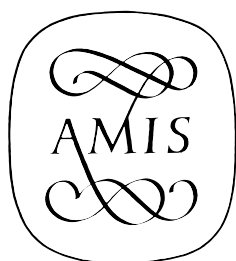


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AMIS AT FIFTY

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# “In the Beginning”—The Early Days of the American Musical Instrument Society\*

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During late 1971 and early 1972 an informal network of people interested in musical instruments was transformed into a formal organization—the American Musical Instrument Society (AMIS). The need for a United States-based group devoted to musical instruments had long been felt, and the impetus toward founding one came from several directions. American members of the Galpin Society (formed in London in 1946) wanted to bring to the United States the camaraderie they had found through corresponding with and visiting their British colleagues. American customers of London musical instrument dealer Tony Bingham desired a better way to keep in touch with each other to facilitate their collecting activities. Museum professionals in the United States sought more efficient methods of exchanging information with each other and with music historians, instrument builders, and performers. In fact, a group of about thirty curators, musicologists, performers, and teachers had met in 1965 at Yale University for a conference (which will be described below), during which they discussed establishing a more permanent forum. But although they remained in touch through the ensuing years, no concrete steps toward organization were taken.

This article focuses on the society's first ten years—from October 1971, when a small group of collectors met in Scarsdale, New York, to April 1981, when the society celebrated its tenth anniversary by holding its first meeting outside the United States, in Vancouver, Canada. The article draws on AMIS newsletters, minutes of meetings, files and archival material, and interviews with members who were active during the formation of the society.<sup>1</sup>

\* This is an abbreviated version of the 2007 article, including the full narrative of forty-eight pages, but without the thirty pages of appendices. Some of the information in the appendices is available elsewhere in this fiftieth anniversary volume. The entire original article is available online through ProQuest or through RILM abstracts with full text (RAFT). See the author's note at the end of this article.

1. Those interviewed (in 2001 or 2005–6) include: Frederick R. (Eric) Selch (1930–2002), Phillip T. Young (1926–2002), James M. Swain, Linda Tauber, William J. Maynard, Cynthia Adams Hoover, Jeannine E. Abel, Richard W. Abel, William E. Hettrick, Betty Austin Hensley, Dale Higbee, Robert E. Eliason, Tony Bingham, Margaret Downie

Fortunately for this history, the newsletters started early, thanks to a particularly energetic communicator, James M. Swain, who attended the first organizational meetings and reported on them. The first newsletter appeared in November 1971; thereafter newsletters were published three times per year. The earliest minutes of a board meeting date from October 1972 (when the society's board of governors first met), and the earliest minutes of a business meeting date from April 1973; the minutes continue once or twice a year for board meetings and annually for business meetings, which were open to all members. Though not always covering every subject the historian would wish (and sometimes presenting what is obviously an expurgated report), minutes and newsletters provide the essential framework for the article. An official set of minutes is held in the AMIS Archives at the University of Maryland.<sup>2</sup>

Files of correspondence and personal papers—scattered documents that too often provide only incomplete information—add detail and color. Ideally, files would exist for every officer, board member, committee chair, and editor, but that is simply not the case. Nevertheless, at least some correspondence is available from most of the people who founded the organization and shaped it over the following decade. The files of Cynthia Adams Hoover, curator of musical instruments at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.,<sup>3</sup> cover the entire period of study, and reach back to the 1960s to provide a prehistory for AMIS. Papers at the National Music Museum (University of South Dakota), preserved and organized by André P. Larson and Margaret Downie Banks, include responses to a questionnaire mailed out before the first organizational meetings, early membership forms, and various correspondence files dating from the 1970s and 1980s, including some concerning the early days of the *Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society*. The AMIS Archives established in 2000 in the Special Collections in Performing Arts (SCPA), Performing Arts Library, University of Maryland, contain, besides a set of minutes, Banks, and André P. Larson.

2. All references to the minutes are to the official set of Minutes of the American Musical Instrument Society, Inc., which resides in the American Musical Instrument Society Archives, Special Collections in Performing Arts (SCPA), Performing Arts Library, University of Maryland. This set includes minutes from board, executive committee, and business meetings, interfiled by date. Minutes from the business meeting are sometimes entitled "Minutes of Annual Meeting," but in fact they contain minutes of only the business session held during the multi-day annual meeting.

3. Hoover was on the curatorial staff of the Smithsonian institution from 1961 to 2004, when she became curator emeritus of musical instruments, which was still her title in 2007.

a variety of other material from the period of study, including programs from annual meetings and correspondence regarding financial matters in the late 1970s. Unfortunately, little correspondence from the first two presidents, Robert M. Rosenbaum and Frederick R. (Eric) Selch, is available.

The primary goal of this article is to establish the chronology of the early years of AMIS. Discovering which sources are available (and which, at least at present, are not), as well as hearing the accounts of those who founded the society (and realizing how memories alter and dim through time), convinced me that a presentation of the details, through narrative and documentary appendixes, was a worthwhile way to create a reference that could be read as a reminder of the period and used as a basis for further study. Although a history reaching to the present would be ideal, limiting this study to the society's first ten years has allowed me to explore that period in detail. Events crowded thick and fast, especially in the first year, with goals to be set, decisions to be made, and compromises to be reached. In reviewing the events of the early years, I have attempted to underscore the ideas and ideals that have shaped the society and provided continuity through its first thirty-six years. I hope that this article will provide the basis for additional studies and analysis of the history of AMIS, by others or myself; in particular, biographical information about a cross-section of the early membership—the collectors, performers, curators, makers, dealers, and others who brought the society into being—would add greatly to our understanding of the society.

Newsletters, minutes, correspondence, and personal reminiscences all refer to many of the same happenings, with varying viewpoints, emphases, and amounts of detail. In any history, there is always tension between charting one overall chronology and following thematic threads. In this telling, I chose an overall chronology (with one flashback) for approximately the first year, up through the election of the first board, since these events seemed to flow in a story line. Then the recital switches to sections, each treating a topic or related topics: organization and leadership, annual meetings, membership, and the *Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society*.

I hope that long-time members will read this history with a sense of recognition, and that younger members will gain a better understanding of the process by which their elders created a society for and about musical instruments.

### *The Historical Musical Instrument Society*

On Saturday, October 23, 1971, eight collectors of antique musical instruments met to discuss the possibility of forming an organization that would enable them and others to exchange information about instruments and collecting. They gathered in Scarsdale, New York, at the home of Robert M. Rosenbaum, a research biologist and professor who was also an oboist and a collector of woodwinds and other instruments. Others in the group included music teachers Robert P. Spargo and Alfred Wood; a professional flutist, Harry Moskovitz; and a consulting engineer, Henry J. Modrey. During the meeting several steps were taken: it was agreed that a society should be formed; a set of proposed bylaws (drafted by William J. Maynard, a teacher, librarian, and collector of clarinets) was discussed in detail;<sup>4</sup> and one of the eight agreed to prepare a newsletter (James M. Swain, a radiologist, flutist, and collector of flutes). They decided to call the organization “The Historical Musical Instrument Society.” Dues—to cover such things as printing and mailing a newsletter—were set at \$5.00 a year, and temporary officers were chosen (Rosenbaum as president, Maynard as secretary, and Swain as treasurer) to serve until a formal election could be held.

This meeting evidently formalized discussions and negotiations that had taken place during the preceding months, and the decision to proceed with forming a society resulted from the positive response to a questionnaire that had been mailed in August. An accompanying letter mentioned “a group of collectors” who had corresponded and met “with the idea of forming a national organization of collectors, or at least providing a forum (newsletter, bulletin, etc.) for this activity.” The purpose of the questionnaire, the letter pointed out, was not simply to make another list of collectors and collections, but “to learn more about our fellow enthusiasts over the country, even around the world.” Those who responded would receive a summary of the tabulations from the survey; respondents’ names and any details of their collections would not be made public. A “steering committee” listed at the foot of the letter consisted of Rosenbaum, Maynard, Swain, and Linda Tauber (a professional flutist and teacher from Yonkers, New York).<sup>5</sup>

4. The draft was based on the bylaws of The Bohemians, a New York musicians’ club to which Maynard belonged. E-mail message to the author, 20 June 2002.

5. Letter dated August 1971, addressed to “Dear Friend” and signed J. M. Swain,

The group's first newsletter appeared just a few weeks after the gathering. In addition to details about the meeting and a complete copy of the proposed bylaws, it included results from the questionnaire, which had been mailed to nearly four hundred people. Over one hundred questionnaires had been returned, and the responses tabulated by Tauber (the lone woman at the meeting). According to her report, those who responded had collections ranging from just a few instruments to a high of three thousand. About three-quarters of them played, either semiprofessionally or professionally, and nearly half were teachers of some sort—at a university, in public or private schools, or as individual instructors. They were overwhelmingly male (ninety-nine men and nine women) and ranged in age from eighteen to eighty-two. They felt that the proposed society should “inform, encourage, and publish research projects; help collectors learn of one another; and aid in the sale/purchase of instruments.”<sup>6</sup> Some expressed concern that belonging to an organization might lead to increased publicity and compromise the security of their collections. Few had definite plans for disposition of their collections, but many felt that the society might be helpful in that process.<sup>7</sup>

The group's purpose, as stated in the first draft of the bylaws, was “to further the cause of organology,” specifically through “the study and collecting of historical musical instruments, and their performance, design, and production.” The newsletter closed with an invitation to join, asking potential members to send the \$5.00 membership fee, along with information concerning their musical interests, to treasurer Swain.<sup>8</sup>

AMIS papers, National Music Museum (NMM), the University of South Dakota.

6. *Newsletter of the Historical Musical Society* 1, no. 1 (November 1971): [2], quoting responses to the questionnaire. The society's name was evidently mistyped on the masthead, omitting the word “Instrument”; the group is listed as “The Historical Musical Instrument Society” in the proposed bylaws, on page [4]. The first three newsletters appeared under different titles while the society's name was being decided upon. Volume 1, no. 2 was entitled *Newsletter of the Musical Instrument Society*. Volume 1, no. 3 was entitled *Newsletter of the American Musical Instrument Society*, the society's name from April 1972. Since these names all refer essentially to the same publication, which was numbered continuously from the first issue, all further references will appear as *Newsletter*, with volume number and date as identifiers.

7. *Newsletter* 1, no. 1 (November 1971): [3]. Additional questionnaire results were reported in *Newsletter* 1, no. 2 (February 1972): 3. By that time, responses had been received from 120 men, 12 women, and 1 museum. Thirty-five American states were represented, with additional responses from Canada and Austria.

8. *Newsletter* 1, no. 1 (November 1971): [4–5].

### *An American Chapter of the Galpin Society*

At about the same time, two members of the music faculty of Jersey City State College—Arnold Fromme and Alvin Fossner, both of whom were also Galpin Society members—were busy making plans for a three-day conference to serve as an organizational meeting of a projected Northeastern regional chapter of the Galpin Society.<sup>9</sup> Invitations were sent out in November 1971 to American members of the Galpin Society,<sup>10</sup> and the conference was held January 7–9, 1972, at the college. It opened on Friday with a tour of the new musical instrument exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, after which the group returned to New Jersey. Paper sessions began on Friday afternoon and continued on Saturday and Sunday, intermixed with several organizational meetings and periods for socializing. In all, ten papers were read (listed in Appendix 2). The Saturday sessions concluded with a concert of medieval and Renaissance music by the group Music for a While.

