

The Hobart Society of Recorder Players Inc.

<https://hobartrecorderplayers.com>

Newsletter March 2021



Girolamo Romanino 1484-1562

Reminders & Dates for your Diary:

Playing dates and Conductors for 2021

March	1, 15, 29	Claire
April	12, 26	Claire
May	10, 24	Xavier
June	7, 21	Xavier
July	5, 19	Xavier
August	2, 16, 30	Julie
September	13, 27	
October	11, 25	

All sessions start at 19.30 at the Civic Club in Davey Street. Unless there are changes to Covid requirements we will, for the moment, require members to book in to ensure we have the correct number of people present. Watch out for an email in the week before each playing date in order to express your attendance.

Subscriptions are now due for 2021

It is important to keep your subscriptions current as it also covers insurance.

Fees are as follows: Under 18 \$30, Concession \$55, Full member \$65

Please pay by bank deposit:

Westpac

BSB: 037014

Account: 266570

February 20/21 Weekend Report from Clodagh Jones

HSRPI Report 20 -21 February 2021

A weekend of playing took place in the Fern Tree Community Centre with an almost full complement of members, we were finally able to meet face to face after many months of Coronavirus restrictions.

It was a cool weekend, but the Community Hall is a lovely place to meet, one feels as if one is at tree top level and mountain air feels palpably fresh, good for lung function! There is also plenty of room and the catering facilities are excellent.

Ruth Langman, with much thought and skill, organised music for the weekend, we started out with simple music which allowed us to settle us down comfortably and practise sight reading. Later we were provided with early music.

Lunch, a welcome break, gave us the opportunity to chat, something we haven't been able to do since the limitations brought about by the Coronavirus, kept us apart. After lunch we separated into two and three groups to play two- and threepart choir music, mostly one to a part. At the end of the playing session the AGM was held, committee members were elected, and several matters discussed.

In the evening, a delicious dinner provided by members allowed us to mingle again and there was lots more chat.

Sunday was a more demanding day. Claire Farrell conducted us as we practised *Circadian Rhythm*, a piece specially composed for us and commissioned by the Society. Claire took us through her music section by section, steadily and painstakingly and with much skill. Gradually we began to settle into the piece, it was a question of once the timing was conquered we then had to listen carefully to each other. This was easier said than done and we struggled a little. At the end of the day we wound down, with members taking it in turns to practise conducting, ending with *Teddy Bears Picnic* played at speed.

Thank you, Ruth, for organising the music, and Carol Samuelson who organised the weekend with her usual competence. We returned to our homes having enjoyed our playing and rewarding weekend and meeting one another.

February AGM

Our AGM was held on Saturday the 20th February as part of our playing weekend. Here is our President's report for 2020.

President's AGM Report

2020 has to be one of the strangest years any of us has lived through. I am proud to report that our Society worked hard through many challenges and restrictions to continue both our musical rehearsals and social connectedness. Here is a summary of some of the year's events.

In February, when Australia was still basking in summer normality, we enjoyed our annual musical weekend at the Langman's cabin in Bicheno. Thanks, as always, to Ruth and Richard for their kind hospitality.

By March, the realities of the coronavirus pandemic were becoming more obvious and health authorities and government stepped in with strict guidelines on group meetings of any kind. As we debated how to deal with this, the Civic Club, where we rehearse, announced it was closing to group meetings until further notice. This led to a scramble in organising our AGM - initially we thought of meeting in the carpark with appropriate social distancing, but in the end settled on a Zoom AGM.

Following the success of the Zoom AGM (with those less computer savvy joining forces with those who were more confident) we continued having Zoom meetings through the year, both for social reunions and for our committee meetings. On June 15 for instance, we held a Zoom midwinter reunion to take the place of our usual Midwinter dinner.

In July, the Civic Club informed us that we could recommence rehearsals, this began on July 27 under strict COVID guidelines – these included limited numbers (relating to the size of the room), no sharing of music stands to maintain distancing, sanitising of the room and no use of the kitchen. Despite these precautions, a number of members of the Society felt it best to continue avoiding social gatherings to protect their health. This was totally understandable in the face of so much uncertainty. Because our usual musical director, Nicholas Lander was unable to conduct us, our secretary, Carol Samuelson stepped in to coordinate and conduct our fortnightly rehearsals. As

a result of the need for multiple individual copies of parts and no sharing, we ended up playing a lot of new and interesting music sourced from the internet. There was no pressure to prepare for a very unlikely end of year concert.

Towards the end of the year we decided to cancel the reservation we had made at the Moonah Arts centre for our concert. Instead, we used this same day to meet at the Fern Tree Community Centre for a very special workshop. At the end of 2019 the Society had commissioned our member Claire Farrell to compose an original piece for the group, scored for full recorder orchestra soprano to contra bass and suitable for our players. On November 15, eighteen of us gathered to work through this piece for the first time. This also gave Claire the chance to finally hear it on real instruments and make any necessary adjustments. A few weeks later, on December 20, the committee met with Claire for the final handover of her work and a celebratory glass of champagne.

