



# The Blawenburg Band Newsletter

Number 9  
April 2010



## ENSEMBLE RECITAL

The Blawenburg Band Chamber Recital took place on Sunday March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2010 at 2:00 PM, at Rider University's Fine Arts Department, Room 147. Below are a few notes about the composers and pieces performed. The Ensemble Program opened with Sharif Sazzad and Leslie Rife, with a Fantasie-Polka for Piccolo by Eugene Damaré, transcribed for cornet. This is perhaps Damaré's best-known piece. Sharif mentioned that the period from the 18<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries was considered the Golden Age of the piccolo. Damaré, a French piccolo player and flutist born in Bayonne, in the South East of France in 1840, composed mainly for the instruments he played. During his life he conducted at the Hôtel de Ville festivals in Paris, where he died in 1919.



Leslie Rife, Ensemble Coordinator, with Sharif Sazzad

Not unexpectedly for a flute composer, several of his works relate to birds (*Le Merle* [the Magpie], Opus 161 for piccolo and piano; *la Tourterelle* [the Turtle-dove], Opus 119, for flute piccolo and piano; *L'Alouette* [The Lark] Opus 172, also for flute, piccolo and piano). Another polka is titled *The Piccolo Polka*, Opus 157, for flute piccolo and piano. Damaré wrote a treatise on the flute, with a supplement for piccolo. *Cleopatra*, played by Sharif and Leslie, is a showy virtuoso piece, which allows the soloist to display his agility on the instrument through changing rhythms and alternating keys.

Dina Robinson and Ron Greenspan performed two pieces. First was Paul Koepke's *Arietta*. Paul Koepke was an American composer born in 1918. Koepke composed and arranged for the flute, and for flute combined with other winds and double-reeds. Examples for flute quartet are an arrangement of Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov's *Song of India*; *Fox Fire*; and *Danse Capriole*; for flute trio and piano, there is *Harlequinade*; for flute, oboe and Bb clarinet, *Badinage*; for tenor saxophone and piano, *Intermezzo*.



Sharif Sazzad

Second, Dina and Ron performed a lively Rigaudon, by Philippe Rameau. Rameau made his mark late in life, in opera. His debut, *Hippolyte et Aricie* (1733), caused a great stir and was fiercely attacked for its revolutionary use of harmony by the supporters of Lully's style of music. Lully was court composer at the Court of Louis XIVth. Later, however, Rameau was attacked for being part of the "establishment" in the quarrel between French and Italian styles of composition which became known as the Quarrel of the Buffoons.



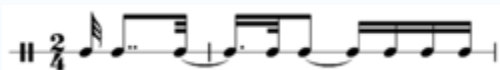
Dina Robinson and Ron Greenspan

Charlie Howard, with arm in a sling following rotator cuff surgery, performed the virtuosic *Czárdás* composed for violin and piano by Vittorio Monti, in a transposition for euphonium and piano. Vittorio Monti (6 January, 1868 – 20 June, 1922) was an Italian composer, violinist, and conductor. Monti was born in Naples where he studied violin and composition at the Conservatorio di San Pietro a Majella. Around 1900 he was given an assignment as the conductor for the Lamoureux Orchestra in Paris for which he wrote several ballets and operettas. His only famous work is his *Czárdás*, written around 1904 and played by almost every gypsy orchestra.



Charlie Howard

The *Czárdás* is a traditional Hungarian folk dance, the name derived from *czardas*, an old Hungarian term for tavern. It originated in Hungary and was popularized by Roma music (Cigány) bands in Hungary and neighboring countries



*Czárdás* Rhythm

The origin of the *Czárdás* can be traced back to the 18th century Hungarian *verbunkos*, used as a recruiting dance by the Hungarian army. The *Czárdás* dance is characterized by alternating slow and fast movements: it starts out slowly (*lassú*) and ends in a very fast tempo (*friss*, literally "fresh"). There are other tempo variations, called *ritka czardas*, *sűrű czardas* and *szökős czardas*. The music is in  $\frac{2}{4}$  or  $\frac{4}{4}$  time. The dancers are both male and female, with the women dressed in traditional wide skirts, usually colored red, which form a distinctive shape when they whirl. Classical composers who have used *Czárdás* themes in their works include Emmerich Kálmán, Franz Liszt, Johannes Brahms, Johann Strauss, Pablo de Sarasate, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky and others. Probably the best-known *Czárdás* is the composition by Vittorio Monti written for

violin and piano. This virtuosic piece has 7 tempo variations, and was performed beautifully by Charlie.