As an introduction to the paper sessions, a keynote address was given by Cynthia Adams Hoover. During her talk, she outlined a vision for an American society devoted to musical instruments. In particular, she urged the assembled group to include the study of American instruments among its goals and to broaden its vision to take in the world's music as well. She emphasized that this should not be to the exclusion of European traditions, but she hoped the new organization would avoid the Eurocentric bias of so much of American musicology of the time.<sup>11</sup>

9. During its short existence, the group was referred to by several names. The program of the Jersey City meeting was entitled "Galpin Society – Projected / Northeastern American Chapter / Organizational Meeting / January 7th, 8th & 9th, 1972." In a handwritten draft of minutes of the planning session held during the Smithsonian Institution meeting in April 1972, Selch referred to the group as the "ad hoc Galpin Society Members of Northeastern America."

10. The invitation was dated 23 November 1971, but plans had evidently been underway for some time, since the invitation mentioned an "excellent response to our previous inquiry."

11. "Keynote Address, Jersey City State College, Jan. 7, 1972," typescript, p. 8; Hoover papers, Smithsonian Institution Archives (hereafter referred to as "Hoover papers"). Hoover's ideas, which today seem unextraordinary, were at that time unusual and forward-looking, since in scholarly circles "American music history" had long meant the history of European art music in America. At meetings of the American Musicological Society at this time, music outside the European tradition was generally neglected, so much so that in 1975 a group of Americanist scholars, tired of the skepticism or rejection that greeted their attempts to pursue serious study of American music, formed a new group, The Sonneck Society (named for Oscar G. T. Sonneck, pioneer scholar of American mu-

Several people who had attended the Scarsdale meeting, plus a number of those who had sent in a membership fee in response to the November newsletter, were also at the Jersey City meeting, which had an attendance of “nearly fifty interested persons.” During the organizational sessions it became clear that “it was the unanimous feeling of those present that the two groups had identical aims and goals.”<sup>12</sup> Therefore they decided to proceed as one group. They chose to form an independent organization, as opposed to becoming an appendage to the Galpin Society, although that group was certainly invoked as a model.

The latter decision may have been influenced by the reaction of the Galpin Society’s governing committee to the Americans’ wish to establish a chapter. The committee had approved the idea but offered some ground rules, one of which was that the American group would not have a separate journal.<sup>13</sup> Since a number of those who attended the Jersey City meeting thought that an American journal devoted to musical instrument studies was an important goal, this restriction may have made the chapter idea seem less attractive. Although the American group chose to become a separate organization, ties to the Galpin Society remained strong. In June, several American members of both societies would travel to England to attend the Galpin Annual General Meeting, during which the chairman, Brian Galpin, “welcomed the formation of a sister society in the U.S.A.”<sup>14</sup>

No minutes of the organizational sessions have survived, but the news-

sic), devoted to “all aspects of American music and music in America.” Hoover was one of the founding members.

12. “American Galpinists,” *Newsletter* 1, no. 2 (February 1972): 4.

13. Correspondence from William Waterhouse, Archivist of the Galpin Society, 31 July 2007, quoting from the minutes of the 192nd Galpin Society meeting, held in London, 16 December 1971: “A letter from Mr Anthony Baines (Hon. Editor) had been received setting out the Americans’ wish to establish an American ‘Chapter’ of the Galpin Society. The Committee welcomed this and decided upon the following ground rules for the proposed American branch:

- (1) The American branch not to have a separate journal
- (2) to encourage a separate Bulletin, supplying 3 copies to England
- (3) to be self-financing
- (4) to have some sort of Committee structure
- (5) for the Galpin Society and the American branch to exchange Committee Minutes
- (6) not to advertise events or otherwise function in the name of the Galpin Society but, rather, in the name of the American Chapter of the Galpin Society or such name as they take for themselves.”

14. Minutes of the 25th Annual General Meeting of the Galpin Society, held in London, 24 June 1972. Correspondence from Waterhouse.



letter report mentioned two topics that were discussed: how the purpose of the society should be stated and what the society's name should be. The name "The Historical Musical Instrument Society" had been proposed during the Scarsdale meeting, and this had appeared as the society's name in the first newsletter. But there were some objections to "historical" as being too restrictive, perhaps too suggestive of "antique instruments" in the European art-music tradition. In defining the purpose of the society, the bylaws proposed at the Scarsdale meeting mentioned "historical musical instruments" and the term "organology." Not all at the Jersey City meeting were in favor of using this somewhat scientific-sounding term that, as a Galpin Society member once noted, sounded like "studying [the] biology of pipe organs."<sup>15</sup> It is unlikely that a consensus on either the name or the stated purpose was reached in Jersey City, but it is clear that from the beginning the aim of the society was to be inclusive both in subjects of interest and in membership. During the meeting, two ad hoc committees were appointed—a bylaws committee to refine the draft Maynard had produced, and a publications committee to look into the possibility of publishing a journal.

Another gathering had been in the planning stages even before the Jersey City meeting was held, and Rosenbaum and Swain had been in contact with the Smithsonian Institution about holding a national meeting there. Several people (Fromme, Hoover, Maynard, and Edwin M. Ripin) were added to the program committee, and an announcement, with a call for papers and an invitation to demonstrate "unusual or historical" instruments, appeared in the second newsletter (February 1972), along with a full report on the Jersey City meeting.

### ***A Look Back to 1965***

The consensus that was speedily reached in Jersey City makes it clear that this gathering had been preceded by some years of talk, thought, and desire for such an organization by a number of people. One event that should be considered part of the prehistory of AMIS was the colloquium on "Music, Museums, and Instruments in the United States" that took place September 25–26, 1965, at Yale University. Attendance was

15. As quoted by Hoover, in "Keynote Address," 9, Hoover papers.

by invitation: the thirty who came included museum curators, music historians, performers, and instrument makers, several of whom would later be instrumental in forming AMIS or involved in the organization's early days—Hoover, Howard Mayer Brown (professor of musicology at the University of Chicago), Friedrich von Huene (Boston maker of historical woodwinds), Josef Marx (oboist and professor of musicology at C. W. Post College of Long Island University), and Robert A. Warner (curator of the Stearns Collection, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor). The ostensible purpose of the colloquium was to discuss topics such as the musical instrument museum as a research institution in music and the educational use of instrument collections, to name two sessions listed in the invitation. But, according to a report written by Hoover for her Smithsonian colleagues, the primary theme that emerged was the need for a permanent forum for exchanging ideas and discussing problems related to instrument collections and museums. Many at the meeting expressed the hope that the Smithsonian itself could facilitate the sharing of information. The immediate result was the formation of a committee to investigate ways to achieve the group's goals; Hoover and Brown were both on the committee, which was chaired by Theodore Grame, a young faculty member at Yale.<sup>16</sup>

Over the next few years the committee met several times, discussing, for example, whether it would be better to form a separate society or to create a liaison with an established organization such as the Association of American Museums, the American Musicological Society (AMS), or the Society for Ethnomusicology. In 1967 Brown proposed a liaison with AMS in a letter to Jan LaRue (then president of that organization), suggesting the formation of a "Study Group on Musical Instruments" operating "under the sponsorship of the AMS . . . [that would] function like a standing committee and might issue an irregular newsletter."<sup>17</sup> The com-

16. "Report on trip to New York and New Haven, September 22–26, 1965," memorandum by Hoover, 5 October 1965, Hoover papers. This memorandum also includes a report on a meeting of the International Committee of Musical Instrument Museums and Collections (CIMCIM: the International Council of Museums [ICOM] committee on musical instruments) that Hoover attended at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, September 22–24.

17. Brown to LaRue, 6 February 1967, Hoover papers. Although no standing group was formed, the AMS meeting in December 1967 included an informal study group on musical instruments, chaired by Emanuel Winternitz (one of several on different topics), and a session on musical instruments took place at AMS meetings in 1968 (Yale) and 1970 (Toronto), according to listings of programs in the *Journal of the American Musicological*

mittee also planned to issue a newsletter. Hoover drafted an introduction, and several articles were outlined, but the newsletter never appeared, and the committee stopped meeting after about two years.

It is not clear just why little came of this endeavor. It may simply have been that many of those who attended the Yale conference (as well as their colleagues) already had fairly good methods of keeping in touch. They were members of other organizations that met periodically, their work paths crossed, they consulted with each other on specific projects. Informal networks, though not ideal, worked well enough for the time being.

By 1971, however, the time and circumstances were evidently right. An influence that should not be overlooked is the early music movement, which blossomed in the 1960s and '70s. Though the movement's roots in the United States go back at least to the 1920s, it was the performances of the New York Pro Musica Antiqua, founded by Noah Greenberg and Bernard Krainis, that acquainted a wider audience with the sights and sounds of early instruments, through the compelling pageantry of the medieval liturgical dramas *The Play of Daniel* (1958) and *The Play of Herod* (1963).<sup>18</sup> This ensemble became an inspiration for other professional groups and for numerous amateur and college ensembles. With professional groups such as the New York Pro Musica using an array of heretofore little-known instruments, amateur performers (many of whom were also interested in collecting instruments) broadened their interests beyond the recorder and viol. At that time, the emphasis for both museums and private collectors was the restoration of musical instruments to playing condition. As demand increased for instruments that could be played, and as museums began to be more aware of the value of their original instruments for study purposes, the making of historical copies flourished, resulting in beneficial interactions among makers, researchers, professional and amateur performers, and collectors.<sup>19</sup>

In the creation of AMIS there seems to have been a particular synergy in the combination of private and institutional collectors who brought

*Society.*

18. *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, s.v. "Early-Music Revival," by Paul C. Echols.

19. Evidence for the shift in emphasis from restoration to conservation can be seen in the titles of panel sessions at the 1975, 1978, and 1981 meetings (see discussion below under "Annual Meetings," and Appendix 2). Robert Barclay (one of the 1981 panelists) explores current practices in *The Preservation and Use of Historic Musical Instruments* (Sterling, VA: Earthscan, 2004), reviewed in this JOURNAL 32 (2006), 191–94.

enthusiasm and expertise from various fields and focused it on forming the society. Perhaps as a result of the various forces that shaped the early music movement, other societies devoted to musical instruments were also formed in the United States at this time. Those founded during the 1960s include the Viola da Gamba Society of America (1962), the Catgut Acoustical Society (1963), and the Lute Society of America (1967). During the 1970s, organizations formed included the International Horn Society (1970), the International Double Reed Society (1971), the Guild of American Luthiers (1972), the National Flute Association (1972), the Violin Society of America (1974), and the International Trumpet Guild (1974). (A more complete list is given in Appendix 3.) These groups were devoted to one type of instrument, or to a group of related ones; by contrast, the subject of AMIS was the world of musical instruments. In the ensuing years many other organizations dealing with musical instruments have been formed, but AMIS and the Galpin Society remain the only generalist societies.

### ***First National Meeting***

A national meeting in Washington, D.C., had been discussed as early as the Scarsdale gathering, and on April 15–16, 1972, a conference was held at the Smithsonian Institution, with about sixty members and guests in attendance. The quick succession of events—with the first planning meeting for the society near the end of October 1971 and a national meeting less than six months later—points to a sense of pent-up energy ready to burst forth and take action.

