

Mid-Western Regional Newsletter, January 2013
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2012 Highlights of the Mid-western Region of the AHS and... Highlights to come in 2013!

Welcome to the Mid-Western Regional Newsletter of the AHS! So many exciting things happened within the American Harp Society this past year!

The most important event was the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the American Harp Society at the 40th National AHS Conference in NYC June 30-July 3, 2012. My husband and I attended the conference and had a wonderful time. It was based at the Marriott Marquis, which is located in the heart of Times Square. No matter what time of night, Times Square is "alive!" The concerts and recitals, which were held at the Marriott Marquis, were wonderful. The Board meetings were very productive. However, the best part of the Conference always is "catching up" with "harp friends" whom I have made over the years....these friendships are so rewarding. If you would like more information about what happened in NYC, please go the AHS website: www.harpsociety.org; and look up the NYC Conference. (<http://www.ahsconference.org>)

Speaking of making new harp friends or connecting with ones you haven't seen for awhile, please plan on coming to the Summer Institute this summer in Los Angeles.

The Summer Institute is more focused on teachers and students, while also providing amazing concert, workshop and competition opportunities. Registration will be coming out shortly. Please look on-line as well as in the mail for the registration packet. The following information is from the AHS website.

2013 Summer Institute, Colburn School

Lyon & Healy Awards □ June 13, 2013 - June 15, 2013
20th American Harp Society, Inc. National Competition □ June 15, 2013 - June 18, 2013

10th American Harp Society, Inc. Summer Institute June 16, 2013 - June 19, 2013

Greetings from Los Angeles!

The 2013 AHS Institute and Competition will be held at the prestigious Colburn School in the heart of downtown Los Angeles, across the street from the world famous Disney Hall. With state of the art rehearsal and performance spaces, dormitory accommodations, and in-house cafeteria and catering, Colburn is ideal for the Competition, Institute, and Lyon & Healy awards.

“Focus on Friends” in 2013 features the finest in chamber music and pop and jazz small ensembles. Coaching and master classes with world class artists such as Heidi Lehwalder, AnneMarie Liss, Carol Robbins, and Paul Baker are just the beginning. Los Angeles premieres and world premieres of new works will open our ears to new repertoire possibilities for students and professionals, performed in Zipper Hall, home of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra. Master classes including instrumental clinicians who play instruments other than the harp will increase our awareness of the possibilities and needs of our fellow musicians, enabling us to be better listeners and performers.

The AHS Summer Institute at Colburn is a great start or finish for a Los Angeles destination summer vacation. Downtown Los Angeles has a vibrant Chinatown, with restaurants and shopping. Attendees will also want to visit historic Olvera Street, the site of the first settlement in this area, with its beautiful cathedral, festive outdoor market, captivating plaza, strolling mariachi musicians, and fantastic Mexican restaurants and food stands. Downtown is also home to many, many fine restaurants, the renowned garment and jewelry districts, shopping malls, and museums. The Metro serves the wider metropolitan area; for example, Hollywood, Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood Boulevard, Grauman’s Chinese Theater, etc. Disneyland, Universal Studios, Knott’s Berry Farm, and other theme parks are all within easy driving distance.

At the 2013 AHS Summer Institute, fine music, fine food, great weather, and good friends merge to create an unforgettable experience.

2012 Highlights from Chapters in the Mid-Western Region:

News from the Lyra Chapter of Greater Kansas City:

On April 15, 2012, Sister Joachim Holthaus of Mount St. Scholastica celebrated her retirement at age ninety after a wonderfully successful career as professor of harp and organ at "the Mount" conservatory in Atchison, Kansas. A former student, Erin Hansen played a beautiful harp prelude for the Mass given in Sr. Joachim's honor. A buffet luncheon followed where her many friends and colleagues gathered to express their thanks for her tireless devotion and for her service to the community in music education.

On August 19, former Lyra Chapter President, Roseanne Gortenburg, gave a party in her home in Edwardsville, Kansas, for the Lyra Chapter to honor Sr Joachim. A vegan brunch was served after which Roseanne Gortenburg, Phaedra Moll, Juli Sackman, Judith Brougham, and Ruth Laughlin played selections on the harp for Sr. Joachim.

Ed Galchick presented a workshop in early June on How to Care for Your Harp. Ed's work is much appreciated here in Kansas City!

Katie Wychulis, a native of Omaha, Nebraska, gave a concert/workshop in Kansas City, Missouri, on June 10. She is principal harp of the Lincoln Symphony and Boulder Philharmonic and has performed nationwide as an orchestral soloist and harpist, chamber musician, and recitalist. Katie's program included works by Handel, Britten, and Salzedo. Her program was well received by an enthusiastic audience.

