



THE

SONNECK SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Editor: William Kearns

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MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

President - Raoul F. Camus
Past President - Irving Lowens
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New Members at Large: H. Wiley Hitchcock,
Richard Jackson, Donald L. Leavitt
Continuing Members at Large: J. Bunker
Clark, Mary Wallace Davidson, Karl Kroeger

FROM THE PRESIDENT

"You've come a long way, baby" may be the slogan for a popular cigarette, but it could also apply to our Society. It was in May of 1973, at a conference sponsored by the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, that Irving Lowens proposed the formation of a society for the promotion of American music, and suggested that it be named after Oscar Sonneck. A few months later he and his wife Margery invited all interested people then attending the American Musicological Society conference in Washington to come to a luncheon meeting, where the proposal was enthusiastically received, and a steering committee was formed to draw up by-laws, and prepare plans for the first meeting. In 1975, at Wesleyan University, the by-laws were approved, and The Sonneck Society officially came into being. Irving Lowens was elected President by acclamation. Our first NEWSLETTER proudly listed the names of 101 members, but very little else in its doubly-folded single sheet.

Today, eight years later, as we near the enrollment of our 500th member, as we read this expanded NEWSLETTER, and as we look forward to the new journal, we should look back and say thanks to some of those who have made it possible. Having nursed the Society to such a state of maturity, Irving has decided to step down as President (but not too far down; fortunately, as he remains on the Board for another year as Past President). What words can we use to express our appreciation for his dedication, labors, and guidance all these years? The presentation at the annual meeting was an

attempt to express our feelings to "Sir Irving, Lord of Baltimore." (See this NEWSLETTER for explanation if you were not at the meeting.)

There are other familiar faces from the early days who have also stepped down from the Board, and they will be sorely missed. Nicholas Tawa, our NEWSLETTER editor for the first six volumes, has turned his pen over to Bill Kearns so that he can get back to more research. Alan Buechner always seemed to have just the right words for the occasion, as you can see by one of his motions reprinted in this NEWSLETTER. Our by-laws are in fine shape thanks to the dedication of John Graziano, who, in his spare time, also handled our membership campaigns. Rita Mead, in spite of a heavy schedule and declining health, flew out to Urbana with us to be sure that the Journal got a fit and proper start in life. Our sincerest thanks to each of them, as we greet the new members of the Board, Richard Crawford, H. Earle Johnson, H. Wiley Hitchcock, Richard Jackson, and Donald Leavitt.

We cannot sit back and rest on past achievements, however. The Bicentennial seemed to open the door for American music, but it appears to be almost shut once again. Looking at two full pages of concert advertisements in the New York Sunday Times recently, I was depressed by what I saw. True, there was a special tribute to Varese; the Philharmonic did present Crumb's "Ancient Voices of Children"; and Indiana University's Philharmonic Orchestra offered Ives' Fourth Symphony--but there was not a single piece of American music in the other 63 concerts advertised. Two particularly depressing advertisements were in close proximity: the Philharmonic's series on "The Romantic Era," which included works by Doppler, Conus, and Reinecke, but not one single American work, and the Guarneri Quartet's "Country Music" series of six concerts, each "devoted to the music of a single country." The home of "Country Music" is conspicuous by its absence in the listing of "Viennese, Czech, Hungarian, French, Scandinavian, and Russian" evenings. Obviously, there is plenty of work still to be done!

You will be receiving a special mailing from our new Treasurer, Kate Keller, in the near future. Included will be a complete listing of all committees and their members, and we urge you to contact them if you can aid them in any way to achieve their goals. Also included will be a special questionnaire on the conference to be held at Keele, England, July 1-4, 1983. May I urge you to plan now to attend this special event, for I know the program committee is

arranging some experiences that will provide memories to last a life-time. Keele is a special conference, and we also have our regular meetings to look forward to: Lawrence, 1982 (see this NEWSLETTER), Philadelphia, 1983, and Boston, 1984. Never before have we made plans so far in advance, and I know that each of the Program Chairpersons is challenging his/her committee to come up with a program even better than the year before! With dedication and enthusiasm like that, we are all bound to come up winners. Those of you who have never attended our meetings, may we urge you to come and find out for yourselves why ours are unlike most other conferences you have attended? Please consider this a personal invitation to become involved in the Society; there are many wonderful people out there you would be happy to have as your friend, and they, you. Give it a try?

