

AMATEUR CHAMBER MUSIC PLAYERS

15 WEST 67TH STREET, NEW YORK 23, N. Y.



Reproduced with the kind permission of Antoine E. Cherbuliez.
(For a description of this drawing, see last page.)

Annual News Letter - - May, 1958

Dear Fellow-Members,

The ninth directory was mailed out in early February. We feel that it would be highly desirable to get it out before Christmas. Please help us to do this by sending in the necessary information with regard to your listing before the September deadline. May we call to your attention again the fact that your name will not appear in the new directory unless we hear from you during the summer.

Although our membership continues to increase, notably in foreign countries, there now being members listed in thirty-seven countries outside of the U.S.A., we have lost an appreciable number of American members. That is to say, these people did not reply to either the 1957 news letter, or to the follow-up sent out in September, and are therefore not listed. It would interest us to know whether this was an oversight on their part, or whether they no longer find the A.C.M.P. useful.

A.C.M.P. ON TELEVISION

Word about the A.C.M.P. has been carried by nearly every medium of communication. Now it is on T.V. A half-hour Kinescope (film for television showing) describing the association, and illustrating it with some genuinely amateur playing, has been produced by the University of Michigan Television Studio. It is entitled "Music for Amateurs," and is part of a series called "Understanding Our World."

The A.C.M.P. and the way it operates are discussed informally by the show's master of ceremonies, John Bardach, Associate Professor of Fisheries at the University of Michigan, Samuel P. Hayes, Jr., Chairman of the Executive Committee of the A.C.M.P., and Director of the Foundation for Research on

Human Behavior in Ann Arbor, and Ross Lee Finney, Professor of Composition and Composer in Residence at the University. The players in the various combinations include, in addition to Messrs. Hayes and Finney and their wives, Louis Tavelli, Instructor in Art at the University, Wolfgang Stolper, Professor of Economics at the University, and Joan King, teacher of strings in the Ypsilanti schools, near Ann Arbor. The program consists of movements from the Mozart G Minor String Quintet, the Michael Haydn trio for violin, cello and double bass, and Schubert's "Forellen" Quintet.

The film was shown in Ann Arbor on November 24th, and more recently by the Metropolitan Educational Television Association in New York. We very much regretted the fact that META gave us only two days notice before the telecast, so that we were unable to notify our Manhattan and suburban members. However, META assures us that they will show the film again, and will give us time enough to send cards to all who are within the New York television area. The United States Information Agency is also interested in the film, and has asked for a copy to use in their foreign centers.

Those of us who had the good fortune to see the telecast thought that despite the fact that it was recorded in a studio, it conveyed the informal atmosphere of the A.C.M.P. to perfection. Mr. Finney's pipe added greatly to the local color! The dialogue, in addition to being informative, was sprightly and amusing; the music was varied and well chosen; and the performance was on a high amateur level.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The financial report which follows is reassuring in that during the fiscal year ending March 31, 1958, we spent less than our income. In other words, we are solvent! Although we still cannot contemplate office space and a part time secretary, we have been able for a modest sum to rent a room in which to keep the files and other records.

Financial report submitted by the Treasurer, April 1, 1958.

BALANCE (reported in May, 1957, news letter) April 1, 1957	\$2,332.12
CONTRIBUTIONS (April 1, 1957, to March 31, 1958)	\$5,889.40
	\$8,221.52

EXPENDITURES ITEMIZED:

Paid secretarial help	\$1,591.05
Printing and postage	3,323.49
Bank charges	30.25
L'Association des Musiciens Amateurs (Paris)	25.15
National Music Council Membership	75.00
Room rent for files, etc., for three months	30.00
Miscellaneous	48.92

Total\$5,123.86

TOTAL EXPENDITURES (April 1, 1957, to March 31, 1958)\$5,123.86

BALANCE ON HAND, April 1, 1958\$3,097.66

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UNESCO

The A.C.M.P. was invited by UNESCO to send two representatives to the Sixth Annual Conference in San Francisco last November. It was attended by delegates from all the countries of Asia. We were fortunate in that one of our most enthusiastic members, Mrs. Lila B. Hassid, of Berkeley, California, was able to represent us at the meetings on music. The following is part of her report:

"The Friday afternoon session came closer to my heart's desire, 'Improving Asian-American Communication Through Personal Contact.' Here I had the opportunity to distribute the leaflets you sent, and to deliver a talk on the A.C.M.P.'s purpose and progress.