Because of a bomb scare at the Smithsonian, the first afternoon's events were moved to the Cosmos Club.<sup>20</sup> As a newsletter later reported, "although the agenda was changed somewhat, no one was left out."<sup>21</sup> Overall, fourteen papers were read, several of them including performance demonstrations, and two concerts were performed. Social breaks gave participants the opportunity to show, discuss, and exchange instruments.

20. The Cosmos Club was a private social club in Washington, DC. A dinner had already been scheduled at the club for that evening, courtesy of one of its members, Dr. Wesley Oler, who had assisted with plans for the meeting. He was able to arrange for the move when the Smithsonian Institution building had to be evacuated.

21. *Newsletter* 1, no. 3 (June 1972): 2.



FIGURE 1. Cynthia Adams Hoover and Arnold Fromme at the first national meeting, Washington, D.C., April 1972. *Newsletter* 1, no. 3 (June 1972): 2.

Although the Galpin Society had often been cited as a model, the new society was already taking a different course. As Frederick Selch remembered, Galpin Society meetings were “very social” with members “drinking tea and playing instruments.”<sup>22</sup> While camaraderie was certainly a goal of the new society, the paper sessions at both the Jersey City State College and the Smithsonian meetings added another dimension to the gatherings.<sup>23</sup>

The Smithsonian conference included a two-hour planning session (referred to as a “business meeting”), chaired by Arnold Fromme (elected at the session as temporary chairman), with Selch (acting secretary) taking minutes. When Fromme assumed the chair, he pointed out that the conference was the result of the merger of two groups of persons interested in

22. Telephone interview, April 2001.

23. According to Jeremy Montagu, a long-time member of both societies, a Galpin Society meeting was (and still remained in the early twenty-first century) generally a one-day event, usually taking place at a museum with an interesting musical instrument collection. The goal was an informal gathering, with plenty of time for members to view the collection, show each other recent acquisitions, and do some swapping. In addition to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) (with a business session) in the summer, there was usually a winter meeting, offering similar opportunities. Great Britain being much smaller than the United States, there was little need for multi-day conferences to make it worthwhile traveling a long distance. E-mail message to the author, 24 June 2007. At the end of the twentieth century there began to be occasional joint meetings with other societies such as AMIS, CIMCIM, and the Historic Brass Society, lasting several days and including scholarly paper sessions.



FIGURE 2. James M. Swain at the first national meeting, Washington, D.C., April 1972. *Newsletter* 1, no. 3 (June 1972): 4..

musical instruments, the organized Historical Musical Instrument Society and the ad hoc “Galpin Society Members of Northeastern America,” and that on January 8, 1972, at the Jersey City meeting, the membership of the two groups (which was widely duplicative) had decided to join together.<sup>24</sup> The Smithsonian planning session must have included discussions of points raised at the Scarsdale and Jersey City meetings, having to do with defining the purpose of the society and establishing procedures. The question of the name had evidently already been settled, since the event was billed as the “First National Meeting of the American Musical Instrument Society.”

The evolution of the name sheds light on the envisioned purpose of the society. The name proposed in Scarsdale—“The Historical Musical Instrument Society”—reflected the interests of a group of collectors primarily focused on antique instruments.<sup>25</sup> After the Jersey City meeting, when those who had a broader interest in instruments pointed out the restrictive nature of “historical,” the group was referred to as “The Musical

24. Frederick Selch, draft of minutes of planning session (business meeting), AMIS papers, NMM. Only some sketchy notes and a handwritten, partial draft of minutes (headed “American Musical Instrument Society / Minutes of First Annual Meeting”) have been found. A report on this planning session (probably written by newsletter editor James Swain) appeared under the title “Business Meeting” in *Newsletter* 1, no. 3 (June 1972), 2; a copy of the report appears in the official set of AMIS minutes, suggesting that no formal minutes were produced.

25. The name originally appeared as “Historical Musical Instrument Association” on letterhead used by Swain for a letter to Phillip T. Young, dated 26 August 1971, two months before the Scarsdale meeting (Phillip T. Young papers, AMIS Archives, SCPA); then as “The Historical Musical Instrument Society” in the proposed bylaws printed in *Newsletter* 1, no. 1 (November 1971), [4–5]. Responses to the August 1971 questionnaire had brought in many suggestions on the antique musical instrument theme but also some with a broader focus, for example, “The Steinert Society” (after Morris Steinert, the first American collector—an obvious reference to the naming of the Galpin Society), and “American Organological Society” (with “Bessaraboff Review” suggested as the name of a society publication). AMIS papers, NMM.

Instrument Society” for several months.<sup>26</sup> The current name, “The American Musical Instrument Society,” first appeared on the program for the Smithsonian Institution meeting. The addition of “American” must have been decided on by the planning committee. In this case, “American” referred to an American society, not American instruments (though as Hoover had pointed out, the study of American instruments was a worthwhile goal for the group). The additional word identified the society’s home, gave the name more substance, and created a pleasing acronym.

The planning session continued with a report by Cynthia Hoover for the publications committee, formed just three months earlier. She presented information on possibilities for establishing a formal journal, emphasizing the need for high-quality scholarship on musical instruments.<sup>27</sup> (A full account of the establishment of the JOURNAL will be given below.) Lastly, a nominating committee was appointed, consisting of Hoover, Dale Higbee, and William E. Gribbon. They met on Saturday afternoon to select a slate for electing officers and a board of governors, and reported back to the assembled group during a general business meeting the next day. The slate was carefully balanced between the two originating groups. The candidate for president—Robert Rosenbaum, who had been chosen as temporary president at the Scarsdale meeting—ran unopposed, but for each of the other offices—vice-president, secretary, and treasurer—there were two candidates. Twelve people were nominated to run for five seats on the board of governors. At the general business meeting, additional nominations for these seats were made from the floor, bringing the number of candidates to fifteen. (The entire slate is listed in Appendix 4.) The ballots were mailed out in May, to be returned by mid-June.<sup>28</sup> When the votes were tallied, the first board consisted of Rosenbaum as president, Fromme as vice-president, Linda Tauber as secretary, and James

26. In a letter to Arne B. Larson (24 January 1972), Swain explained that the word “Historical” had been eliminated “so that modern instruments will not be excluded.” In the second newsletter (vol. 1, no. 2, February 1972), the name was given as “The Musical Instrument Society,” and the registration form for the first national meeting, apparently drawn up by Rosenbaum in February 1972, also used this name.

27. Selch, notes for minutes of the planning session (business meeting) of April 1972, AMIS papers, NMM.

28. Selch, draft of a letter to the membership, 19 May 1972, AMIS papers, NMM. The letter accompanying the ballot explained that the added nominations consisted of the members of the committee “who had generously not suggested themselves.” It also explained that the enclosed ballot was a second, corrected, one, required because “an ungracious gremlin had inexplicably removed Cynthia Hoover’s name” from the first version.

Swain as treasurer (he was also newsletter editor). The first five governors were Higbee, Hoover, Barbara Lambert, Edwin Ripin, and Friedrich von Huene.<sup>29</sup> The nine-member board was indeed diverse, including three in health-related professions (Rosenbaum, a PhD research biologist; Swain, an MD radiologist, and Higbee, a PhD psychologist), all of whom played and collected woodwinds; three museum curators (Hoover from Washington, D.C., Lambert from Boston, and Ripin from New York City); one professor of music (Fromme); one professional musician (Tauber); and one instrument builder (von Huene).

### ***Founding Date and Founding Members***

Having followed AMIS through a year's events, let us go back to address two basic questions about the society—when was it founded and who were the founding members? The founding year has long been stated as 1971, starting with early letterhead created by Swain,<sup>30</sup> in the *JOURNAL* (from 1975), and more recently in the AMIS Directory and on the web site.<sup>31</sup>

To review, the first organizational meeting was held in October of 1971; this was followed in January 1972 by another organizational meeting attended by a different (but overlapping) group of people, during which the two nascent groups decided to join forces. April 1972 brought a meeting of the combined groups. Billed as the “First National Meeting of the American Musical Instrument Society,”<sup>32</sup> this event marked the first use of this name. Some could argue for 1972 as a more accurate founding date for the society as we know it, but few could argue with beginnings in 1971.

Founding members start with the eight who met in October 1971, but

29. Undated report, Hoover papers. The ballot indicated that the three governors receiving the most votes would serve three-year terms, and that the other two would serve two-year terms. However, the report mentions nothing about term lengths, and no further reference to two-year or three-year terms for the original governors has been found.

30. Swain to Arne B. Larson, 24 January 1972, with letterhead “The Historical Musical Instrument / Society / Founded in 1971.” The letterhead also listed Rosenbaum, Maynard, and Swain as Acting Officers. AMIS papers, NMM.

31. This date is given in the inaugural issue of the *JOURNAL*, on the *JOURNAL* information page, verso of title page; in the directory, as heading to the Organization page (beginning with the 2006–7 directory); and on the Society's website (probably dating from 2001, when Margaret Downie Banks redesigned the site).

32. Program of meeting, Hoover papers.



to those should be added others who planned and participated in the meetings in January and April 1972. A total of forty names can be gleaned from newsletter accounts of the three meetings, programs from the 1972 meetings, and the first ballot. While some members played a larger part than others and some may have made contributions that were not noted, I believe that these forty should be recognized as the founding members. They are listed, with notes about their early activities for the society, in Appendix 5.

### ***Organization and Leadership***

This section describes how the AMIS defined itself in its statement of purpose and bylaws, and how it was governed. Appendix 4 lists the officers and board for each year, and includes details about the elections, where available.

**Bylaws and statement of purpose.** The bylaws committee appointed at the Jersey City meeting (consisting of Maynard, Fromme, Ripin, Mordecai S. Rubin, and Selch) refined the draft agreed upon in Scarsdale to produce a version that was mailed to members in March 1972 for their approval via a mail ballot.<sup>33</sup> One of the major changes was in the statement of purpose, which in the draft had appeared as: “The object of this Society shall be to further the cause of organology. The specific objective shall be the study and collecting of historical musical instruments, and their performance, design, and production.” In the revised version it read: “The object of this society shall be to further the study of all aspects of musical instruments, as well as their collection and their use.”

Gone was the term “organology,” which some considered problematic.<sup>34</sup> As used by Nicholas Bessaraboff, organology referred particularly to the scientific and engineering aspects of musical instruments; the term may have seemed at odds with the broad cultural view advocated by Hoover

33. Although no mention of voting or approval can be found in newsletters or minutes, it is clear that the bylaws were approved as mailed to the membership, since identical bylaws were submitted in 1978 as one of numerous “exhibits” required when application was made for tax-exempt status.

