ARSC Conference Update

ARSC in Syracuse, May 20-23, 1998

Friday afternoon’s sessions will be held at the Landmark Theatre in downtown Syracuse. Opened in 1928 as Loew’s State, this facility was designed by Thomas Lamb, and has seen scores of live and film performances over the years. It was rescued from the wrecking ball some 20 years ago and enjoys a new lease on life. Tours of the building will follow the afternoon presentations, which include area composers and performers on their experiences with the recording industry, and some early film sound history.

You may want to plan on arriving early on May 20th, or staying later on the 24th, to take advantage of the sale of duplicate records from the Belfer Archive. This event will run all day May 20th and May 24th, as well as during non-session hours on the days of the conference. The sale includes 78s, 45s, and LPs, and it will be advertised to the local community as well.

Susan T. Stinson, Local Arrangements, Curator, Belfer Audio Laboratory and Archive, Syracuse University Library, 222 Waverly Ave., Syracuse, NY 13244-2010 Phone 315-443-3477, fax 315-443-9510

Updated Publishing Schedule for the ARSC Newsletter

Starting with the prior issue, the ARSC Newsletter is published according to the following schedule. Please note that the following dates indicate the time frame in which the ARSC Newsletter will be delivered to the Post Office and not the deadline for the submission of materials to the editor. The deadlines will continue to be printed on page 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall issue</td>
<td>End of November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter issue</td>
<td>End of February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring issue</td>
<td>Mid – June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer issue</td>
<td>Mid – September</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Plans are shaping up for the 1998 ARSC Conference in Syracuse! Once again, we hope that a very strong program will entice you to come to the convention and be with kindred spirits. Among the highlights already planned:

- Author, performer, and producer Artis Wodehouse will be there with a Yamaha Disklavier discussing her ongoing projects concerning keyboard artists of the 1920s and 1930s.
- Lots of discussions about cylinders (for those who are unaware, the Belfer Audio Archives has one of the premiere collections of cylinders in the world), including a Q&A session with the Cylinder Subcommittee, critic and ARSC member David Hamilton talking about his recent work with the Mapleson cylinders, member Jerry Fabris discussing the 1888 cylinder of Thomas Edison’s voice, and hopefully a demonstration of Belfer’s laser-playback system for cylinders.
- Dr. Martin Elste talking about some recently-discovered experimental recordings by Paul Hindemith.
- Part II of ARSC member Mike Biel’s “History of Instantaneous Recording”.
- Joseph Reidy (the lawyer who writes the copyright column for the ARSC Journal), of the law office of Cumpston & Shaw, will talk about domestic copyright issues; and Pekka Gronow will be discussing the European situation.
- ARSC member Gerry Gibson discussing the state of digital preservation at the Library of Congress.

These and many other interesting topics will engage and inform you in the course of three days in Syracuse, New York. I hope to see a record crowd of ARSC members there!

Jim Farrington, ARSC 1998 Program Chair, Olin Library, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT 06459 phone: 860-685-3899, fax: 860-685-3890, alt. fax: (860) 685-3899, e-mail: jfarrington@wesleyan.edu (e-mail preferred)
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Will ARSC grow or shrink? Will ARSC programs and publications continue or not? Will ARSC have the resources needed to continue its existing activities?

At the Nashville conference in 1997, the membership received a recommendation from the Board of Directors to increase member dues. That initiative failed to gather the necessary majority to pass, despite receiving a majority of more than 55 percent of the vote.

The Board of Directors has responded by again voting to submit for member consideration a dues increase resolution. It is the unanimous view of the Board that ARSC must have more income to maintain its current schedule of programs. I fully agree with this view.

This time the resolution to be presented to members at the business meeting on Saturday, May 23, 1998 is simple. It calls for a dues increase for individuals of $6 and for institutions of $10. If passed, individual member dues for 1999 will amount to $36, and institutional dues will amount to $40. It is projected that the dues increase will yield a little over $6,000. But ARSC has lost at least $8,000 in buying power since 1991. Passage of this recommendation will replace some, but not all, of the buying power ARSC had in 1991. As you can see, this is purely an inflation dues increase. Our programs and services are being damaged by increasing costs which are not matched by increased income. Think only of the dramatic increase in the price of paper several years ago.

If the resolution does not pass, what happens? Buying power will continue to erode, and in my view programs will have to be reduced or eliminated. The Board of Directors took actions over the last year to begin program reductions. In all probability the ARSC Membership Directory will now be published on cheap paper intended to last only two years. As programs are cut, the benefits realized by members declines, membership shrinks, and a very serious situation becomes gradually more ominous.

Let’s avoid the negative scenario. Let’s act together to assure that ARSC remains a vibrant association with a wide range of programs and services benefiting its members. Right now, ARSC is the premier association of its kind in the world. I hope you will join me in keeping it that way.

I want to invite all members to make their views on this important topic known. Send me your comments! I will make sure that the Board of Directors and members voting at the business meeting hear a summary of the comments I receive. Send your comments to:

Ted Sheldon, ARSC President
Miller Nichols Library
5100 Rockhill Road
Kansas City, MO 64110-2499
Fax: (816) 333-5584
E-mail: sheldon@smtpgate.umkc.edu

And of course, I’m always happy to hear from members and interested persons about ARSC problems and opportunities. Send them along any time.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

First of all, I want to thank all of the members who have responded to their dues notices in a timely manner. I also want to thank those you who gave donations in addition to the regular dues. I am pleased to report that our Sustaining Membership is up over the last few years. Due to rising costs, your donations are needed and greatly appreciated.