Following the Euphonium solo, the flute quartet composed of Edie Howard, Marissa Fleming, Leslie Rife and Dina Robinson, performed three very different pieces. *Stalcaire Reel* by Catherine McMichael is part of the four part work *Falconer*, which tests each of the flutists' skills. Catherine McMichael is a contemporary pianist, arranger, composer and publisher of a wide variety of choral music, chamber music and Suzuki-related material. Teaching, performing and composing comprise her professional musical life in Saginaw, Michigan. Catherine's commitment to making chamber and ensemble music available to the young musician has led her to compose and publish music for piano and strings, flute and harp, brass choir, piano duet, and chorus, many of which appear on the National Federation of Music Teachers' recommended repertoire list. Two of her works for flute have won the Best Newly Published Music award from the National Flute Association (*Floris* and *La Lune et les Etoiles*). She is the author of a piano method, *Making Music My Own*, supplementary repertoire and duets, published in 1994-1995 by Lorenz Corporation/Heritage Press of Dayton, Ohio.



Flute quartet Marissa Fleming, Dina Robinson, Leslie Rife, and Edie Howard

Their second offering was an 18<sup>th</sup> century classical work, *Adagio and Allegro con fuoco*, by Fürstenau. Born in Munster Germany in 1792, The most prominent exponent of German Romantic flute-playing in the first half of the 19th century, A.B. Fürstenau was the son and flute pupil of Caspar Fürstenau (1772–1819) and the father and teacher of Moritz Fürstenau (1824–89). After an early career as a traveling virtuoso alongside his father, he was appointed principal flutist of the Dresden Orchestra by Carl Maria von Weber in 1820. All his life Fürstenau continued to play the traditional German keyed flute, preferring instruments by Wilhelm Liebel and others, though he allowed his son Moritz to study the ring-key flute with Theobald Boehm. However, on succeeding his father in Dresden in 1852 the son had to give up the new flute and return to the older

model, which was preferred for its ability to blend with the other woodwinds and its soulful ability to produce a large palette of tone colors (*Modulationsfähigkeit*). A.B. Fürstenau wrote articles about flute playing in 1825 and 1838 that tell us much about the special style and feeling of the time. He also gave extensive technical directions, especially for the fingering of the German and Viennese-type keyed flute, in his flute tutorials of 1826 and (circa)1844. Fürstenau died in Dresden on November 18, 1852. The quartet closed with the jazzy *4merly*, a great name for a foursome by Russel Stokes.

Megan Helvering (horn) and R. Douglas Helvering (piano) performed a lovely psalm from their church hymnal. Dr. Helvering currently teaches at Westminster Choir College, as adjunct assistant professor in the music theory department. He also serves as music minister at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Princeton Junction, NJ. He has formerly served as choir director at Countryside Christian Church in Mission, KS as well as the music director of the Sunflower Brass, a professional brass choir in the Kansas City area. He is the founding editor of Amber Waves Music Publishing and served for four years as composer-in-residence for the William Baker Choral Foundation.



Megan Helvering

Next were two works for flute performed by Edie Howard and Dina Robinson. The first was the *Echo Sonata*, by Franz-Joseph Haydn. The second was a Duet No. 2, Opus 10 by Kuhlau.

Friedrich Daniel Rudolf Kuhlau (September 11, 1786 - March 12, 1832) was a German-Danish composer during the Classical Period. Born in Germany, after losing his right eye in a street accident at the age of nine, he studied piano in Hamburg. In 1810, he fled to Copenhagen to avoid conscription in the Napoleonic Army, which overwhelmed the many small principalities and duchies of northern Germany, and in 1813 he became a Danish citizen. Apart from several lengthy trips which he took, he resided there until his death. During his lifetime, he was known primarily as a concert pianist and composer of Danish opera, but was responsible for introducing many of Beethoven's works, which he greatly admired, to Copenhagen audiences. Even taking into account the fact that his house burned down, destroying all of his unpublished manuscripts, he was a prolific composer who left more than 200 published works in most genres.



Dina Robinson and Edie Howard

Beethoven, whom Kuhlau knew personally, exerted the greatest influence upon his music. Interestingly, few of Beethoven's contemporaries showed greater understanding or ability to assimilate what he was doing than Kuhlau. Certainly with regard to form, Kuhlau was clearly able to make sense and use what Beethoven was doing in his Middle Period.