Thanks for listening,
Raoul Camus
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MUSICAL THEATRE IN AMERICA

Mild weather, the rustic location of the C. W. Post Center of Long Island University, a good conference room, many varied activities--all these conspired for the success of Greenvale. The committee planning had to be more extensive than any conference to date with no fewer than seventeen meetings. Raoul Camus, John Graziano, and Beth Flusser represented the Sonneck Society. The special theme of the conference demanded such planning, and, although the individual sessions reflected standard demarcations, the conference from start to finish emphasized the collective nature of musical theatre.

Conference participants got into the mood of the occasion on Wednesday evening, April 1, with a food-laden, opening reception followed by a variety of theatre music performed by the ensembles and soloists from the C. W. Post Music Department. On Thursday morning, kick-off speaker Lehman Engel, a legend in musical theatre, established the lively pace and sometimes controversial nature of the conference with his lament on the lack of the "spoken word" (book musical) in today's musical, a condition he believed to be necessary for good lyric theatre. At least two papers read in the following sessions challenged this assumption, however.

Abstracts or shortened versions of many of the papers given at this extended conference (five days!) appear in both this and the fall issue of the NEWSLETTER, and negotiations are underway for Greenwood Press to publish a conference proceedings. In addition to being of good quality generally, the papers were as varied in subject matter and their authors were as diverse in backgrounds as one might expect in a meeting of musicians, dancers, actors and actresses, producers, choreographers, teachers, writers, etc. The commingling of professional theatre people and scholars gave the conference its special excitement with some earnest exchanges occurring both on and off the floor.

Thursday's sessions, morning and afternoon, were organized around the 18th- and 19th-century musical theatre respectively. Friday's subject was the 20th-century

musical with variety and review formats in the morning and the book musical in the afternoon. Saturday morning's session was devoted to the dance, and two sessions were crowded into Sunday morning. One was devoted to preserving the aural heritage of the musical; the other, to preserving the written and visual record. The latter session, billed as a symposium, turned out to be a sleeper. What we actually heard were some excellent individual papers describing the circumstances and contents of some important, specialized theatre collections around the country.

The "big" symposium of the conference occurred on Saturday afternoon when coordinators Glen Loney and Richard Buck assembled their panel of "over-achievers," an illustrious group of diversified theatre people who, among themselves, have been responsible for many of the good musicals these past fifteen or twenty years. "Putting It All Together," the title of the panel, brought the integral aspect of the conference into its clearest focus, for, as philosophies, opinions, and reminiscences were bantered back and forth among the panel, we in the audience were given a vivid impression of how closely these professionals interact, even occasionally exchanging responsibilities, to make a successful musical.

The evenings were given over to the theatre itself. Thursday evening's production of Kurt Weill's *Lady in the Dark*, given by the C. W. Post Music Department was a challenge. Can a Broadway show from a different time (1941) and on a dated theme (psychiatry) be given a convincing revival in the much different setting of a college theatre production? For most of us, the answer was a resounding yes, and the C. W. Post performers are to be congratulated for an evening both moving and entertaining.

Friday evening, Lee Theodore brought from Manhattan out to campus a troupe of a dozen young dancers from her American Dance Machine. For the first half of the program, we were treated to an open rehearsal in which some of the basic dance patterns and steps found in the musicals from the 1920s through the 60s were illustrated. The content was certainly interesting; however, even more revealing was Ms. Theodore's teaching technique, one of modelling each pattern and then coaching her apprentices individually as they danced collectively. The last half of The American Dance Machine program consisted of five celebrated dance routines reconstructed, sometimes with tremendous effort, from famous musicals of the past. For musicians with a relatively advanced notational system, it is a shock to realize how tenuous the heritage of American dance can be, and The American Dance Machine should be vigorously applauded in its effort to recreate an accurate record of the past.

Saturday night's banquet was accompanied by sparkling entertainment, selections from 18th-century American musical theatre performed by the talented After-Dinner Opera Company. The numerous toasts and courses, the charming music and humorous theatre pieces all produced a relaxing and convivial atmosphere. To author Gerald Boardman fell

the task of summarizing the accomplishments of the conference at the closing lunch early Sunday afternoon. In reviewing the many different papers and events, he noted the colorful and variegated history of the American-musical theatre, and he expressed the wish for continuing activity through revival, teaching, and research-publication, on this vital and fascinating subject.

Those of us from the Sonneck Society in attendance can only echo the eloquent motion of thanks expressed on our behalf by Alan Buechner at the banquet:

I rise to offer a motion expressing the Sonneck Society's heartfelt thanks and those of the American Society for Theatre Research and the Theatre Library Association to Dean Julian Mates, and to the Program Committee for offering such a delightful program of papers, presentations, and performances and to C. W. Post College for serving as a gracious host for the Musical Theatre in America Conference.