34. The term was introduced by Nicholas Bessaraboff (1894–1973) in his *Ancient Musical Instruments: An Organological Study of the Musical Instruments in the Leslie Lindsey Mason Collection at the Museum of Fine Arts*, Boston (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1941).

and others, as well as too esoteric for a society trying to appeal to a wide range of interests and expertise. The revised statement of purpose places more emphasis on study than on collecting, and specifies “all aspects” of musical instruments without adding much in the way of detail. But as one member pointed out, the new statement could be read as saying that the object was “to further . . . the use of instruments,” whereas he believed the idea was to further the *study* of the use of instruments.<sup>35</sup> This ambiguity was removed in 1973, when a differently worded statement of purpose was included in the Certificate of Incorporation (which will be discussed below). There the purpose is stated as: “To continue a course of study of all aspects of musical instruments and particularly information pertaining to the collecting, history, performance, use, construction and restoration of musical instruments of all ages and all peoples.” Though awkwardly worded, the 1973 statement provides details about “all aspects” that make clearer the goals of AMIS. Unfortunately, there is no documentation of how the statement was devised. Since Rosenbaum spearheaded the incorporation process, he may have written it himself, feeling that the stated purpose needed to be expanded, and that he could speak for the society.

Since the Certificate of Incorporation was a legal document, the statement of purpose therein became the official version, although the society’s bylaws were not changed to reflect this at that time. In 1978, when the society finally received its tax-exempt status, it was deemed necessary to completely revise the bylaws, in part to bring the statement of purpose in line with the Certificate of Incorporation. In the new version of the bylaws (adopted March 1979) the statement of purpose appeared as: “to promote the knowledge of all aspects of musical instruments, particularly pertaining to the collecting, history, performance on, use, construction and restoration of musical instruments of all ages and all peoples.” This conveyed the same meaning as the version in the Certificate of Incorporation, but in a more refined wording. It remains the official statement of purpose to the present day (2021).

An alternate version, however, appeared in 1975 in the first issue of the *Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society*, in a sentence defining the society: “AMIS is an international organization founded in 1971 to promote study of the history, design, and use of musical instruments in

35. John W. Coltman to Swain, 17 March 1972, AMIS papers, NMM.

all cultures and from all periods.”<sup>36</sup> In recent times this gracefully worded version, which succinctly sums up the goals of AMIS, has more often been used as the statement of purpose than the official one.

How does AMIS’s statement of purpose compare with statements from the bylaws of some similar societies, for example, the American Musicological Society, the Society for American Music, and the Galpin Society? The American Musicological Society’s object is “the advancement of research in the various fields of music as a branch of learning and scholarship.” The mention of “various fields of music,” could be read as similar to AMIS’s “instruments of all ages and all peoples,” but AMS was long conservative in its idea of which “various topics” ought or ought not to be studied. The emphasis on “learning and scholarship” was consistent with the relative newness of musicology as an accepted field of study at the time of that society’s founding (in 1934, just a few years after the appointment of Otto Kinkeldey as the first professor of musicology in the United States, at Cornell University in 1930). Perhaps as a sign of the more free-spirited 1970s, AMIS decided to promote the “knowledge” and the “study” of musical instruments, but did not insist that this had to be scholarly—suggesting that the society recognized that worthwhile study could well be carried out by an inquisitive amateur without a scholarly background.

The Society for American Music (founded as The Sonneck Society in 1975) states its purpose as “to carry out educational projects in order to assist in the dissemination of accurate information and research dealing with all aspects of American music and music in America.” Like AMIS, SAM stated its purpose in an inclusive way, aiming to embrace all aspects of its field of study, as evidenced by its welcome to enthusiasts as well as scholars. The goal of “educational projects” to disseminate “accurate information” may reflect the society’s determination to make American topics accepted in scholarly circles, something that was not the case in the early 1970s.

Founded in 1946 to commemorate the pioneering work of the late Canon Francis W. Galpin, the Galpin Society states a threefold purpose: “(a) to promote the study of the history, construction and functions of instru-

36. This statement appears on the verso of the title page of volume 1. As far as I can determine, this was the earliest appearance of that wording, so it may well have been written by the journal’s first editor, Thomas Forrest Kelly. Consulted about it in 2007, Kelly could not remember, but suggested that since he would not have published it without approval of the board of governors, it should stand as the board’s expression.

ments of music, and all cognate matters; (b) to further such research by the publication of a Journal, whose pages shall be open to papers and other matter; and (c) to propagate a knowledge of instrumental history by any other means which may from time to time be considered desirable and practicable.” A broad compass is expressed in “and all cognate matters,” but the inclusion of all instruments is implied, not stated, as it was in the AMIS statement. The description of the Galpin Society in that society’s journal had, in fact, originally referred to “research into the history of European instruments . . .” (volume 1, 1948), with the term “European” being removed in 1963 and the statement changed to read “instruments of all kinds . . .”<sup>37</sup> The goal of publishing a journal shows the importance this society placed on that method of promoting study; the first volume of the *Galpin Society Journal* appeared just two years after the society’s founding. Those who composed the AMIS statement of purpose surely knew and agreed with that of the Galpin Society.

**Board meetings and elections.** The first meeting of AMIS’s elected board of governors was held on October 15, 1972, at which time it was decided that the society should become an incorporated organization; Rosebaum was delegated to start the process. Plans for a journal were progressing, with a “pro tem editorial board,” consisting of Hoover, Ripin, and Lambert, having been appointed to search for an editor. Plans for the second annual meeting, to be held in Boston, were underway, with Lambert in charge of local arrangements and Hoover heading the program committee.

The second election, held in March 1973, offered candidates only for secretary and treasurer, and seems to have served to diplomatically reassign some board duties. Just one candidate was proposed for each office: William Maynard for secretary and Linda Tauber for treasurer. Results were announced at the annual business meeting in April, confirming Maynard as secretary, replacing Tauber, and Tauber as treasurer, in turn replacing James Swain, who was then appointed to the new office of membership chair. Maynard also became newsletter editor, replacing Swain.<sup>38</sup>

37. See also *Galpin Society Bulletin* 85 (October 1992): [6] (remarks by David Rycroft, editor of the *Galpin Society Journal*, on the forthcoming volume, which would include several articles on non-Western and ancient musical instruments).

38. *Newsletter* 2, no. 2 (June 1973): 2. Maynard’s first issue was June 1973; one of his useful introductions was adding a masthead that included a listing of the officers and board—making it easier for a historian to keep track of the society’s leadership.

Gaining incorporated status turned out to be a fairly simple matter (at least in New York State, where the papers were filed), requiring a single two-page legal document with attached affidavits for signatures. The papers, signed in April 1973, stated that the group had “not been formed for pecuniary profit or financial gain” and that the territory in which operations were conducted was “worldwide.”<sup>39</sup> This was the first step toward gaining tax-exempt status, a more complicated procedure that took until 1978 to complete.

The election of 1974 brought no changes to the board, which caused Hoover to wonder if the society was beginning to become a “closed corporation.” In response, the board decided that “from now on every effort would be made to include new faces.”<sup>40</sup> The following year, two new governors were elected to replace two whose terms of office were up. After the election announcement, a board recommendation was put forth to increase the number of governors from the current five to eleven within three years, by adding two additional governors each year. When the membership approved this measure, two additional governors were immediately announced—Howard Mayer Brown and Betty Austin Hensley.<sup>41</sup> At that time, there was no limit on how many times governors could be reelected (the term was three years), but there was a six-year term limit (three two-year terms) for the offices of president and vicepresident. From references in both board and business meeting minutes it is clear that at least some members wanted the board to be more varied and the nominating committee to seek more than one candidate for elected positions, something that had not been done since the first election in 1972.<sup>42</sup>

39. “Certificate of Incorporation of the American Musical Instrument Society, Inc.,” AMIS Archives, SCPA. The incorporation was under Section 402 of the Not-For-Profit Corporation Law of New York State; the affidavits were signed by Robert M. Rosenbaum and William J. Maynard, both sworn to be members of “the majority of a Committee duly authorized to incorporate The American Musical Instrument Society” on 20 April 1973.

40. Minutes of the board meeting, 5 April 1974. In response to Hoover’s comment, Rosenbaum cautioned that “getting the Society and the Journal underway required considerable time and attention from the same people if the effort were to be effective and unified.”

41. Though this is never explicitly stated in minutes of either the board meeting on April 5 or the business meeting the following day, the 1975 ballot must have indicated that additional governors were to be elected. During the board meeting, reference was made to the “recent ballot increasing the number of Board members to 15”; the board decided that such an important matter should be voted on by the membership, not decided by themselves (or, as it may have happened, by the president alone).

42. Minutes of the business meeting for 1975 reported that “after some discussion from

After this, the nominating process became more open, with the nominating committee announced at the business meeting or in the newsletter. New names showed up on the ballots, but the same stalwarts tended to be reelected, keeping the board much the same through the first ten years.<sup>43</sup> At least one nominating committee took into account geographical location in choosing nominees and also decided not to nominate more than one candidate from the Shrine to Music Museum (former name of the National Music Museum).<sup>44</sup>

In January 1976, the first volume of the long-awaited *JOURNAL* (dated 1975) appeared, having been in preparation since the spring of 1973. The handsome volume was very well received, and the board reappointed the editor, Thomas Forrest Kelly, for the next three years. With large bills from the publisher and printer to pay, however, board and business meeting discussions began to turn to ways to increase revenue and cut costs. Betty Hensley was appointed chair of a membership committee, which promptly recommended that each member should bring in at least one new member per year. Expanding advertisements in the newsletter was discussed, as was the possibility of getting grant support for the journal.

During this period, André Larson, who had been elected to the board in 1976, became increasingly involved with administrative aspects of AMIS. When Maynard stepped down as newsletter editor, Larson took over,<sup>45</sup> starting his editorship with a combined June–October 1976 newsletter. The following year he was directed by the board to open a membership office at the University of South Dakota, and in 1979 the board voted to establish the office of Registrar of the Society and to appoint Margaret

the floor it was decided that the Nominating Committee [should] actively solicit more than one name for each office.”

43. Two people remained on the board for the whole ten-year period—Rosenbaum (first as president, then governor) and Hoover (as governor, then vice-president, then governor again). Barbara Lambert served as governor every year except 1977. It was not until 1988 that governors were limited to two consecutive terms (with the possibility of serving again after an interval of one year). Also in 1988, the number of times the president or vice-president could be reelected was changed from three times to two (an individual could serve again after an interval of two years).

44. William Maynard, chair of the nominating committee, to committee member André Larson, 15 December 1978. Maynard noted that there were several New Yorkers in office, and suggested that nominating Phillip Young would serve to expand the board geographically. He agreed that it might appear that “too much input was coming from your office” if an additional employee of the University of South Dakota were to be added to the slate. AMIS papers, NMM.

45. Larson to Selch, 5 August 1976, AMIS papers, NMM.

Downie, newly employed by the Shrine to Music Museum, to that position.