December 1 will bring Los Angeles jazz harpist Lori Andrews with her husband Bart Samolis on bass to Kansas City for concerts at the Truman Medical Center and at the Blue Room, 18th and Vine. Lori and Bart will also give a concert/workshop for the Lyra Chapter. Michael O'Shiver, preeminent Kansas City jazz harpist (musication.com), is providing advertising and other assistance for the duo, as well as the Lyra Chapter.

Also: The Kansas City Musical Club and the Lyra Chapter are co-sponsoring a harp competition on January 5th for college-age students who reside in the Greater Kansas City area. There will be five participants. Two thousand dollars is being made available as prize money.

Ruth Laughlin
President, Lyra Chapter, AHS
Greater Kansas City

News from the Wichita Chapter:

The Wichita Chapter sponsored Sunita Stanslow in concert on July 16th in Wichita, KS.

Faith O'Neal is now teaching harp at the Oklahoma City University.

Some of the local harpists have formed a harp circle to give harpists more ensemble playing experience. This is something new for Wichita, and is under the direction of Suzanne Shields.

Submitted by Suzanne Shields, President

News from The Great Plains Chapter:

Congratulations to Katherine Stangl who won the Intermediate II Division, and Zach Hurst who placed 2nd in the Advanced II Division at the Midwest Harp Festival Competition in Tulsa, OK on July 24th! Both students are from Lincoln, NE and study with Heidi Beran.

A recital for small ensembles was presented by students of Mary Bircher on November 3rd. Students of Mary Bircher and Karen Conoan performed at a recital in March and also in an early Summer recital. All presentations were held at the St. Cecilia Institute for Adult Formation, Omaha, Nebraska.

There is a studio recital scheduled, students of Mary Bircher & Karen Conoan. It is set for Saturday, April 13 at 10:00 AM at the St. Cecilia Institute, Omaha, Nebraska.

Submitted by Karen Conoan, President

News from Tulsa, Oklahoma:

Announcing the 14th International Midwest Harp Festival, July 21-27 2013. Featured clinicians are: Mary Bircher, Jan Jennings, Faye Seeman, Elizabeth Richter and Peter Wiley. For further information: www.midwestharpfestival.org; harpfestival@sbcglobal.net; 918-832-0934

Report from the Mile High Chapter – Colorado:

The season for the Mile High Chapter of the AHS began with the sixth bi-annual Harp Fantasia held last October 2011 at the Lakewood Cultural Center to a sellout crowd. This year, Lynne Abbey-Lee was in charge of selecting repertoire for the four performing groups' and combined groups' works. Conductors for the event were Lynne Abbey-Lee, Paul Crowley, Mary Keener Barbara Lepke-Sims, and Suzanne Moulton-Gertig. Paul Wren was the stage manager and Suzanne Moulton-Gertig was M.C. for the 49- harp event. Works arranged by two chapter members, Margot Krimmel (*Pipeline*) and Lynne Abbey-Lee (*Over the Rainbow*) were performed on the program.

Harp Fantasia Tuning. Photos by David Brown

In the spring of 2012, the chapter hosted the annual Music Education Auditions (AHS Student Evaluations). Suzanne Moulton-Gertig served as evaluator and host with students from the studios of Lynne Abbey-Lee, Courtney Hershey-Bress, Margot Krimmel, Ann Marie Liss, and Monica Smith. Participants were Susan Spangler, Mary Hagen, Emma Strauch, Julie Eoff, Sarah Street, Ally Brown, and Molly Karst.

Oct. 13 2012 the Mile High Chapter held its bi-annual chapter recital, the Harpist Showcase, hosted by St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Denver. Eight harpists performed a varied program, including two world premières. The first by George Banks and Carolyn Kuban was a cello and harp duo, the *Celestial Sonata* played by the composers. The second, *Rain in Japanese* by David Shaul, was a harp duo performed by Bob Litterell and Catherine Rands. Works by Händel, Bach, Tournier, Gau-Guerra, Khachaturian, and Cady were performed.

Many of our professional and non professional chapter members are active performing in Colorado orchestras, wind ensembles and chamber groups. Individuals' performances are too numerous to mention here, but members perform in groups including, but not limited to, the Arapahoe Philharmonic, Aurora Symphony, Boulder Symphony, Colorado Symphony, Colorado Wind Ensemble, Denver Philharmonic, Evergreen Chamber Orchestra, Jefferson Symphony, Lakewood Symphony, Littleton Symphony, Lonetree Symphony, and Mountain Chamber Music Society.

Other Upcoming Events:

Emily Levin is playing the Ginastera concerto with the Littleton Symphony on Feb. 22. "Duo Scopio" will be performing March 9th at Cameron Church. For more admission check out: www.milehighchapterahs.org.