While some of the previous speakers pointed out the handicaps of the language barrier for Westerners stationed in the Asian countries, I was able to point out how music played by strangers in strange countries bridged the barrier through this universal language, and how East and West have already been brought closer together through the A.C.M.P. directory. I was personally pleased to be the first speaker to present a positive idea. Those who preceded me dwelt on criticisms and handicaps . . . but it took the A.C.M.P. to introduce a little sunshine and light! . . . You know that I am being half facetious in this telling. . . . It was a tremendous experience and one for which I am deeply grateful."

UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

The U.S.I.A. sent out directories and explanatory folders all over the world last June. We were pleased to receive requests from time to time during the summer for additional directories, totalling in all about eight hundred. It was not surprising that such countries as England, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands should ask for fairly substantial numbers, but the fact that the following countries should request additional copies was most unexpected:

Colombia	Iceland
Bolivia	Iraq
Egypt	Malay States
Ghana	Nicaragua
Guatemala	Syria
Honduras	Turkey

From Turkey came the following: "It (the United States Information Service in Ankara) considers this one of the most useful and interesting projects of the People-to-People Program. Local Turks commented that the tone of the material is so practical, cordial and yet restrained that they feel under no pressure or obligation, and yet feel free to participate."

In addition to sending out our material, the United States Information Agency also published an article about the A.C.M.P. in Russian. It appeared last May in a magazine which they prepare for circulation in Russia, and was called, "In Search of a Fourth." The photographs with which it was illustrated were the ones taken by LIFE in 1953 for their article about the late Leonard A. Strauss, founder of the A.C.M.P.

MEMBERS ABROAD

An unforeseen development is that our foreign members have used the directory not only when travelling in the United States, but also when travelling in other countries. An excellent pianist from Israel was invited by members in Geneva. The Swiss family wrote afterwards that although they were not able to converse together with any great ease, the music, which was a common bond and a common language, made it an unforgettable evening. A cellist from Rio de Janeiro was ecstatic about several sessions with members in Buenos Aires, and the latest is that neighbors in London met through the A.C.M.P., and now play together regularly every week!

Our chairman in Ann Arbor writes: "We had a call from a violinist last fall. Most remarkable was the way he heard about the A.C.M.P. Having come to Ann Arbor in 1950, he did not hear about our association until seven years later when he went to Turkey to teach chemistry for a semester at Istanbul American College. There he fell in with a pianist-organist who is a member..."

Not long ago one of our British members came to the "States" on business. He confessed that ever since he had heard about our organization he had wondered whether it really worked. After having been included in three very varied evenings which took place in New Jersey, Manhattan and Westchester (this last continuing until three o'clock in the morning) he went home saying, "It works!"

SOUTH IRAN

A letter postmarked "Masjid-i-Sulaiman" from Gordon W. Richmond reads as follows:

"Finally we have gathered up enough people here to form a quartet. Rather international. I am the violist—American; the first violinist is Iranian (Armenian); the second violinist and cellist are both English. Unfortunately they are all in Abadan, while I am in the Fields, about a hundred and fifty miles away. We can only get together when I go to Abadan, which is about once in every two weeks. We surely make the time count then. Fortunately I brought quite a bit of music with me, so we don't have the worry of where to get it. And that is a King-size worry in this country!"

HAYDN MARATHON

In the 1957 news letter we mentioned a group of students at the University of Wisconsin who set out to play all the Haydn quartets consecutively. Our meager, and it appears, inaccurate information was pieced together from New York and Philadelphia newspapers. About a month ago we received a letter from one of the participants, Werner B. Riesenfeld, now living in Los Alamos, New Mexico. His account not only set us straight with regard to all details, but so entertained us that we take pleasure in sharing it with our members.

March 16th, 1958.

Gentlemen,

I read with interest the item in your May, 1957, news letter dealing with the Haydn Marathon conducted at the University of Wisconsin last spring. As a participating member in that noble enterprise I was grieved to detect a number of inaccuracies in your news item, and hereby hasten to set the record straight.

The Grand Project was conceived by Mr. Thomas J. Smith, of the Mathematics Department, and Mr. John Steinhardt, of the Geology Department of the University of Wisconsin. These gentlemen—being violist and cellist respectively—had acquired a great and overriding passion for the string quartets of F. J. Haydn, and therefore with admirable logic suggested that all of these fine quartets, including the **Seven Last Words of Christ**, be

performed in one continuous session lasting as long as necessary; they therefore offered the use of their apartment and an inexhaustible supply of coffee toward this end. There are probably more enthusiastic and selfless chamber musicians at that university than at any other one place, and consequently the Smith-Steinhardt proposal was accepted with alacrity, not to mention shouts of glee. A team of about a dozen quartet players was recruited and organized into relays, with each relay to take over when their predecessors had reached a stage of imminent collapse. Provision was also made for individual emergency replacements of performers as the need arose. Among the players were both students and faculty members, i. e. all social classes were represented. The affair was scheduled for the between-semester interim, when there was most certainly nothing better to do.