While these aspects of AMIS operation were beginning to run more smoothly, the financial state of the society was worsening. The *JOURNAL* proved to be more expensive than expected, and although offering a journal brought in new members, there were not enough to create the cash flow required for paying the large bills from the publisher, Stinehour Press, and the printer, Meriden Gravure.<sup>46</sup>

In April 1977 there was a substantial change in AMIS leadership. After six years as president and vice-president, Rosenbaum and Fromme stepped down, and Frederick Selch was elected as president, with Cynthia Hoover as vice-president.<sup>47</sup> Alan G. Moore became secretary (replacing Maynard) and Tauber continued as treasurer. By this time, there were eleven governors, making a board of fifteen, the size at which it has remained. The new officers faced a precarious financial situation, prompting Selch to meet with his vice-president and secretary to prepare a plan to tackle the problems. They decided that an audit committee should be established to prepare a complete official audit of the society's finances, but that despite financial problems the society should proceed with publishing volume 3 of the *JOURNAL*.<sup>48</sup>

Although AMIS had been incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1973, it had not yet received approval from the IRS for tax-exempt status. Selch felt that permission had been withheld because of poor records and inadequate financial reporting. The audit committee, consisting of Robert A. Lehman and Richard W. Abel, was designated to carry out an audit, prepare books and ledgers, and establish better financial procedures.<sup>49</sup> The committee worked quickly to prepare the financial reports and assemble the various documents required for filing the application for tax-exempt status, which was submitted before the end of 1977.<sup>50</sup> This, however, did

46. In her April 1977 report, treasurer Linda Tauber pointed out that AMIS was using the current year's membership revenue to pay for the previous year's journal. Robert E. Eliason papers, AMIS Archives, SCPA.

47. Although the first election was held in May 1972, terms were evidently counted as having started in 1971, the official founding date of the society.

48. Minutes of the Emergency Meeting of the Executive Committee of AMIS, 7 July 1977.

49. Selch to Abel, 10 August 1977, asking if he would join Lehman on the committee, Richard W. Abel papers, AMIS Archives, SCPA.

50. Application for Recognition of Exemption, Form 1023, under Section 501(c)(3) of

not solve immediate cash-flow problems, nor did a meeting of the board of governors in January 1978, which Selch convened to “consider how we can best solve the financial crisis of the organization.”<sup>51</sup> During the meeting, problems with both journal and financial operations were discussed at length, but no solutions reached. A partial payment of the society’s debt to Stinehour was authorized; the audit committee was asked to prepare a full record of operating expenses; a committee (Lehman and Maynard) was appointed to revise the bylaws, unchanged since 1972; and a nominating committee was appointed.

In 1978 more progress was made. During the annual meeting, held at Yale University, the board met to continue discussions about society finances, among other topics. Three board members offered to lend money to the society, in part to support publication of the third volume of the *JOURNAL*, which had just been mailed to members.<sup>52</sup> These loans, along with recent increases in membership, allowed Selch to present an improved financial picture during the business meeting, where he reported that the society was “playing catch-up ball successfully.” To assist in keeping the society solvent, dues were raised to \$18.00 (from \$12.50), and a student rate of \$10 was added. Selch also announced that Robert E. Eliason would be the new treasurer. Eliason was already serving as a governor and was assisting the society by handling financial matters concerning the annual meeting.<sup>53</sup> He was also capable of preparing the detailed financial reports the society needed.

The members of the board also felt that they needed to better understand the finances of journal publication, and, to this end, Hoover assembled information about costs and revenues to prepare a detailed analysis of the costs for volumes 1–3 of the *JOURNAL* (including calculations of the total cost composition per page) for the board to study. Keeping the journal on a regular production schedule also proved to be a problem through the first several volumes, but the financial strain on the society was due to

the Internal Revenue Code, with cover letter dated 12 December 1977, and exhibits A–K, which included copies of the Certificate of Incorporation from 1973, the 1972 Bylaws (still in use in 1977), sample publications and meeting programs, and financial summaries and balance sheets. AMIS Archives, SCPA.

51. Selch to officers and members of the board, 15 January 1978, AMIS papers, NMM.

52. The loans (by Selch, Hensley, and Rosenbaum) were designated to become donations when tax-exempt status was approved. Selch to board of governors, 8 March 1978, AMIS papers, NMM.

53. Minutes of the Emergency Meeting of the Executive Committee, 7 April 1978.



the high cost of publishing it.

In May 1978 the society was finally granted tax-exempt status, but the IRS was not yet completely satisfied with the society's governance. To keep the exemption, the society would have to amend its Certificate of Incorporation to bring its governing statutes into conformation with non-profit requirements.<sup>54</sup> Tax-exempt status would be terminated unless the amendment was made within one year. Since the bylaws committee was nearly finished preparing its suggested revisions, the board decided to place both changes before the membership at the same time. After board approval, the new bylaws and the proposed amendments to the Certificate of Incorporation were mailed to the membership for their approval. The bylaws had been reorganized and completely reworded to improve the flexibility and efficiency of operations, but the changes did not significantly modify the society's structure and organization. The Certificate of Incorporation amendments added two paragraphs—one to specify (in IRS-approved terms) the society's purpose as a not-for-profit organization, the other to provide for proper distribution of assets if the society were to dissolve. Approval by the membership was recorded by proxy voting at a "Special Meeting of Members" on March 19, 1979. This effort would mark the last major change to the governance of AMIS. Additional changes have been made to the bylaws, but none requiring a vote of the entire membership.<sup>55</sup>

Becoming tax-exempt did not solve all the society's financial problems, but it certainly helped, since the society could now accept tax deductible contributions. Suggestions by members about creating new, higher categories of membership to encourage giving were not carried out by the board, "largely because no one was able to propose a suitable incentive of nominal value to encourage members to elect higher memberships," but the designation "Friend of the American Musical Instrument Society" was created in 1980 to recognize anyone who contributed \$100 or more above dues for any given year.<sup>56</sup>

In April 1981, during the society's tenth annual meeting, held in Van-

54. "Internal Revenue Service, District Director" to "American Musical Instrument Society, Inc, c/o Frederick R. Selch, President," 24 May 1978, AMIS Archives, SCPA.

55. The 1979 bylaws, in fact, simplified the process of amending the bylaws, allowing the board to make routine changes without having to submit them to the membership.

56. Minutes of the board meeting, 14 November 1980. The suggestion was made by the journal editor, William E. Hettrick.

couver, British Columbia, Selch and Hoover stepped down as president and vice-president, having served two eventful terms.<sup>57</sup> Larson became president, with Edmund A. Bowles as vice-president. Lehman, who had worked so ably on both the audit committee and the bylaws committee, had first been elected secretary in 1980; he was reelected in 1981. Eliason continued as treasurer. In a brief valedictory speech, Selch reviewed the problems that existed when he took office and thanked the members for seeing the society through a difficult period.

### ***Annual Meetings***

Starting with the April 1972 meeting in Washington, D.C.—termed a “national meeting”—the annual gathering of the American Musical Instrument Society brought members together to discuss the subject of their mutual interest and to plan the governance of the society devoted to that interest. The Washington meeting has been described above. In this section, I will briefly describe meetings through the fifth year, highlighting points of interest and innovation, then make some general observations on the development of the meeting as a forum for the society. Lists of papers presented and other details of the meetings appear in Appendix 2.

The second annual meeting, held April 27–29, 1973, in Boston, was well attended, with over one hundred members present (an impressive number, as the membership was only slightly over two hundred). Hosted by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, its focus was the Leslie Lindsey Mason collection (formerly the Galpin collection). AMIS members, it was reported, were given liberal access to the collection by Barbara Lambert, Keeper of the Instruments, and were able to see, touch, and even play some of the instruments.<sup>58</sup> For the first time, papers were organized into sessions by topic: American Musical Instruments; Early Strings, Performance Practices; Keyboards; and Wind Instruments. Also for the first time, panel discussions were held: one on the “Philosophy of Collecting” with Rosenbaum as moderator; and one entitled “Instrument Makers’ Forum” with Hoover as moderator.

The 1974 meeting was the first in the Midwest. Held April 5–7 at the

57. Both Selch and Hoover remained on the board, but as governors.

58. *Newsletter* 2, no. 2 (June 1973): 3.



FIGURE 3. William E. Gribbon and Robert E. Eliason at the second annual meeting, Boston, April 1973. *Newsletter* 2, no. 2 (June 1973): 3.



FIGURE 4. Barbara Lambert, Cynthia Adams Hoover, and Frederick R. Selch at the second annual meeting, Boston, April 1973. *Newsletter* 2, no. 2 (June 1973): 4.

University of Michigan, it featured the Stearns Collection, under the curatorship of Robert A. Warner. A full day of pre-conference activities was offered on Friday, April 5: participants had the opportunity to visit the private collection of Edith Freeman in Detroit, the musical instrument collection at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, and the Stearns Collection; to tour the Burton Memorial Tower and Charles Baird Carillon with carillonneur Hudson Ladd (who gave a concert at 5:30 and another on Saturday at the same time); and, in the evening, to hear a concert of music for viol, harpsichord, Baroque violin, and quinton. The collection visits were informal: a sheet included with the program provided information about Mrs. Freeman's collection and asked members to "contact her directly for directions"; members were expected to travel on their own to Dearborn (bus schedule provided), where "Dr. Eliason will be glad to show the instruments to visitors." The meeting itself consisted of four paper sessions (twelve papers), two panel discussions (on "Collecting Musical Instruments" and "Early Pianos: Research and Performance Problems"), and various musical interludes and concerts, including a gamelan concert,



FIGURE 5. Instrument Makers' Forum, second annual meeting, Boston, April 1973. Seated: Frank Hubbard, Charles Fisk, Cynthia Adams Hoover (moderator), Donald Warnock. Standing: Friedrich von Huene. Hoover papers, Smithsonian Institution Archives.

in keeping with the Asian orientation of the Stearns Collection.

In 1975, AMIS returned to the East Coast for a meeting hosted by New York University. The largest attendance so far was recorded: over 150 people attended paper sessions and performances on Saturday and Sunday, April 5 and 6. On Friday, a smaller number had toured the André Mertens Galleries for Musical Instruments at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, private collections at the homes of Selch (in New York City) and Rosenbaum (in Scarsdale; the group traveled there by chartered bus), and a special exhibit at Lincoln Center. During six paper sessions, fourteen papers were intermixed with five short performances and a panel discussion.

The special exhibit, at the Lincoln Center Library and Museum for the Performing Arts, was entitled "Collectors' Choice: Musical Instruments of Five Centuries from American Private Collections." It had been arranged largely through the efforts of Jacques Français, a noted rare violin dealer, working with a selection committee from AMIS. The announcement inviting AMIS members to propose instruments for the exhibit had come from Rosenbaum (ex-officio, but obviously a driving force) in the fall of



FIGURE 6. Robert Sheldon, quinticlavichord, and Robert E. Eliason, ophicleide, played duets at the fourth annual meeting, New York, April 1975. *Newsletter* 4, no. 2 (June 1975): 3.

1974; he specified that the costs of packing and delivery to New York City would be borne by the owner-exhibitor, but assured instrument owners that Lincoln Center would provide insurance and security protection on the premises, as well as “design, graphic, mounting and exhibit case work by superbly qualified professionals.” More than ninety instruments from some ten AMIS members and a few nonmembers were ultimately selected and displayed, and the exhibit was open to the public from April 4 to June 21.<sup>59</sup>

The fifth annual meeting took place April 30–May 2, 1976, at the University of South Dakota at Vermillion; it was hosted by the Shrine to Music Museum, opened in 1973 to house the Arne B. Larson collection of musical instruments. The program featured a Friday open house at the new museum, then continued on Saturday and Sunday with six pa-

59. Copy of announcement courtesy of William Maynard. A twenty-page catalog of the exhibit was mailed to all AMIS members. Exhibitors from the society were Rosenbaum (with some twenty-five instruments), Français (seventeen), Lawrence Witten (fifteen), and several others with fewer instruments: Edwin Ripin, Lillian Caplin, William Maynard, Robert Straus, Frederick Selch, Marianne Wurlitzer, and Gene Bruck.