He wrote a piano concerto, a string quartet, and several works for piano which included all the current genres of the day: sonatas, sonatinas, waltzes, rondos and variations. He also created several works for strings (three quartets and two quintets, and several violin sonatas), works of incidental music and several operas. However, his most-often

recorded and played works are several piano sonatinas and numerous works for flute. It is because of these flute works that he was nicknamed "the Beethoven of the flute" during his lifetime, though he never played the instrument.

The Lambertville Brass closed the Ensemble recital. Sharon Hallanan described the formation and evolution of the group. Initially coming together at Rider University three years ago, the Brass band began by caroling and subsequently expanded their repertoire to play at smaller nursing homes, which their size enables them to do. Their repertoire reflects many traditions of British Brass Bands.

The rousing New Colonial March was composed for the founding of a colony in Maine which anteceded Plymouth. The story goes that when the leader of the band received some money, the immigrants who had formed the community returned home, and the colony was abandoned.

The second offering was a trombone solo by Hoagy (Hoagland) Carmichael, performed on Trombone by Alisa Liten (pictured below).



Hoagy Carmichael was, according to Alec Wilder the "most talented, inventive, sophisticated and jazz-oriented of the hundreds of writers composing pop songs in the first half of the 20th century".<sup>1</sup> Named Hoagland because of the passage of the Hoagland Circus in town at the time of his birth, Carmichael is known for songs such as *Stardust*, *Georgia on My Mind*, *The Nearness of You*, and *Heart and Soul*, probably the

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<sup>1</sup> Wilder, Alec (1990). *American Popular Song: The Great Innovators 1900-1950*. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 371–388.

most recorded songs of all time in America. He was also known as an actor in such films as *Johnny Angel* (1945), *The Best Years of our Lives* (1946), *Timberjack* (1955) and for the 1965 TV show *The Man Who Bought Paradise*, in which he played Mr. Leoni.



Scott Ricketts.

The Ensemble Concert closed with a Barrie Gott piece, a reduction of a big band work for Brass ensemble. Gott, an Australian, arranged the piece about ten years ago, according to Sharif Sazzad. While the piece begins with a horn variation, the actual theme is not heard until the end. The cornet solo work was performed by Scott Ricketts.



The Lambertville Brass

The Blawenburg Band thanks Leslie Rife for coordinating the Ensemble Concert!

## Double Reeds Sectional

*Unlike other sectionals the following was contributed by individual members.*

### Bassoons

Nancy Ervin

***What was my path to playing the bassoon?*** As many woodwind instrumentalists, I started playing clarinet in fourth grade (my third choice after drums and trumpet). I remember my first solo piece, *Bluebird Waltz* from the Belwin Band Builder series. In sixth grade I was one of the three students permitted to leave my elementary school and walk to the high school near the end of each school day to play with the high school band – marching and concert bands. I remember marching for my first football game. The band director felt it was more important for looks to add extra brass players rather than clarinets; so, I marched with a French horn and pretended to be blowing it – without a mouthpiece.

Throughout the school year, our band had scheduled, sectional tryouts called by both our director and individual players challenging other players for their seats. By ninth grade, I had worked my way up the section until I had reached players from the senior class and found a rule I simply would not tolerate..... all seniors sat in seats at the head of the clarinet section and could not be “moved” out of their seats.

Thus, I took home a school oboe and the Belwin Band Builder oboe book, with its fingering chart, and taught myself to play oboe. I used a miniature mouthpiece that looked like a clarinet mouthpiece with a single reed. I even marched with this single-reed oboe. As I auditioned and won seats in regional ensembles, other music directors convinced my director that I should switch to playing with a double reed. So, he volunteered to drive me to Ohio University (14 miles away) each Saturday morning to study oboe with the double reed teacher there. Of course that was the end of my marching with an oboe! I had to march with a bell lyre instead. In my sophomore year, I won a scholarship to the summer music school at OU. My director was so pleased that he decided to send the oboe for an overhaul, new pads, springs, etc. for me to take to summer school. Then came the problem. The date to go to the university got closer and closer but the oboe did not come back from the repair shop. My director called and found that it would not be back in time for the OU activities.