To summarize the results, The Haydn Marathon was a howling success. The playing of the more than eighty quartets took 42½ hours, and this time could undoubtedly have been bettered had it not been for the presence of a large number of newspaper reporters, television reporters, wire services reporters, and Life reporters and photographers who had somehow gotten wind of our undertaking and cluttered up the kitchen and bedrooms. In addition we had a large and devoted audience of local music lovers, which persisted even into the small hours of the mornings. An Official Logbook was kept of the performance, recording the nature and content of each quartet, the personnel performing it, and the caliber of the playing. In this manner some unexpected finds were made—there is a goodly number of rarely performed yet strikingly worthwhile Haydn quartets in the “uncelebrated” volumes.

The playing of the famous final solo-violon canon at the conclusion of the Seven Last Words was accompanied by the popping of pink champagne corks, and the end of our stupendously successful Haydn Marathon was celebrated in proper fashion. I believe that none of the participants will ever forget this remarkable occasion, certainly not Messrs. Smith and Steinhardt who got absolutely no sleep for more than 42½ hours.

(Signed) WERNER B. RIESENFELD.

CODA

After we had already finished the first proof reading of this news letter, there arrived a most interesting communication from England enclosing a clipping from the London OBSERVER which appeared on April 20th. Since it is short and we still have space, we can quote in full:

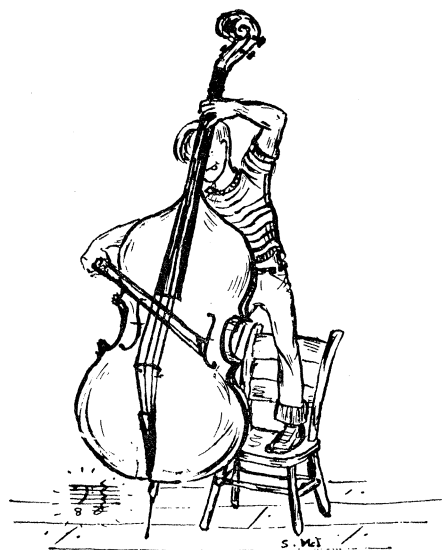
Sir,—The decline of chamber music playing in people's homes is deplored, yet the musical societies mentioned so far cater only for audiences at public concerts. The activity of the Amateur Chamber Music Players may therefore be of interest to those who still play for their own enjoyment.

Every year a directory is published giving the names, addresses, instruments and self-graded standard of performance of people in about forty countries. A news letter is also circulated together with a list of contemporary chamber music suitable for amateurs and of unusual classical works.

(signed) J. B. UPSON.

We would like to add that to date we have received some twenty inquiries concerning Mr. Upson's letter. Perhaps more neighbors in London, or elsewhere in England will meet through the A.C.M.P. directory! We hope also that many of these enthusiasts will one day come to the United States.

We are indebted to Susan McIntosh Lloyd for the drawing which we have the pleasure of reproducing.



1859 TO 1909

The drawing reproduced on the first page was done by a member of the quartet in celebration of their twentieth anniversary. They played in Geneva each week, meeting on Tuesdays continuously from 1859 to 1909. The first violinist was the grandfather of Antoine E. Cherbuliez,* who has so kindly furnished this information, and has given permission to use the drawing. In all the fifty years there was only one change of personnel. (They would have had little use for an A.C.M.P. directory!) Apparently quartet evenings were much the same a hundred years ago—they, too, “warmed up on a Haydn,” and they assuaged their thirst with beer—note the dancing beer steins! This quartet also decided to play all the Haydns chronologically, but unlike the Wisconsin group, they did one each week, which meant that each time they embarked on the project, it took them about a year and a half. These four players were so good and had such a fine reputation that many travelling professionals joined them on occasion. This sometimes led to piano quartets and quintets, or two viola quintets, and from time to time, the Schubert two cello quintet. Grandfather Cherbuliez was the first violinist throughout the fifty years, and when he died at the age of eighty in 1909, the quartet disbanded.

* Dr. Cherbuliez is a professor and musicologist now living in Zurich. He teaches at the University, and is closely associated with Paul Hindemith.