FIGURE 7. Fifth annual meeting, Vermillion, S.D., May 1976. Alan Moore, holding serpent, with Robert E. Eliason and André Larson. AMIS papers, NMM; courtesy of the National Music Museum.

per sessions encompassing twenty papers, and a panel session. Despite the meeting's being in what some may (at that time) have considered an out-of-the-way location, sixty-five people pre-registered, and attendance at sessions ranged to nearly one hundred.<sup>60</sup> A meeting in Vermillion every ten years has since become a tradition.

The annual meetings of the next five years followed a similar pattern. The availability of an interesting collection, if not at the host site, then nearby, was of primary importance in choosing the location. In its second five years, the society saw Moravian instruments at the Wachovia Museum in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, viewed Asian and Pacific collections at the Field Museum in Chicago (many of which had been collected for the World's Columbian Exhibition of 1893), visited important collections at Yale University and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and toured a special exhibition—"The Look of Music" (Vancouver, 1981)—organized by AMIS member Phillip T. Young, which displayed nearly four hundred instruments from major European and North American museums.

60. *Newsletter* 5, no. 2–3 (June–October 1976): 3, as reported by Betty Hensley.





FIGURE 8. Arne B. Larson showing instruments from his collection to (L to R): André Larson, Margaret Downie, Jeannine E. Abel, Richard W. Abel, and Stuart-Morgan Vance, during the fifth annual meeting, May 1976, Vermillion, S.D. AMIS papers, NMM; courtesy of the National Music Museum.

Perhaps even more enticing were the private collections occasionally opened by AMIS members to their colleagues. In 1974 Edith Freeman invited members traveling to the University of Michigan to stop in Detroit to see her collection of Renaissance, Baroque, and non-Western instruments, and in 1975 pre-conference activities of the New York meeting included tours of impressive collections at the homes of Selch and Rosenbaum. In 1979 Jeannine and Richard Abel invited “AMIS members traveling by car from the eastern part of the country to the Chicago meeting in April to stop at their home [in Pennsylvania] for an open house on the 18th to see their collection of woodwinds.”<sup>61</sup> Whether the collection was public or private, the draw for AMIS members, of course, was being able to discuss the instruments with knowledgeable collectors or curators and see items that would not normally be on view.

After considering what collections might be of interest to members, the planning committees then tried to vary the geographical location, but with much of the membership and a number of the major museums

61. *Newsletter* 8, no. 1 (March 1979): 4.



FIGURE 9. Robert Cole, Cline Hensley, and Betty Hensley talking to Arne B. Larson, fifth annual meeting, May 1976, Vermillion, S.D. *Newsletter* 5, no. 2–3 (June–October 1976): 3.

located on the East Coast, meetings tended to gravitate there. Six of the first ten meetings were on the eastern seaboard (four in the Northeast—Boston, New Haven, and New York [twice]—plus Washington, D.C., and Winston-Salem), three were in the Midwest, and not until its tenth anniversary did the society venture to the West Coast (Vancouver, British Columbia—outside the United States for the first time).

The AMIS statement of purpose mentioned instruments “of all ages and all peoples,” but judging from the titles of papers presented at meetings, many members were interested primarily in instruments of Western art music from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century. In this orientation toward Western art music, AMIS resembled the American Musicological Society at that time, although that organization was, in addition, strongly Eurocentric; at AMIS meetings American topics were welcomed, although European ones usually predominated. Program planners did not usually attempt to direct the meeting toward a particular theme. Only once in the ten years did a call for papers include a suggested focus: for the 1976 meeting in Vermillion, program chair André Larson encouraged mem-





FIGURE 10. Phillip T. Young and Robert M. Rosenbaum, during an open house at Rosenbaum's collection, Scarsdale, N.Y., May 11, 1980. AMIS papers, NMM; courtesy of the National Music Museum.

bers to propose “papers or performances dealing with American music and musical instruments, including various ethnic influences,” in keeping with the celebration of the American Bicentennial.<sup>62</sup> At that meeting, six of twenty papers discussed American topics (one on North American Indian instruments, another comparing Baroque violin and American fiddle playing, one on musical subjects in William Michael Harnett's paintings, and three others in a session on American musical instruments). Although no focus seems to have been suggested for the meeting in Winston-Salem the following year, fully half of the papers dealt with American topics, perhaps inspired by the celebrations of the previous year or the location of the meeting.

Talks on traditional and non-Western instruments made up a small proportion of the presentations during the first ten years: Betty Hensley gave lecture-demonstrations of instruments from her large collection of ethnic flutes (1972, 1975, 1978); papers were presented on, for example, hammered dulcimers in America (1973, 1977) and “Woodwinds of the Sardana Coblas” (1977); and there were sessions devoted to “European Folk Musical Instruments” (1976) and “Ethnological Instruments” (1980). In 1979 the film *Northwest Coast Indian Instruments* was presented by Helen

62. *Newsletter* 4, no. 3 (October 1975): 3.



FIGURE 11. Frederick R. Selch with his wife, Patricia, in their home [early 1980s]. Courtesy of the Frederick R. Selch Collection, New York, N.Y.

Hubbard Marr. While few members were studying and writing papers about such instruments, they were included as added attractions at several meetings. Members heard a gamelan concert in 1974 (at that time quite a novelty) and again in 1979, when they visited the collections of Asian and Pacific instruments at the Field Museum in Chicago. It seems probable that the majority of people studying traditional and non-Western instruments at this time were drawn to the Society for Ethnomusicology, which had been formed in 1955, long before AMIS was ever thought of.

With the many collectors in the society, it is perhaps surprising that only occasional papers were presented on that topic. Talks were given on Dayton Miller in 1972, on George Emmons, collector of instruments of the Tlingit people, in 1980, and on Philadelphia collector Sara Frishmuth, also in 1980. More often, collecting, collections, and collectors were the subject of panel discussions; among these were “Philosophy of Collecting” (1973), “Collecting Musical Instruments” (1974), and “Auctions: Opportunities and Warnings for the Collector” (1979). Rosenbaum was listed as moderator for the 1973 and 1979 panels, and he probably also chaired the 1974 session. A 1976 panel on “Planning for the Eventual Disposal

of a Private Collection of Musical Instruments” underscored concerns of the many private collectors in the society at that time. Chaired by Roger Mather, this panel aptly included a museum director, a collector, and an attorney.

Panels evidently proved a successful forum for presenting topics that might raise opposing viewpoints. In 1975 a panel entered the thorny thicket of “Instrument Restoration” with Selch presiding over a panel of two independent restorers and two museum technicians. In 1978 a panel of three museum curators and a maker-restorer delved into “Preserving the Evidence,” with Lambert moderating. By 1981 the topic was defined as “Musical Instrument Conservation” and was discussed by five museum curators. The progression of topic from restoration to conservation parallels a general change in emphasis during the period. The president of the International Committee of Musical Instrument Museums and Collections (CIMCIM), Friedmann Hellwig, was the featured speaker at the closing banquet of the 1981 meeting, and he added another dimension to the debate when he spoke on the topic “The Museum Musical Instrument Collection: Ivory Tower or Public Service?”

Other than this example, however, little in the way of trends can be discovered by examining paper and session topics of the first ten years.<sup>63</sup> Meetings changed in another way, however, in the late 1970s, when other societies began to participate. In 1979 and 1980 there were joint sessions with the Répertoire International d’Iconographie Musicale/Research Center for Musical Iconography (RIIdIM/RCMI); in 1981 members of CIMCIM participated throughout the conference and a joint session was held with the Northwest Chapter of the AMS.<sup>64</sup>

Finally, although many long-time members mentioned “Show and Tell sessions” in their recollections of the early meetings, I must report finding no mention of such sessions in any programs from the first ten years. It is clear that plenty of showing of instruments and discussions about them, as well as swapping and selling, took place at meetings. Jean-nine Abel describes informal get-togethers during the 1970s in the hotel

63. In comparing topics of interest at the meetings of the first ten years with those of meetings since 2000, however, one now sees papers on twentieth-century topics and on electric and electronic instruments, paralleling interest in modern and popular music at AMS and SAM meetings. The 2006 AMIS meeting, for example, offered probably the first session ever with the title “Electrical Music.”

64. Since 2000, joint meetings (not just joint sessions) have been held with both the Galpin Society (Great Britain, 2003) and CIMCIM (Vermillion, SD, 2006).

rooms of collectors and dealers such as Tony Bingham, a London dealer who always brought items to show to collectors, and William Gribbon, a retired music-store owner who brought instruments from his large collection. The instruments were spread out on the bed, the tub was filled with beer on ice, and the party went on.<sup>65</sup> Sometimes a meeting room was made available for these activities, as shown by an announcement for the 1979 Chicago meeting mentioning that “a room will be set aside for those who wish to swap or sell instruments.” (A request for this had been made at the 1978 business meeting at Yale, evidently because no such arrangements had been offered there.) The following year, a welcome letter from Laurence Libin requested those who wished to show instruments to take them to one of three dealers, where, he assured them, “‘Show and Tell’ sessions can be arranged informally during the weekend” (Metropolitan Museum of Art regulations did not allow instruments to be brought into the museum for commercial purposes). Perhaps the earliest reference to “Show and Tell” comes from James Swain, the first newsletter editor; in relating plans for the 1972 meeting at the Smithsonian Institution, he mentioned the possibility that “a form of ‘show and tell’ may develop with regard to unique and rare instruments which are owned by many collectors.”<sup>66</sup> These informal activities seem to have merged in memory with later, scheduled sessions where instruments were shown and discussed. In addition, some short performances have been remembered as “show and tell” events. For example, Douglas F. Koeppe recalls talking about and demonstrating his EE-flat Contrabass Sarrusophone at the 1975 annual meeting in New York City.<sup>67</sup> In the program, however, this demonstration is listed as a “performance” that took place as introduction to a session on nineteenth-century instruments (one of several short performances interspersed with paper sessions that year).

Looking just beyond our period of study reveals that a “Show and Tell” session appeared in the program of the 1982 annual meeting in Oberlin, Ohio, with William Gribbon appointed to chair the proceedings. Richard Abel remembers Gribbon using an alarm clock to keep participants from exceeding a time limit. From then through 2000, “Show and Tell” sessions

65. E-mail message from Abel, 25 September 2007. I am indebted to Jeannine and Richard Abel and Douglas F. Koeppe for searching their memories and their files to provide me with conclusive answers about Show and Tell.

66. *Newsletter* 1, no. 1 (November 1971): [2].

67. E-mail correspondence with Koeppe, 20–24 September 2007.

(announced in a newsletter or by a flyer sent with meeting registration materials) were scheduled at many annual meetings.<sup>68</sup> However and wherever it has taken place, “Show and Tell” has been an honored tradition at AMIS meetings.