So, my director gave me the school bassoon and the Belwin Band Builder bassoon book, with its fingering chart, and told me to prepare to play bassoon at camp instead of oboe. I didn't read bass clef but taught myself pretending the notes were really the treble clef and ignoring the names of the notes on the fingering chart. Can you imagine the surprise the conductors, teachers, etc. experienced when the oboe player showed up with a bassoon? They must have been extremely flexible! Fortunately, the double reed teacher for the summer was hired to teach both oboe and bassoon. I found that I fell in love with the bassoon and didn't want to go back to the oboe even though the oboe was in great shape when school started in the fall.

Summer music experiences must have been my fortune because the next year I won a scholarship to attend the six-week music session at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music where I studied with a bassoonist from the Cincinnati Symphony and had my first experience playing in an orchestra. By then, I knew I wanted to major in music. I planned to be a high school band director. I was accepted in the music education department at Ohio University as a bassoon major – playing clarinet in the marching band and bassoon in the concert band and orchestra. While there, I fooled with the contra for a short time but didn't like it as I had to practice in the basement of the Fine Arts Building at night (because it was too heavy for me to carry to the Music Building) and I was afraid of the rats.

While at OU, I was inducted into Tau Beta Sigma, the national band society, and Sigma Alpha Iota, the national music fraternity. (I have often wondered how many Blawenburg members are also members of these organizations.) I was also a member of the OU Bassoon Quartet. We had a lot of fun on band tours being one of the featured “special” presentations and playing some Don Gillis pieces written just for us. My teacher was a member of the Charleston (West Virginia) Symphony Orchestra and would take me along to play when an extra bassoon was needed or ask me to substitute for him when he couldn't make a concert. The cash earned helped me buy music and reeds. The summer following my sophomore year I was hired to play bassoon, teach arts and crafts and coach woodwind ensembles at Red Fox Music Camp in the Berkshires of

Massachusetts. There I fell in love with a marvelous pianist, the camp director and orchestra conductor. We were married in September after he played a concert at the National Gallery in DC the week before. He bought me the bassoon I play now as a wedding gift.

We moved to North Jersey where I played in several community orchestras and was on the “church circuit” of paid, non-union musicians. I also taught private bassoon lessons at home and at Caldwell High School for Keith Brion (before he was conductor of the New Sousa Band.) After moving to Lawrence Township, I found a plethora of bassoon players firmly entrenched in the local music scene. So, I put my bassoon in the closet along with my flute, oboe, and clarinet and followed other interests for 35 years. I finished my college degree, worked as a children’s librarian, founded and taught in a 4<sup>th</sup> grade, remedial-mathematics lab, and worked at Educational Testing Service (ETS) for 22 ½ years plus continued supporting the musical career of my husband and the responsibilities of mothering two wonderful sons. At ETS I started in the College Board Statistical Analysis area, moved to a position of Program Director for National Recognition Programs, later changed to College Board Program Direction in charge of Statistical Reporting Service (SRS), and finally served as Program Director and traveling presenter for the College Board On-line Validity Studies Program (ACES.)

**What have been some memorable music moments in your life?** Well, there have been some bad and some good that stand out. Among the former was playing for the Ohio State soloist competition and having a strip of keys fall off my bassoon in the middle of my piece. Then, there was my first time to see tenor clef in music during an orchestra rehearsal in Cincinnati and just thinking it was a fancy bass clef. The orchestra director, as well as my ear, soon let me know there was something disastrously wrong. And, maybe the worst was when playing a solo having my mind go blank. The pianist started the piece several times without me coming in. Finally, she called out the opening notes. Of course she called them out in the bass clef -- as written -- while I was still in my transitional mode of thinking of them as treble-clef notes. Only after walking to the piano to see the score could I go back to start, play, and finish the solo.

Good musical moments include being a member of Nelsonville High School Band when we were chosen to be one of two bands representing the state of Ohio at the Cherry Blossom Festival in Washington, DC. I played clarinet then and was in the last row of the band. Directly behind was the US Marine Band. When the trombones in their first row “let go” the pavement buckled! What a thrill. Then while at OU, Ernest von Dohnanyi spent a portion of the spring semester each year with our college orchestra. It was such a wonderful experience to play under his conducting and be part of the orchestra when he played the Brahms 2<sup>nd</sup> piano concerto on one concert. Another real highlight was turning pages for my husband and a violinist on stage at Carnegie Recital Hall in NYC. Currently due to my husband sight problems, we have front- row, center seats for our subscription concerts for the Philadelphia Orchestra. This experience lets me feel as if I am playing in the orchestra itself – without any worries about intonation, reeds, etc. Lastly, my good experiences in music include the few times Jerry has been able to say, “good job, Nancy.”