The Music Education Auditions: March 16 & April 20, 2013. Dr. Kathy Bundock Moore; adjudicator.
“The Whole Harpist Program” on 3/16/13 presented by Carolyn Kuban

Harp Fantasia planned for October 26, 2013.

The present board of the Mile High Chapter serving Sept. 1, 2011 – Aug. 31, 2013 is Paul Wren, President; Lynne Abbey-Lee, Vice President; Paul Crowley, Secretary; Suzanne Moulton-Gertig, Treasurer/Communications and List Serve Manager; and Catherine Rands, Member-at-Large.

Respectfully Submitted, Suzanne Moulton-Gertig, Treasurer/Communications

Mile High Chapter Group Picture





Additional News from the Mile High Chapter for 2013

*Kathleen Bride and Courtney Hershey Bress will be performing two duo harp recitals in May. These recitals are part of the Colorado Symphony's new outreach that started this season. The concert will be mostly French music. Both Kathleen and Courtney will also each be performing a solo piece on the program. The first concert is on May 17th at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Arvada at 7:30pm. Ticket information is not determined yet, but you can reserve tickets on their website. The second concert will be at the Mizel Arts and Cultural Center in the Jewish Community Center in Denver on May 22nd at 7:30pm. Tickets can be purchased through the Mizel Center.

Kathleen Bride and Courtney Hershey Bress will also be performing with the string section of the Colorado Symphony in Vaughn William's Five Variants of "Dives and Lazarus" on May 19th at 5:30pm at Montview Presbyterian Church in Denver. They will also be performing one of their duets on this concert too. Tickets can be purchased through the Colorado Symphony.

Kathleen Bride will be giving a Master Class on Saturday, May 18th from 1-4pm. Participants will pay \$50 and auditors will pay \$20. There are a very limited amount of slots to participate, but there are an unlimited amount of auditor slots. To sign up please call Courtney Hershey Bress at [720-941-2444](tel:720-941-2444) or email her at chbress@gmail.com. Place to be determined....

Are you interested in becoming a Certified Music Practitioner through the Music for Healing and Transition Program which certifies musicians to play by the bedside in a healthcare setting? Contact: Barbara W. Lepke-Sims, Area Coordinator at blepksims@gmail.com or check out www.mhtp.org

In Memoriam:

In the month of January 2013 the Denver area lost two of their beloved harpists:

Bob Litterell (September 10-1946-January 30-2012)

Bob Litterell passed away on January, 30. He was born in Las Animas Colorado.

Bob was an accomplished world renowned harpist and an expert Egyptologist. He made many friends here and all over the world in his travels. He is survived by his sisters Mary and Shirley, brother-in-law, and nieces and nephews and their families and cousins and friends. Loved and was loved.”

Bob started playing violin at age seven and began playing the harp as a teenager. He studied harp with Mary Bickford and has since studied privately with Susann McDonald. In addition to serving in the Wichita State University Orchestra, his alma mater, he served as solo harpist with the Kern Philharmonic Orchestra in Bakersfield, Calif. for a number of years. In the summer of 1999 he performed the Parish Alvars Concertino for Two Harps and Orchestra with the Radio Prague Symphony at the Seventh World Harp Congress in Prague.

Bob has traveled the world extensively looking for unknown and out of print music for the harp. He has made five trips to Egypt and brought back completely unknown works written for the harp by Egyptian Composers. While there, he lectured and coached at the Cairo Conservatoire. In addition to his original compositions Bob was equally at home in the field of popular music. He was also a trained chef and loved cooking and hosting dinner parties.

I would like to say a personal note about Bob. He was well-loved in the local harp community and happily opened his home to Mile High Chapter meetings, recitals and student evaluations. The last time I saw Bob was at the NYC conference, where we had fun telling fun harp stories to each other. The Sunday before he passed away he was at a Mile High Chapter potluck helping to pick out music for the next “Harp Fantasia.” His “official” eulogy will be written by Suzanne Moulton-Gertig for the American Harp Society Journal. (BLS)

***Helen Elizabeth Hope*, (January 30, 1927 - January 21, 2013)**

Helen was the Principal Harpist of the Denver Symphony and Colorado Symphony for 47 years. She was my former harp teacher. This is her “family obituary.” I plan to write her professional biography for the AH Journal. She was the “grand dame” of the harp world in Denver and will be missed. (BLS)



Helen Elizabeth Hope

January 30, 1927 - January 21, 2013
Resided in Centennial, CO

Obituary

Helen was born to Joseph Sylvester Brennan and Helena Katherine Phillip on January 30, 1927 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This little family, in which she was an only child, was pretty well to do in that they had a row house and an automobile. Both of her parents were devoted to her care and well-being.