The 2020 Christmas party was held outdoors at the Ancanthe Park next to the Lady Franklin Gallery, Lenah Valley., on December 13. The day was hot and sunny, the local neighbours clapped, and new member Henry stepped into the role of Father Christmas. It was a delightful end to 2020, after so many worries and uncertainties.

In closing I want to pay tribute to everyone on the committee who has worked so hard finding alternative ways to get things done this past year, from setting up Zoom, sending emails, changing concert bookings, ensuring our rehearsals met with COVID rules and keeping in touch with members who were not able to attend. Well done and thank you!

Luz Montes
President

Your 2021 Committee

President: Luz Montes
Music Director: Carol Samuelson Librarian: Arjun
von Caemmerer
Secretary: Carol Samuelson
Treasurer: Nicole Parums
Committee members: Wes Campbell, Nicholas Lander

Other Dates for 2021

- We are excited to announce that we will be having a mid-year afternoon playing and dinner get together at the Fern Tree Community Centre. So please

put Saturday 24th July in your diaries and watch out for more information closer to the date.

- There are also plans afoot to have an end of year concert in conjunction with the Hobart Guitar Society, hopefully in November. We will also be premiering Claire's commissioned piece. Again, watch this space.

Interesting Articles

Nicholas has again kindly passed on this article:

KEYED RECORDERS

As we have seen in previous issues of *HSRP Newsletter*, there have been various attempts in recent years to re-design the recorder and extend its capabilities for use in a contemporary context. It may come as a surprise to find that a brief glance over our shoulders will show that the recorder has undergone almost continuous development from its supposed demise in the 18th century right up to the present day.

As early as 1636 the French polymath Marin Mersenne advocated the use of extra chromatic keys on recorders, a suggestion not explored until the 19th century when the recorder adopted the unusual key of A_b , changed its name to *csakan*, sprouted a few keys, and gained a walking-stick attachment.



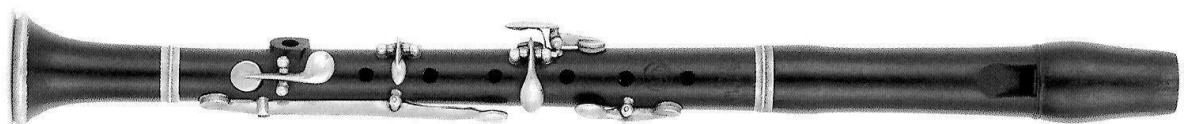
Associated primarily with the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the *csakan* (*czakan*, *czakany*) first appeared around 1807 in Budapest and was probably the invention of Anton Heberle. Initially the new instrument was equipped with a low $d\sharp$ key (as on the older transverse flute) and had a range of 2 octaves and a fifth corresponding to the notation $c'-g''$ but sounding $ab'-eb''$, which is to say that the *csakan* was considered a transposing instrument in A_b . By 1815, up to 13 keys might be added, along with a tuning-slide. By c.1820, instrument manufacturers provided *csakans* modelled after the flute, oboe and clarinet. Such *csakans* had keys for $g\sharp$, f , $f\sharp$, and b_b , a b/c trill key, a low $d\sharp$ key and a low $c\sharp$ key ... Some *csakans* featured a narrow thumb hole, which could be left open for over-blowing rather than being partially closed. Some manufacturers made both *csakans* and *flûtes douces* (in effect our familiar recorder), and a number of methods for the instrument were published.



Komplizierte Csakan, by Johann Ziegler (1795–1858)

Rather than extending the volume of the baroque recorder, the csakan further refined the instrument's sweetness of tone. Its keywork facilitated chromatic playing, extended its useful range and, more importantly, ameliorated the recorder's characteristic unevenness of timbre, a product of its cross-fingering. These features of the csakan are beautifully illustrated in the performance of Karl Scholl's, *Quartet for Csakan and String Trio* (c.1813), a video of which you can find on YouTube (see below for details and link). The csakan repertoire, the subject of a large-scale survey by Marianne Betz (1992), numbering some 400 pieces, offers a happy hunting ground for those looking for suitable 19th-century music technically and stylistically suitable for recorder. The first pieces for csakan or *flûte douce* were composed and published by the instrument's inventor Anton Heberle in 1807. Heberle's works for csakan include eight volumes of light pieces, a *Fantasy*, a *Sonata Brillante* (all solo works), two volumes of short duets, a concertino with string trio and two horns, and a set of variations with string quartet and two horns. Heberle's example was rapidly imitated by numerous Viennese composers of the day including Stephan Franz, Anton Kargl, Ernst Krähmer, Johann-Baptist von Hunyadi, Wilhelm Klängenbrunner, Joseph Gebauer, Anton Stadler (the clarinetist to whom Mozart dedicated his clarinet concerto), and Anton Diabelli (publisher of works by Beethoven and Schubert). And there were virtuosic csakan and piano transcriptions of music by Donizetti, W.A. Mozart, F.X. Mozart, Rossini, J. Strauss, and Weber. In passing, I note that Beethoven himself owned a csakan of the walking-stick kind which survives in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (Inv. SAM 830); and he even composed a *Menuetto moderato* for csakan and guitar which he subsequently reused in one of his piano sonatas, and again in a wind septet.