**How else are you involved in music besides the Blawenburg Band?** I sing in my church choir and, along with several of my Blawenburg colleagues, play bassoon in the Lawrence Sight-Reading Orchestra. And, I attend many concerts and especially enjoy those we hear during our travels.

**How/when did I become a member of the Blawenburg Band?** After retirement, I joined a line-dancing group at the Lawrence Senior Center. In the spring of 2005 we performed at Rider College as part of a celebration put on by the Lawrence Arts Council. The Blawenburg Band played a concert that same day. I enjoyed that concert and found two of my ETS colleagues, Judy Pollock and Skip Livingston, playing in the band. After the concert I began to realize there was something important missing in my life. I wanted to be back playing in a band. I practiced for the next several months and by summer contacted Skip for information about how to join. I attended one rehearsal; played a Hopewell Gazebo concert the next week (along with three other bassoon players) and I am (as one of my friends says) “thrilled to be back pursuing the passion of my youth.”

## Kristen Little

**How you came to play bassoon (or your instrument)?** I originally played flute and piccolo in high school but when I reached my sophomore year the two bassoons for the school were about to graduate. They introduced themselves to our band classroom and showed us the Bassoon. After giving us general information they asked if anyone would be interested in learning to play it. I thought the instrument sounded wonderful and I immediately volunteered. The upperclassmen gave me lessons and I auditioned for the upper level band the following year and made first chair, I've been playing ever since.

**Where you play/have played?** I played first chair for Cherry Hill High School East Wind Ensemble, Chamber Orchestra, Pit Orchestra, and Woodwind Quintet. My junior year of high school I played with the Wind Ensemble at the Kimmel Center in PA. Currently I play bassoon in the Rider Band and in Blawenburg Band.

**What you like about your instrument:** I like that the bassoon is a rare instrument that people do not know much about. It is always interesting to be stopped at concerts and asked the name of my instrument. It is more complicated than the flute that I started out on, but that's part of the joy of learning the ins and outs of the instrument.

**What you like about the Blawenburg Band?** Blawenburg Band is a great band to be a part of. Everyone I've met has been more than friendly and welcoming. I'm glad to have found the Blawenburg Band because I've not played with a band of their caliber since high school and I missed the opportunity to be able to play with other experienced musicians.

**Anything else that is relevant to you?** I'm a senior Biology Major at Rider University and have been playing music since I was in fourth grade.

## Mark Schroeder

I started playing clarinet around 5th grade, I think. Although I still played it in the marching band, eventually in high school I started looking through the band closet for something different to play in the symphonic band. I think I was attracted to the bassoon's big wooden parts and the awkward feeling of the keys. Once I learned how it sounded, I decided this would be it. There was something about the frog-like croaking sound that made it all the more interesting and fun.

Of course I had a hard time playing it in high school - partly because the reeds in supply were of minimal quality, partly because the instrument hadn't been well maintained, and partly because it was vastly different from the clarinet! After high school I went to college and forgot all about it until about 10 years later, when I suddenly realized I missed it. I happened to mention this to a friend, who, against seemingly extraordinary odds, turned out to also have played bassoon in high school. We decided to check out eBay to see what was available and ended up splitting the cost of one. She never regained her interest, so eventually I purchased her half.

Never feeling very good about my playing, for a few years I only practiced late at night in my bedroom closet. Eventually, though, I became a little more confident and started playing with the Woodside Village Band in California. I was still not very good, but I stuck with it for a couple years. After that we moved to New Jersey, and I was introduced to the Blawenburg Band a few years ago.

I still play that instrument, despite the cracks, broken keys, and other faults that have been found or have occurred over time. However I got so badly bitten by the bassoon bug that I bought a few more on eBay. They all were cheap and needed some repair, which to me was part of the fun. However I have never tried to play any of the others in the band.

To me, the best thing about the Blawenburg Band is the people. Despite being a fairly large community band, the group has always maintained that music should be fun - and even more fun when it is played together.

## Oboes

### Mike Benthin

I began on the flute in 4th grade, and upon entering high school in 1959 I was the darling of the all female flute section! I continued to play flute/piccolo in the marching band; I remember that 5 mile march for the Miss America Pageant . The oboe player was about to graduate, so I was "encouraged" to play oboe and found it challenging. Jerry Rife and I had the same itinerant wind teacher, Mr. Birnbaum! Being always mechanically inclined, I began making my own reeds after a year, and "study hall" meant practicing and whittling in the band room. The yearbook shows me as "Abdul the reedmaker".