THE BOARD MEETING AT GREENVALE

The Board convened on the afternoon of 1 April 1981 and, excepting a break to attend the opening reception of the Musical Theatre in America Conference, met until nearly midnight. Reports from those responsible for the various publications of the Society and from the ad hoc and standing committees were received and discussed. The substance of many of these reports can be found in the minutes of the business meeting below. The Board reconvened briefly on April 4 to make arrangements for the fall interim Board meeting to be held in Boston during the fall conference of the American Musicological Society.

MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS MEETING GREENVALE, NY, April 4, 1981

[Editor's note: Texts of the several commendations read at this meeting are numbered and appended to the minutes.]

President Lowens called the meeting to order at 12:50 p.m. Kate Keller moved that the minutes for the meeting of March 22, 1980 be approved as published in Vol. VI, No. 2 of the NEWSLETTER. The motion was seconded by Tawa and approved unanimously.

Camus announced that the treasurer's report for 1980 had been published in Vol. VII, No. 1 of the NEWSLETTER. While entertaining questions pertaining to the treasurer's report, Camus recognized Arthur Schrader, who, with appropriate tongue-in-cheek comments, lauded Nicholas Tawa's scholarly activities in the field of American music and praised in particular his efforts in helping to found the Society and developing its NEWSLETTER as a uniquely useful medium of communication. Schrader's remarks were greeted by general applause.¹ Lichtenwanger then proceeded to address the membership concerning the extraordinary contributions of outgoing President Irving Lowens, during the course of which Lichtenwanger proposed a resolution conferring upon "Sir Irving, Lord of Baltimore" the "Royal Order of the Sonneck Sunburst."² The treasurer's report was concluded by Gordon

Myers' singing of several nursery rhymes, the texts of which had been fittingly altered to honor the two retiring officers.³ Inscribed silver cups were presented to Lowens and Tawa.⁴ Amid general merriment and to the accompaniment of popping champagne corks, Kate Keller moved that the treasurer's report be approved as presented. The motion was passed by acclamation.

Allen Britton reported that work on the first volume of American Music is progressing well. A call for papers appeared in the last issue of the NEWSLETTER. Members are encouraged to submit suggestions and comments to Britton, to special issues coordinator Jean Geil, or to the three special editors (Irving Lowens, Don L. Roberts, and Richard Jackson).

William Kearns spoke on anticipated developments in respect to the NEWSLETTER. Members are encouraged to submit to Kearns any ideas and suggestions, as well as news items and announcements appropriate for inclusion in the NEWSLETTER.

Bill Lichtenwanger announced that the manuscript for Oscar Sonneck and American Music was submitted to the University of Illinois Press. The book will include 14 articles by Sonneck, some of which are being published for the first time.

Jean Geil read excerpts from Grants Committee chair Doris Dyen's letter to the Board, and reported on actions taken by the Board in respect to Dyen's suggestions. The Grants Committee will be replaced by a Grants Advisor; Dyen has been asked to assume the latter position. The Sonneck Society will act generally as endorser rather than sponsor of individual grant applications.

H. Earle Johnson reported on a proposed Publications Committee project involving the recommendation of doctoral dissertations in the field of American music to be published as a continuing series under the auspices of the Sonneck Society. Comments and suggestions from Society members are encouraged.

John Graziano outlined proposed changes in Article III, Section 2 of the Society's by-laws. Keller moved that the proposed changes be accepted as presented; the motion was seconded by Tawa and passed without opposition.⁵ Alan Buechner offered a resolution recognizing retiring Board member Graziano's continued efforts on behalf of the Society, particularly in respect to revising the by-laws.⁶ Buechner's remarks were followed by a round of applause.

Election results were announced. [See page 1 of this NEWSLETTER.]

Announcements were made as to future conferences in Lawrence, Kansas (April 1-4, 1982), Philadelphia (Spring, 1983), Keele, England (July, 1983), and Boston (1984). J. Bunker Clark described events planned for the conference at Lawrence, which will be held jointly with the Midwest Chapter of the American Musicological Society and the Midcontinent American Studies Association. "The Midwest" has been established as the conference theme. The 1983 conference at Philadelphia will be held jointly with the Music Library Association. A tentative theme of "British-American Music Interactions" has been established for the

special conference hosted by the Keele Centre for American Music.

Lowens read a citation which bestowed honorary membership on Howard Hanson and which acknowledged "his magnificent contribution to American music as composer, conductor, educator, and musical statesman."7 A moment of silence was observed in Hanson's memory.