The csakan continued to be played until the turn of the 20th century, by which time it had become an instrument in C with keys (*Komplizierte Csakan*) or without keys (*Einfache Csakan*). The firm Conrad Mollenhauer made csakans and flageolets in the 19th century, not making recorders as such until after World War II. An 1899 catalogue by the Leipzig instrument-maker Julius Heinrich Zimmermann advertises csakans without keys, with one key and with six keys. Thus, a tradition in the manufacture of recorders existed long before the commonly supposed rebirth of the instrument in the 20th century as an old instrument for early music.



Wiener Csakan, Ziegler model

As the early 20th-century revival of the recorder gained momentum, flautists who began to play the recorder wanted to have an instrument fitted with the familiar keys rather than having to get used to historical forked fingerings. Thus, after c.1930, several workshops started to offer recorders with between three and six semitone keys, among them German instrument-makers Oscar Adler, Max Hüller, Ludwig Schlosser, Martin Kehr and Karl Hammerschmidt & Söhne.



Soprano recorder in C with 6 semitone keys by Robert Barth (c.1940)

The East German firm Johannes Adler made keyed recorders in c" as late as the 1960s – they often turn up on eBay!



Soprano recorder in C by Johannes Adler (c. 1960) with 6 semitone keys

In our own times there have been two major attempts to apply a Boehm system keywork to the recorder, namely the 'Orkon' and the 'Strathmann flute'. The 'Orkon' or 'Chromette', invented in 1941 by Edward Verne Powell (son of V.Q. Powell, the famous New York flute maker) was essentially a modified soprano recorder moulded in bakelite with metal reinforcement rings and fitted with a simplified Boehm system keywork. Its lowest notes could be blown loudly as well as softly with minimal pitch change and the chromatic scale was much facilitated by the keywork. Although the Orkon was intended to be mass produced for use in schools as a preparatory instrument for potential flute players, the venture failed. The Orkon was sometimes played by jazz musicians such as clarinetist/saxophonist/band-leader Woody Hermann, who used it as a novelty instrument. In much the same way, multi-instrumentalist Lazy Ade Monsborough (one of the fathers of Australian jazz) played the recorder – and brought the house down!



‘Orkon’ by Edward Verne Powell

In 1987, a European patent was accepted for a fully keyed recorder designed by the late German saxophonist Arnfred Rudolf Strathmann. This instrument lacked a thumbhole but featured the elaborate keywork and fingerings of a saxophone. With the assistance of the Klein company Kiel, a series of ‘Strathmann flutes’ was developed with many modern features beyond the modern keywork. The body is made of wood or durable plastic, the block height is adjustable with a simple thumbscrew, and the thumbhole is replaced by a key which opens two small holes high up in the headpiece which raises any fingering of the lower register to the octave above. Their volume is stronger than on conventional recorders, and the timbre is between that of a recorder and flute. Strathmann flutes have found favour with other German jazz musicians. Strathmann passed away in late 2019 and these interesting instruments have become collectors’ items.



Keyed recorder by Arnfred Strathmann

It is worth noting that as well as the adjustable block height system he developed Strathmann later patented a device in the block itself, operated by the lower lip which alters the pitch of the recorder by up to 5 cents, similar (but not identical) to those developed by Dolmetsch in 1930 and by Max King & Sons in 1937.

Some Recordings (YouTube)

- Karl Scholl (c.1813), Quartet for Csakan and String Trio, performed by Hugo Reyne (csakan), Philippe Couvert (violin), Serge Raban (viola), Dominique Dujardin (cello) [Video](#)
- Anton Diabelli (1821), *Notturmo* Op. 123, performed by Yvonne Weichsel (Komplizierte Csakan with 8 keys after Ziegler by Guido Hulsens), Robert Finster (csakan with 2 keys after Johann Ziegler by Bernhard Mollenhauer) & Hans Palier (original Biedermeier guitar). [Video](#)

- Gerald Marks & Seymor Symons (1931), *Lass mal schnacken [All of Me]*, played by Rudi Strathman (Strathmann flute) Dirk Neumann (bass) & Gerd Hausotto (snare-drum). [Video](#)
- Frederick Allen Mills aka Kerry Mills (1899), *Whistling Rufus*, played by ‘Lazy’ Ade Monsborough (recorder) and friends, [Video](#)

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