As a young girl, Helen wanted to play the harp and she begged her father. He promised her if she played the piano for three years, she could play the harp. Helen held him to his promise and around 12 years old, she began harp lessons. This was the beginning of her life's path. Helen attended Catholic Grammar School, Catholic High School and Catholic College.

In grammar school, Helen met a boy from the neighborhood, Len. Len said he was really impressed by her Daddy's car. Joe Brennan was impressed that Len loved baseball. Helen and Len were best friends. They shared Friday night card games and late night sandwiches. They eventually went to dances and football games and Len became her best friend and boyfriend.

The path Helen and Len divided when Len went off to war and Helen came to Denver in September of 1946. Helen's hard work paid off when, at only 19 years of age, she became Solo Harpist with the Denver Symphony. Helen came to Denver on her own, finding a boarding house to live in, and beginning a new career. Having to support herself, she made \$25 a week with the Symphony and supplemented by teaching at Lamont School of Music, at Denver University.

Helen met John Edward Lunn, a trombone player, who had coincidentally arrived on the same day. John was 25, also from the east coast, and also beginning his new career both with the symphony and teaching at Lamont.

Helen and John found a new relationship and were engaged on January 10, 1947. They were married in the spring of the same year. During their 30 some years of marriage, Helen juggled her career and three children, John 'Buddy' Lunn, Pam Walters, Brad Lunn. In 1977 Helen ended her marriage to John and she and youngest son, Brad, were on their own.

Grandma Brennan, being the wonderful woman that she was, wrote a lovely note to Len Hope, back in Philadelphia. This note stated that poor, dear Joe, was failing. His health was not good and by the way, their daughter, Helen, was single again.

Len, being the devoted almost son, felt for Grandma Helen's situation and he wanted to come to Denver to give her support and visit 'poor Joe.'

Now, Len's path had brought him back from the war in 1948. He married a lovely lady and had 5 lovely daughters. His youngest daughter, Ellen, then 18, accompanied or chaperoned her father on the compassion trip to Denver. Grandma Brennan, of course, arranged for Len and his daughter, Ellen, to stay near her and asked Helen to pick them up at the airport.

Helen was never the same again. Their love was evident to everyone who was near. Len returned home, took care of his affairs and returned to Denver. Helen and Len were married in August of 1979. They began a marriage as true friends, as true lovers, each with the others' well being in their hearts. This was a love that would sustain them not only for the honeymoon years but also for the hard years of their lives.

Mom continued to play harp in the Symphony until her early 70's. She played shows and taught a few students. Len took care of her, which enabled her to continue. He went to every concert. He carried her harp. He cooked her scrambled eggs and bacon on weekend mornings. Looking from the outside in, one could not tell the hand from the glove.

The early 90's brought a new challenge for this loving couple. Len got an infection in an already somewhat weakened heart and found he needed a heart transplant. The thought of losing Len brought Helen into action. She used every fiber in her being to extend his life. This became the fight for her own life...because she couldn't even think of being without her Len.

Len received his gift of life in 1998. As we sat in the waiting room at University Hospital through the long, long surgery, Helen was terrified. The thought of losing Len was now a reality. For years she had only focused on the goal of getting the heart and now he was being wheeled into surgery. He was 72 years old and getting a new heart. Setting a new precedence for heart transplants because of Helen's determination and perseverance. The talented doctors of Colorado University Hospital kept this love story going. Len came through the surgery and recovery with flying colors and they shared another 10 years. The two of them battled their individual age ailments but they were truly appreciative for each other and for the life they were enjoying. They loved their days together until May 3rd of 2008 when Len passed away on a Saturday morning, making eggs for his best friend.

Helen was never the same after Len's passing, the light in her eyes dimmed; she felt that no one could understand her loss. She had never known unconditional love until she and Len were married. Her life from 1947 until 1979 had given her a career, children, family, but Len had given her love.

Helen loved the ocean and Len was her shore. Len was her mountain and she was the setting sun making a vision, which will always be etched in our hearts. All the expressions we can think of that describe what love is...they shared.

The comfort of knowing they are once again together makes our loss more peaceful.

Helen leaves a family who loved her and will always miss her.

She is survived by her 3 children, 8 grandchildren, and 3 great grandchildren.

Memorial Service Saturday, February, 2, 2013 at 10:00am., Horan & McConaty Family Chapel, 5303 East County Line Road (One block west of South Holly Street) in Centennial, Colorado 80122.

Memorial contributions may be made in Helen's name to Make a Wish Foundation 7951 East Maplewood Avenue, Suite 186, Greenwood Village, Colorado 80111.