### *Membership*

After the initial organizational meetings, membership in the new society grew quickly. By March of 1972 there were 136 members “with more coming in every day.”<sup>69</sup> By March 1973, when the first directory was published, there were 217 individual members and two institutional members, and by the time of the annual meeting in 1974, total membership was about three hundred. In 1975, dues, which had remained at \$5.00 per year since the inception of the society, were raised to \$12.50 to meet increased costs of mailing the newsletter and anticipated costs associated with the new journal (which was scheduled to be published that year). This large rise caused some members to leave the society, but when the *JOURNAL* appeared in 1976 it attracted new members, including a number of institutions.<sup>70</sup> The rapid increase in membership during the first few years validated the need for the society. After this period, membership continued to increase, but more slowly. By the end of its first decade, AMIS had 521 members (374 individuals and 147 institutions).<sup>71</sup>

The quick success of AMIS may have had an influence on the formation of other instrument-oriented societies. For example, several members of AMIS were involved in the founding of the National Flute Association (NFA), chartered in late 1972. The first national meeting of this group was held in Anaheim, California, in August 1973 (as reported in an AMIS newsletter), and AMIS members Harry H. Moskovitz, James Swain, and Linda Tauber presented a joint paper. Moskovitz (who had attended the 1971 Scarsdale meeting) served on the NFA’s first board of directors, as

68. Sessions appeared on programs of meetings in 1982–84, 1986–88, 1992–98, and 2000. Jeannine and Richard Abel, personal files.

69. Letter from Swain to Hoover, 24 March 1972, Hoover papers.

70. Rosenbaum noted that nearly fifty new members joined in January 1976, when the first volume of the *JOURNAL* appeared. President’s Report [March 1976], AMIS papers, NMM.

71. Minutes of the board meeting, 15 November 1981.

did Alexander D. Murray, who had presented a paper at the Smithsonian Institution meeting.<sup>72</sup> The NFA and other societies founded around this time, such as the Violin Society of America and the International Trumpet Guild (both founded in 1974), also competed with AMIS, perhaps slowing its growth. Swain, for example, had been an energetic leader of AMIS in the formative days and the early voice of the society as the first newsletter editor. After 1973, however, he focused his attention on the NFA.<sup>73</sup> Other members of AMIS, though they may also have joined a specialist society, found that the generalist approach of AMIS provided them with broader insights.<sup>74</sup>

Although AMIS drew its membership from a broad spectrum of people interested in musical instruments, the common thread connecting them (at least in the early years) was collecting. In the first membership directory (1973), over 70 percent of members were identified as having some sort of collection—whether a private collection or an institutional one with which a member was associated. The percentage may have been somewhat overstated due to ambiguous wording that combined interests and collecting in the first membership forms, but even allowing for exaggeration, it makes clear that collections and collecting were very important to many members.<sup>75</sup>

In the 1978 membership directory, compiled by the membership office at the University of South Dakota, each person's entry allowed separate space for interests and for his or her collection (for those who wished to provide such information).<sup>76</sup> Approximately 40 percent of the individuals described a collection. Assuming that at least some collectors declined to provide information, we might estimate that 45 to 50 percent of members were collectors or involved with collections, with private collections in the

72. *Newsletter* 3, no. 1 (March 1974): 6.

73. Swain maintained his membership in AMIS for more than twenty-five years, although he is hardly mentioned in AMIS documents after 1973. In a telephone interview (28 March 2001) he indicated that he felt that AMIS had become "too university based," with excessive emphasis on scholarly issues.

74. Several long-time members voiced this view in conversation in 2007.

75. In the 1973 directory, an asterisk beside the name denoted "some sort of collection." I counted asterisks for 159 of 217 individual members (the directory listed 219 members, two of which were libraries). The possible inaccuracy arose because directory information was taken from questionnaires or membership forms, some of which asked people to list "instruments which you collect or seek information about," while others had separate lines for listing interests and describing a collection.

76. *1978 Membership Roster* (Vermillion, SD: The Shrine to Music Museum, 1978).

majority.<sup>77</sup>

In contrast, the *2006–07 Membership Directory and Handbook* places all information about interests in an “Interests Index” (members check off categories from a lengthy list).<sup>78</sup> Only about 15 percent of individuals in this directory indicated that they are collectors; however, a quick glance at the list of names reveals that a number of members who do indeed have collections did not check that category, and that almost no museum professionals—another category—now identify themselves as collectors, perhaps because there is no way to indicate that the collection is in a museum. Hazardous a guess based on combining numbers of collectors and museum professionals shown in the index, and adding something for under-reporting, might bring the total to 25 to 30 percent—substantially fewer than in 1978, and now including a sizeable number of “surrogate” collectors who manage museum collections.<sup>79</sup>

Clearly, there was considerable interaction between collectors and dealers during the early annual meetings, which served as occasions for informal exhibiting, and for buying and selling. Panel discussions on collecting, such as “Planning for the Eventual Disposition of a Private Collection” in 1976, and a room being set aside for displaying, swapping, and selling instruments (specifically mentioned in 1979) also point to a greater concern with private collecting in the first decade. Determining more accurately the number of collectors, documenting the fate of private collections after the death of the collector, and sorting out reasons for the decline (or the perception of a decline) in private collecting would be a worthwhile study, providing information on the role of private collectors in the preservation and study of musical instruments.

Reading individual entries in the early directories is always interesting, but drawing further profiles of the early membership by profession or interest would be time consuming, as directories had no subject indexes until 1985. The amount of detail and the terminology vary widely in the entries, and while most individuals indicated what instrument(s) they were interested in, virtually the only ones who indicated their profession were

77. The count of 138 collectors (out of 338 members) was made by noting each entry that described a collection. It is not always clear whether the collection was private or owned by an institution for which the individual worked.

78. *2006–07 Membership Directory and Handbook* (Malden, MA: American Musical Instrument Society, 2006).

79. Actual counts are 53 collectors and 34 museum professionals out of 415 individuals listed.

those whose employment was concerned with musical instruments—curators, dealers, makers, restorers, and the like. Perhaps the most interesting point—the professions of those who worked outside the field of music—could not be addressed at all.

Regarding geographical distribution, information can be obtained from a geographic index in the directory of 1978 and from a report prepared by Margaret Downie in 1980. These confirm that the majority of AMIS members lived near the East Coast (as indeed they still did in 2007). The 1980 report showed that over half the membership lived in East Coast states. Of the five states with the largest memberships, three were on the East Coast (New York, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania), one on the West Coast (California), and one in the Midwest (Illinois). International memberships made up 15 percent of the total membership, with Canada, England, and West Germany having the most members.<sup>80</sup>

Having noted the low rate of participation by women in the earliest days of the society (counts from the 1971 questionnaire), I thought it worthwhile to make some later comparisons of the ratio of men to women. As mentioned earlier, the respondents to the 1971 questionnaire were about 90 percent male. In the 1973 membership directory, women make up about 17 percent of the total, in 1978 about 22 percent. The reasons for this low representation can only be guessed at, but it does not appear that women's participation was discouraged. In the first election (1972), the fifteen candidates for five governor positions included only two women, but both women were elected, along with three men. With a woman also elected as secretary, the board of nine was one-third female. During the first ten years, there were generally three or four women on the board.<sup>81</sup> Quick counts of those presenting papers reveal that about 20 percent were women, consistent with the membership percentage.

Although it was not until 2003 that a woman served as AMIS president (Kathryn L. Shanks Libin of Vassar College), the board of governors since 1999 has had approximately equal representation by men and

80. In 2007, there were substantially more members from the Midwest and West Coast, although the East Coast still predominated. International membership stood at 21 percent.

81. Admittedly this representation consisted of several combinations of the same four women: Cynthia Hoover, Barbara Lambert, Linda Tauber (to 1978), and Betty Hensley (from 1975). However, the board overall was static during the period, there being no term limits for governors and six-year term limits for president and vice-president, who, upon leaving office, usually became governors.



women.<sup>82</sup> Considering that women still make up only about 27 percent of the membership, this indicates both the acceptance of women in leadership positions and the willingness of women to serve the society. Other healthy signs of activity by women in AMIS include a good proportion of them among the William E. Gribbon scholarship students (40 percent, 1991–2007) and that at the 2007 meeting at Yale University, 40 percent of the papers were given by women and 50 percent of the sessions were chaired by them.<sup>83</sup>

### *The Journal*

Publishing a journal was a goal from the earliest days of the society. During the organizational meeting in Jersey City in January 1972 a publications committee was formed, consisting of Cynthia Hoover, chair, with Alvin Fossner, Josef Marx, Robert Rosenbaum, and Mordecai Rubin. Through correspondence during the next few months they developed recommendations, which were reported at the April meeting at the Smithsonian Institution. Speaking for the committee, Hoover emphasized how important the journal would be to the society, and how crucial it was to set high standards for both its contents and appearance, since to a large extent it would be through the JOURNAL that the rest of the world would judge the society. To ensure high-quality scholarship, she recommended the formation of an editorial board of scholars chosen to represent the diversity of subjects that might be discussed in the articles making up the journal.<sup>84</sup> The committee had made rough calculations of possible costs, and several members expressed concern that these costs would prove too high for the society in its current state, requiring a greater number of members to support them.<sup>85</sup> Others, however, must have judged the potential benefits of such a publication to outweigh possible problems, since the committee soon began the search for an editor.

82. Between 1999 (the date I began to keep a cumulative list) and 2007, women filled between five and eight of the positions on the fifteen-member board.

83. As a point of comparison, The Society for American Music's membership was approximately 40 percent women in 2007; the American Musicological Society's membership was 38 percent women by the early 1990s.

84. Selch, handwritten notes for Minutes of First Annual Meeting, 15 April 1972, AMIS papers, NMM.

85. Swain reporting in *Newsletter* 1, no. 3 (June 1972): 2.

By the next year's annual gathering (in Boston, April 1973), an editor for the proposed journal had been found. He was Thomas Forrest Kelly, a young assistant professor of music at Wellesley College with a PhD from Harvard University.<sup>86</sup> He had become known to the publications committee through his work as a research fellow in the musical instrument collection at the Smithsonian Institution in the summer of 1972.

After his appointment, an editorial board of thirteen was chosen to advise him. The tentative publication date for the first volume was set for the fall of 1974, and a request for articles appeared in the June 1973 newsletter. By the board meeting of April 1974, Kelly was ready to show the board a mockup of the proposed journal, displaying the binding and one article set in type. The board approved the format and authorized him to continue negotiations with publisher, printer, and authors. In October 1974 the newsletter included a reproduction of the cover of the journal (as Volume I • 1974) and a substantial report by Kelly, in which he reviewed the goals that the committee and he had discussed, and noted that the JOURNAL had a two-fold purpose: to reflect the interests of the society's members (both amateur and expert); and, in the wider world, to serve as the expression of the ideals and a record of the achievements of the society. One point decided upon by Kelly and the committee, but not mentioned in the report, was that, although the Galpin Society was in many ways a model for AMIS, the American society would publish longer, more substantive articles than generally appeared in the *Galpin Society Journal*, modeling the AMIS journal more on the *Journal of the American Musicological Society*.<sup>87</sup>

Kelly's report also introduced the printing firm, Stinehour Press, of Lunenburg, Vermont, and the offset-printing company that would reproduce the illustrations, Meriden Gravure, of Meriden, Connecticut—one of the premier teams of publisher and printer in the United States, and another indication of the high quality for which the society was striving. Kelly described Stinehour as “a group of dedicated people who care as much about the quality of good printing as some of our members do about violins.” Meriden Gravure's reproduction of drawings and photographs had earned them an international reputation. The report provided highlights

86. Kelly had received his BA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and spent two years as a Fulbright scholar in France studying musicology, chant, and organ.