Upon transfer of the Society's gavel to incoming President Raoul Camus, the Society's committee structure was described in detail.

Under New Business, Vivian Perlis proposed that the Sonneck Society make official objection (by letter or telegram to the Senate Appropriations Committee) to the proposed cuts in the programs of the National Endowment For the Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts. Leonard Rivenburg expressed concern for the Society's prospects in attracting and keeping members; he proposed that the Membership Committee apply appropriate "arts marketing tactics" in this regard. An announcement was made concerning a symposium, "American Folksong as Historic Document," to be held April 18, 1981, at Douglass College. A resolution proposed by Buechner expressing gratitude to Julian Mates and to all the other individuals who contributed in so many ways to the success of the 1981 conference was deferred until the banquet that evening.

--Submitted by Jean Geil, Secretary

1. TRIBUTE TO NICOLAS TAWA

By Arthur Schrader

Mr. Treasurer: Since the NEWSLETTER has always been one of the largest demands on our annual budget I would like to speak to that point. - - -

Mr. Treasurer, Ladies & Gentlemen: I was wondering a few days ago what my ancestors were doing in 1770 when Billings published the New England Psalm Singer. That naturally led me to wondering what some of your ancestors were doing then, and especially what Nick Tawa's ancestors were doing in what is now Lebanon.

I have never asked Nick about this, but he is so damn versatile that the possibilities are staggering. You know he is cunning. It's easy to imagine some very successful merchants in his past. Yet I wonder; would you buy a pre-owned camel from this man? Nick always stands erect; chest out; a regal posture; was there a Caliph of Beirut in his ancestry? He is a gourmet and a gourmet cook. Is his ancestry through the Caliph's kitchen? He is a composer; did an ancestor pluck an oud and sing love lyrics while the Caliph dallied with a gazelle-eyed virgin?

I know Nick best as a friend, scholar, friend, workaholic, friend, and now past editor of the SONNECK SOCIETY NEWSLETTER. Nick first came to the Old Sturbridge Village music studio when he was finally finishing his doctoral dissertation after twenty years as a dropout from the Graduate School at Harvard. Nick later edited one of our recordings, but more important, he was a vital part of the triumvirate of Buechner, Schrader and Tawa which conceived and planned JOYFUL SOUNDS at Old Sturbridge in early May 1973. Irving has told me that JOYFUL SOUNDS was the first conference on

early American music, and has told many of us that Sonneck Society had its start there. I can easily believe that because so many spoke to us at the end of the JOYFUL SOUNDS sessions about the need to keep this thing moving. The Colonial Society conference which followed a fortnight later was a heaven-sent opportunity to keep things moving, and shortly after, the triumvirate became a temporary quartet when Gilbert Chase joined Alan, Nick and me at my house in Sturbridge for strategic and philosophic discussion on the subject: "What? Another Society?" Nick prepared the lunch, brought an appropriate luncheon wine, acted as secretary to the meeting, edited the questionnaires he sent out about a new society, and most important, sent out reports to all who might read them.

These reports were the predecessors of the SONNECK SOCIETY NEWSLETTER. A new society is, for awhile, little more than acts of faith by many people. In Nick's hands, the NEWSLETTER became the social glue that enabled this Society to get its act together. And now Nick has decided to rest on those laurels and go on to other projects--including a short history of the founding of the Society --Bill Kearns, Alan Britton, please note. I'll probably miss some of Nick's ascerbic witticisms in the NEWSLETTER, but "The old order changeth yielding place to new; And God fulfills himself in many ways, Lest one good custom should corrupt the world." Thank you Nick.

2. BILL LICHTENWANGER'S RESOLUTION CONCERNING IRVING LOWENS

Be It Resolved
by The Sonneck Society

in Plenary Session Assembled: that

Whereas on the 19th of August in the year 1916 a new sunburst forth upon the skies of the Family Lowens of New York and was named Irving by the astronomers that discovered it; and

Whereas during the several ensuing decades said sun did cast its unique radiance upon many and diverse aspects of the Human Condition, including--but not limited to--the Art of Das Schachspiel, the Serene Science of Musical Sounds, the Trepidatious Task of Talking Aeroplanes safely onto the ground and back up again, the Fickle Game of Scholarship and Learned Writing about Music, and the Solemn Sacrifice of Personal Ambition to the Organizational Demands of his fellow-wanderers in the Endless Dark of Human Existence; and, further;

