who used choral music as the basis of many of their intabulations and in some cases, keyboard pieces by their contemporaries. Francis Cutting, the 16th century lutenist comes to mind, arranging keyboard works by William Byrd for the lute. I also looked to the 19th century guitarists who made numerous arrangements of popular opera reviews and also the arrangements of Tarrega and Llobet.

After a few play throughs and minor revisions, the Beach was ready and has had some quite successful performances.

I am constantly searching for new pieces to arrange. I'm into a piece by Edward Elgar as well as pieces by Webern and Berg.....The journey is one that many guitarists have taken. Elizabeth Cotten, Reverend Gary Davis, Justin Holland, Andres Segovia. Leo Kottke, Johnny Smith, Dennis Turechek, Chet Atkins and Julian Bream to name a few. Join their ranks, challenge yourself and help our repertoire!

[Beach Children's Album Op.36 \(Complete\)](#)