87. Conversations with Selch and Hoover, April 2001, and correspondence with Kelly, July 2007.

of seven articles that would constitute the first issue, along with reviews and a book list.<sup>88</sup> (Publication details and listings of articles for the first ten volumes are listed in Appendix 6.)

Progress on the JOURNAL helped concentrate efforts to create a logo to use on publications and correspondence so that AMIS could present a unified appearance. Stephen Harvard of the Stinehour Press produced the handsome design (still in use in 2007), which was used first on the banner head of the newsletter of June 1974 before appearing on the cover of the journal.

The editing of articles, assembling of other material, and production of the first volume took much longer than expected. In July 1975, Kelly was able to report to his editorial board that, despite delays in assembling advertising and settling on the final page layout, everything was at Stinehour Press in production. Volume 1 had been pared down to four articles and four book reviews (all edited by Kelly; a book review editor was not appointed until volume 3). Evidently there were still more problems with volume 1, for it was not mailed to the membership until January of 1976.<sup>89</sup> President Rosenbaum was impatient with all the delays, but others felt that it was “much more important that the Journal be good than that it be on time.”<sup>90</sup> The first volume’s four articles totaled 121 pages; the four book reviews and a list of recent books brought the total number of pages to 140.

On the strength of his work on volume 1, the board of governors appointed Kelly as editor for volumes 2 through 4 at its meeting in April 1976. By this time, he had already sent the text of volume 2 to the publisher and was working on assembling articles for volume 3. Jane Bowers had been appointed review editor, allowing Kelly to concentrate on editing articles and attempting to coordinate production. Volume 2 also incurred delays, but was published in October 1976 (the same year as the date on the cover). The JOURNAL, well received for its handsome appearance and the substance of its articles, was a source of pride, but the higher than expected costs took a toll on the society’s finances (as discussed under Organization and Leadership above). Publication of volume 3 (dated 1977) was delayed until April 1978, after a payment schedule had been worked

88. *Newsletter* 3, no. 3 (October 1974): 1–3.

89. By that time the volume was dated 1975 on the cover and in the copyright date, but the title page in the journal still showed “Volume I • 1974.”

90. Howard Mayer Brown to Rosenbaum, 28 July 1975, Hoover papers.

out with Stinehour.

At the society's annual meeting in 1978 it was announced that Kelly would continue as editor for the fourth volume, now assisted by Hoover as "Journal Expediter," but that a search committee (consisting of Hoover, Robert Eliason, and Howard Mayer Brown) for a new editor had been appointed. Although the finished product was universally admired, it was felt that another editor might be better able to manage the details of scheduling necessary to keep journal operations flowing smoothly. In November, the search committee recommended William E. Hettrick, an associate professor at Hofstra University with a PhD from the University of Michigan, and the board confirmed him as editor for volumes 5 through 7.<sup>91</sup>

Volume 5 was originally scheduled for publication in fall 1979, but Hettrick soon realized that it would not be possible to assemble enough articles in time, there being no backlog. By December 1979 it had been decided to issue a combined volume 5 and 6 (1979–80); Hettrick had already sent three articles to Stinehour Press to be set and had three more in progress, including one (by Edmund Bowles) that he considered particularly suitable for the double issue, since it was of major proportions with much illustrative material.<sup>92</sup> During this time, Kelly continued work on volume 4 (dated 1978), and it finally appeared in January 1980. The combined volume 5–6 was published in January 1981. In addition to the six articles, it included an impressive array of sixteen book reviews assembled by review editor Bowers. During production of this volume, Hettrick recommended that the deadline for submission of articles be earlier, which he felt would help put the journal on a regular publishing schedule.<sup>93</sup> He also added several new members to the editorial board in an effort to broaden its expertise and to have available people who could be more responsive to requests to read and critique potential articles.

In the assembling and publication of the early volumes of the JOURNAL, the goals of the editor concerning quality of scholarship, writing, and

91. Hettrick had served as Robert Warner's graduate assistant in the Stearns Collection at the University of Michigan and had received a Fulbright grant (1966–67) for study and research in Munich. He had originally been approached about the editorship in 1973, but declined after learning that the editor would also be responsible for business decisions. At the beginning of his job at Hofstra and occupied with working on a critical edition for A-R Editions, Hettrick did not want to be bogged down with business work. E-mail to the author, 14 September 2007.

92. Hettrick to Selch, 11 December 1979, AMIS papers, NMM.

93. Minutes of the board meeting, 9 May 1980.

editing had to be meshed with the complex details of production schedules and finances—a process that sometimes proved difficult. The production problems caused consternation at board meetings, but the governors worked hard to ensure that financial problems would not lessen the quality of the journal. Kelly brought vision to the task of starting the journal and was willing to face the risks associated with starting a new venture. Hettrick maintained a high quality of scholarship and brought order to the process (and a sense of calm to board meetings).<sup>94</sup>

Having discussed the technical side, let us consider the content of the JOURNAL during the first ten years. The goal of presenting substantive articles led to the journal's usually containing four or perhaps five relatively lengthy ones, usually around 25–30 pages each. This number of articles seemed to work well with editorial needs, allowing editor and author to spend time perfecting each one. The overall page count was maintained at between about 135 and 165 pages to control production costs. No information is available on how many articles were submitted, but not published; the sense one gets from reading the rather small amount of editorial correspondence available is that many, though not all, articles submitted were solid studies, though often needing additional work before publication.<sup>95</sup>

Categorizing the twenty-three articles that appeared in volumes 1 through 5–6 (and usually counting each article under more than one subject), there were six articles relating to iconography, five each on musical instrument makers and American topics, five whose topic could be considered organology (two of these focused on treatises), four each on woodwind instruments and bowed strings, four that emphasized aspects of performance practice, three each on brass instruments and keyboard instruments, two on timpani, two that could be classified as ethnomusicology, and one each on plucked strings, orchestras, and Asian instruments.<sup>96</sup>

94. In 1982 Larson (then president) and Hettrick found another scholarly publisher who could print the journal at lower cost. The change assured that the society's finances would no longer be in a continually precarious position. By then, with seven volumes published, the journal's reputation was secure, and the loss of elegant printing, though mourned by many, did not affect the popularity of the journal or the status of the society.

95. Kelly to his editorial board, 10 October 1976, mentioning two articles that he was unsure about but would send to some of them for additional opinions; Hoover to Kelly, 29 August 1978, agreeing that one article "in its present, rather chatty form" was not usable and suggesting it for the newsletter; Hettrick to Selch, 11 December 1979, mentioning extensive rewriting of one article and a negative evaluation of another. AMIS papers, NMM.

96. The categorizations are based on subjects used in the *Index to the Journal of the Amer-*

Looking through the titles, we notice (as with papers read at meetings) that the interests of the authors centered on instruments of Western art music from the Middle Ages through the nineteenth century, but that there were substantial contributions in other areas, for example, articles on ancient Chinese instruments, the classical Greek phorminx, and instruments used by North American Indians.

In addition to the articles, some forty-five books were reviewed. Their subject matter ranged from broad coverages such as *A Survey of Musical Instruments*, by Sibyl Marcuse, to the very specific, for example, *United States Military Drums, 1845–65: A Pictorial Survey*, by G. Craig Caba. Each issue also contained a comprehensive listing of recent books on musical instruments, compiled by George Huber of Swarthmore College.

### ***Conclusion***

The early years and the work of the founding members are crucial to the future success of any organization. The events recounted here make clear the energy and persistence of those who founded the American Musical Instrument Society. It is indeed impressive how quickly the society developed—organizing a meaningful annual meeting within six months, attracting two hundred members within a year, and publishing a journal within four years. Within the first ten years, the society had weathered its financial difficulties and established itself as a smoothly running non-profit organization. By 1981, members could take pride in the society's international membership of more than five hundred individuals and institutions, in its well-attended annual meetings, at which interesting and meaningful research on musical instruments was presented, and in the international reputation of its journal.

Through its first ten years and beyond, AMIS has served the needs of its members by providing them with various ways to communicate and learn from each other—meetings where they can present and hear papers and socialize with colleagues, and publications that they can read and contribute to. Through furthering the continuing education of its members, the society advances its overall goal of increasing the understanding and appreciation of musical instruments in the larger community, as

*ican Musical Instrument Society, Volume I through XX*, compiled by Thomas G. MacCracken (1977).

members become more informed advocates for their specialties. From the perspective of 2007, we can see how the society has developed while remaining constant in its overall purpose. The goal of education has broadened to include courses and programs in universities, often developed by AMIS members. With less emphasis on private collectors, there is more focus on students: in 1989 the William E. Gribbon Memorial Award for Student Travel was established to enable students to attend the society's annual meetings; the Frederick R. Selch Award for the best student paper presented at the annual meeting was established in 2004.<sup>97</sup> Already enlivening the meetings with their enthusiasm and ideas, students are the next generation who will collect and care for the musical instruments of the past—hopefully with broad understanding and appreciation of their worth to the world.<sup>98</sup>

In her keynote address at the Smithsonian Institution meeting in 1972, Cynthia Adams Hoover described the society and expressed its goals in terms that still seemed pertinent in 2007 (and indeed in 2021): “we all come to the study of instruments for different reasons and from different backgrounds, sometimes technicians and scientists, sometimes performing musicians, sometimes historians (music, art, cultural, military), sometimes enthusiasts. . . . but . . . we do agree . . . that musical instruments are living, that they do have personalities past and present—and we can't be held back in our desire to learn more about them.”<sup>99</sup> May we all keep this spark of enthusiasm and delight alive and pass it on to those coming after us.”

97. *American Musical Instrument Society: 2006–07 Membership Directory and Handbook*, v–vii.

98. From the further perspective of 2021, I would like to note that our hopes that students would become leaders in the society have come to pass in a number of ways. Former Gribbon students have not only served on committees and the board of governors but have also taken on substantial jobs including NEWSLETTER editor (Edmond Johnson 2013–17 and Sarah Deters 2018 to the present), JOURNAL editor (Allison Alcorn 2012–17), secretary of the Society (Michael Suing 2018–21), and vice-president and then president of the Society (Jayson Kerr Dobney 2015–21).

99. Hoover's penultimate sentence paraphrases a statement from Nicholas Bessaraboff's *Ancient Musical Instruments* (1941) that she had quoted at the beginning of her speech: “Musical instruments are living entities possessing their own personalities and reflecting the collective personality of the men who have had anything to do with them.”

### ***Author's Note***

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References to appendices remain in the article text even though the appendices themselves do not appear here. Following is a description of appendices that were included in the *JAMIS* 2007 version:

1. Time Line, listing milestones of the first ten years
2. Organizational and Annual Meetings, giving details of annual meetings, including papers presented, session topics, concerts and other events (1971–81)
3. Related Societies and Groups, with year of formation and statement of purpose
4. Elections and Board, an annual list of officers and board members, with slate information when available (1971–81)
5. Founding members (forty people) and Long-time Members (to 2007)
6. The JOURNAL in its first ten years, including editors, editorial boards, and titles and authors of articles.