Whereas said sun did, before his sixtieth birthday, conceive and bring into being The Sonneck Society, and in seven years thereafter did hold sway over it in the Seven Cities of Sonneck--to wit: Middletown, Bayside, Williamsburg, Ann Arbor, New Orleans, Baltimore, and Greenvale--and did thereby create a Sonneck Boom to enliven the turgid vibrations that had so poorly served the Fame of Oscar Sonneck; Be It Resolved we therefore say, that

Irving Lowens is hereby awarded the Royal Order of the Sonneck Sunburst with Seven Oscars Radiant upon a Field of Blue and is hereby dubbed Sir Irving, Lord of

Baltimore; and as an earnest of awe, affection, and esteem felt for him by members of The Sonneck Society he is hereby tendered a silver tankard on which is inscribed the following boundless sentiment:

Presented to Irving Lowens in recognition of his devoted service as Founding President of The Sonneck Society 1975-1981

3. PARODIES By Gordon Myers

Sing a song of six-pence
To Irving and to Nick -
Four hundred thirty four of us
Are glad they're on the stick!

Irving had a little lamb
It's bleat was sour as hell;
It followed Nick to school one day,
And now it bleats quite well.

Hi diddle, diddle -
Nick Tawa's on the fiddle -
And Irving is strumming his fork;
To show we are grateful -
We add to this plate full -
So Raoul--let's 'out mit der cork'!

Why salute - is no puzzle -
So gargle and guzzle -
Let's hoist a toast to the most;
To Nick and to Irving
For so devotedly serving -
In the spirit of Oscar's Ghost!

4. TANKARD INSCRIPTIONS

Presented to
IRVING LOWENS
in recognition of his
devoted service as
Founding President
of
The Sonneck Society
1975-1981

Presented to
NICHOLAS TAWA
in appreciation of his
devoted efforts as
first Newsletter Editor
for
The Sonneck Society
1975-1980

5. CHANGES TO THE SOCIETY'S BY-LAWS

[Underlined sections indicate changes.]

Section 2 Nomination. Election and Term of Office

The slate of candidates shall be mailed to the voting members of the Society in the form of a printed ballot at least two (2) months before each annual meeting of the Society. Officers and Members-at-Large shall be elected by a majority vote cast in sealed envelopes. The name and address of the voter must be affixed in the upper left hand corner of the envelope, by which means the voter will be verified against the membership rolls. The ballot may or may not be signed, but must be received by the Secretary no later than one month before the annual business meeting of the Society. The President shall appoint two tellers who shall tally the returns and report the results. In case of a tie, the deciding vote shall be cast by the Board of Trustees. No person shall hold more than one elective

office in the Society at one time.

"The Board of Trustees shall present to the members each year a double slate of candidates, acting on proposals by the Nominating Committee, except that, at their discretion, the Board of Trustees may by a two-thirds vote decide to present only one candidate for the posts of Secretary and Treasurer (changed from "post of Treasurer"), provided the candidate has already served at least one term in the same post."

"Officers shall serve terms of two years or until such time as such officer's successor shall be elected and qualified. Members-at-Large shall serve terms of two years or until such time as each Member-at-Large's successor shall be elected and qualified. Except for the offices of Secretary and Treasurer, members of the Board of Trustees may serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms in any one office or position. Upon the election of a successor, the President will serve on the Board of Trustees as past President for a period of one (1) year. (Changed from "Members-at-Large may serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms.") The terms of Members-at-Large shall overlap so that half will retire and half will be added each year."

6. RESOLUTION FOR JOHN GRAZIANO

By Alan Buechner

I would like to call your attention to the retirement from the Board, temporarily I hope, of John Graziano. I don't know whether the membership realizes the extent of his labors for the good of the Society. To mention but one of his many contributions, if we have an intelligible and useful Constitution, and we do, it is largely because of his tireless efforts.

And, the Board will always be indebted to him and his wife, Roberta, for their gracious hospitality over several years in providing a congenial place in which to hold its meetings. They are too fine a team to lose. We must bring them back soon.

7. CITATION FOR HOWARD HANSON

By Irving Lowens

In acknowledgement of his magnificent contribution to American music as composer, conductor, educator, and musical statesman, the Sonneck Society awards honorary membership to Howard Hanson, director of the Institute of American Music at the University of Rochester.

Dr. Hanson is a founding member of the Sonneck Society, and an enthusiastic supporter of its stated aim, "to carry out educational projects and to help disseminate accurate information and research dealing with all aspects of American music and music in America."

Even though his age and fragile health do not permit him to share in the fellowship and camaraderie so characteristic of the Society, he represents, in his genial personality and his 60-year-long career, the ideals and aspirations of the Society, which honors itself by honoring him.

Baltimore, MD
1 December 1980