Secondly, I want to remind those who have not yet paid their 1998 dues that the deadline was March 1st. If you want to continue receiving the ARSC Journal, ARSC Newsletter, the ARSC Membership Directory, news on the Conference, and all of the other good things we send your way, you will need to pay your dues today so we can keep you on the active mailing list.

And remember, the Journal, Newsletter and other publications we send you are only part of the ARSC experience. To capture the full spirit of ARSC, meet other members, and learn much new information not yet published, you need to come to the ARSC Conference in Syracuse. It is a rewarding experience for all those who attend.

Thank you for your continuing support of ARSC.

Peter Shambarger
Executive Director, ARSC

Note: Letters to the Editor, see page 5.

DEADLINES

Classified Advertising:
No. 84, Summer 1998 August 7, 1998
No. 85, Fall 1998 October 23, 1998

Editorial Material:
No. 84, Summer 1998 August 14, 1998
No. 85, Fall 1998 October 30, 1998

ARSC NEWSLETTER

The ARSC Newsletter is published seasonally four times a year. Submissions should be typed and well written. You may send submissions to the editor at the following address:

Michael Devecka
206 Park Street
Montclair, NJ 07042
973-655-9730
E-mail: mdevecka@aol.com

Claims or other notification of issues not received should be addressed to the Executive Director of ARSC. His address serves as the return address of every issue of the ARSC Newsletter.
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Our insurance carrier is Best rated A+ (Superior), size 15 (the largest). The latest Best's report is available on request. A specimen copy of the coverage is also available on request.

When a loss occurs we use professionals and knowledgeable experts to help determine current replacement value. We pay current collectible market retail prices for collectors and current collectible market wholesale prices for dealer losses. Consistent claims handling over long periods is very important, we have used one Claims Representative firm since 1971. One claim rep has handled collector claims since 1982 and the two dealer claim reps have handled dealer claims since 1971. These three individuals have more experience handling collectibles claims than any other individuals in the world. Mail, shipping and small claims are often handled by the Collectibles Insurance Agency, Inc. office.

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Number 82, Winter 1998
Letters to the Editor

I have been a member of ARSC for over a year and a member of the local club in Houston, Texas. I have a large collection of records and tapes, however, I am only interested in Jazz and some Blues and 1917 to 1947 are my basic years. Heavy on the 1930s and 1940s.

Cylinders and acoustic records are not part of my main collection.

Getting right to the point. Look at the picture of page 5 of the Newsletter #51, see the horn and cylinder machine. That seems to be the interest of most of the members, "Vintage" recordings.

My opinion is that ARSC should serve the "Vintage" record collector (1880-1925) and let the rest of us, that are interested in other things find our way.

I myself need to find a club that is into Jazz and only the recordings I collect.

Would you think of joining a book club that covers all books from 1400 to today? Of course not. It seems that recordings are about the same, except the time period is shorter.

That's my opinion. Thanks for reading my letter.

Sincerely,
Albert L. Mantell
Kenedale, Texas

Editor's reply:
The essential purpose of ARSC is to promote the preservation and study of historic recordings in all fields of music and speech. Basically, ARSC members are private collectors or institutional representatives. It is true that ARSC is not an organization for only jazz collectors. But the same is true regarding opera, orchestral, popular, blues or whatever category of sound recording one chooses. Variety is perhaps the easiest and simplest generalization one can make about the interests of the 900 plus ARSC members. Look at any ARSC Conference program to see the tremendous range of subjects presented in a few days. I always find it amazing.

Funny Mr. Mantell should mention the picture of the cylinder phonograph. I ran the picture of the recording demonstration because it provides an example of what ARSC is about. Peter Dilig is a private collector who has experimented on acoustic recording techniques for many years. For the most part acoustic recording is a lost art. At the Conference he shared his knowledge and expertise with those present

...I find it inexplicable that ARSC — an organisation dedicated to sound collections — should do nothing to encourage original recordings from amongst its own members. Rather, written articles are solicited, abound in profusion, and are awarded prizes. Further, whenever I have floated the suggestion that ARSC should encourage such original recordings I have been shut down in flames. Why? Are all ARSC members POBs (Print oriented illegitimate)?

In Britain I recall competitions for non-professional sound recording enthusiasts whose efforts were so good as to be given an airing on the BBC.

If tiny Britain can be the source of such worthwhile material how much richer must be the material to be garnered from the vastness of the USA

So come on ARSC members why not use a microphone to justify the demands of our nomenclature

Yours sincerely,
Joe Pengelly
Plymouth, England

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WHAT'S NEXT on our mail auctions? JAZZ — a great list of 78s and LPs including a lot of rare blues titles — available in April. PERSONALITY — including some early country, dance band, and many historical 78s — available in June. CLASSICAL — continuing the sale of several fine collections — available in August. Look for our very special 10th Anniversary Auction — available in Fall ’98. All lists free upon request. Tom Hawthorn, 77 Columbia Ave., Roseville, CA 95678 phone/fax: 916-773-4727.

FOR SALE: Edison Blue Amberlons cylinders (4 minute). Good playing condition, titles my choice, no boxes or tops. $100.00 plus shipping and insurance. Jerry Madsen, 4624 W. Woodland Rd., Edina, MN 55424-1552, phone: 612-926-7775.

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Number 82, Winter 1998
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is a lively magazine covering the music scene of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. Although the emphasis is placed on the British dance bands and vocalists, the magazine also covers the American scene, jazz, big bands, music hall, and variety, etc. Memory Lane incorporates the Al Bowlly Circle. Published quarterly and professionally printed, each edition includes exclusive articles by leading journalists and writers, picture pages, readers' letters, record and book reviews, and discographical information. A must for 78 rpm collectors and enthusiasts. Please send 3 International Reply Coupons for a sample copy. Memory Lane, P.O. Box 1939, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 3UH, England.

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