High school double-reed instruments tend to never be in adjustment so my parents got me a German oboe that I still have. Mr. Dash, our band director, was very supportive and personally drove his promising students to events like All State Band. I remember our summer trips to hear the Goldman Band in NYC. Junior and senior years were a flurry of playing in All-State (3rd oboe), Newton Community Orchestra, Mt. Tabor Band, and 1st in the New Jersey Wind Symphony started by Keith Brion, who went on to conduct the Sousa Band.

In college I was a biology major, but seriously entertained a musical career, playing 1st in the NYU Orchestra, Bronx Symphony, the Doctor's Orchestra, and the NJ Wind Symphony. I studied with the English horn player of the New York Philharmonic, who got me into the NYC Opera Training Orchestra. With the draft looming I joined the Army Band at Ft. Meade, Md., which filled in for the Marine Band when they were out of town. From there the bassoon player and I were shipped to Vietnam in 1969, where I played

oboe in 2 bands, a quintet, and the Saigon Symphony. I had to make do with instrument repair, such as making pads from cork or goldbeater's skin wrapped around a key. At ceremonies I still played piccolo but it was stolen off the band bus.

Upon return to the US I was a graduate student in biology and stopped playing while teaching biology. I joined the Lancaster Bicycle Club and did serious riding, including many 100 mile "centuries". After an across the country trip in our VW bus during the bicentennial we moved to this area in 1978 and I drove to North Philly and rode 10 miles by bike to teach at Lasalle College. In 1984 I did a solo ride across the USA, a 6 wk adventure. Then came parenthood, and our daughter grew up in bike trailers and with VW bus repairs and camping trips.

Ironically, a major fall on my face in 1989 shifted me from cycling back to playing oboe and I joined the Blawenburg Band in 1991. The Sousa Centennial at Plainfield was a highlight. Playing under Jerry has been very enjoyable, and I continue to play locally in a reading orchestra, quintet, and occasional pit orchestras. I also spend time making MUTS (Michael's Ultimate Thumb Saver) a clarinet/oboe/English horn support I invented and am actually famous for in the double-reed world and Musician injury medicine!

## Sheila M. MacRae

Playing oboe has involved a circuitous route, which has been more about music than a about a specific instrument. I was inspired to play oboe by – believe it or not – a bassoonist and recorder teacher, Jennifer W. Lehmann. When I was growing up, I pattered around on the recorder, playing by ear instead of reading music. I had a few years of the usual piano lessons. I began to get interested in recorders seriously as an adult, studied and played all members of the family in chamber groups and ensembles, attended summer workshops, and taught. It was at the age of forty that I realized I wanted to explore different musical idioms. Since I loved the sound of double reeds, but thought a bassoon would involve taking a second mortgage on our house, I chose the oboe. I studied for a brief time with Marsha Heller, a New York musician amazing for the sound she gets from the oboe and English horn.

Around that time, I began singing at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Princeton, and leading their Children's Choir. Interesting gigs which involved vocal and instrumental combinations were in major Italian cities, where my ensemble performed in conservatories and churches. The most musically satisfying performance was a concert, Saint Cecilia's in Rome, whose incredible acoustic made it a truly memorable experience. It was also fun to play at the Vatican, and be asked to perform again during mass in St Peters.

Notwithstanding my academic background as a linguist in Slavic and German languages, I entered Westminster Choir College, to learn as much as possible about music. In 2001, I finished a Masters in Music Education, the thesis for which was a quantitative study of musical creativity in adolescents. (I continue to apply the principles as a teacher of French at Princeton High, and in the Department of French at Rutgers University). Through the decade 2000-2009, I played chamber music with a woodwind quintet. Like several colleagues in the Band, I am active in the Lawrenceville Reading Orchestra, of which I am a founding member.

An important musical landmark in our lives was the decision of one of our sons to become a professional cellist, an endeavor in which he is successful. Our older son had a serious encounter with music - playing jazz; his life path has now taken off in other directions, but he continues to play, mostly jazz piano as relaxation. I am really glad that both these young men love music also.

The bassoon, contrabassoon, and the oboe family, because of their double reed, can sound incredibly beautiful; but the most haunting sound, to me, is the sound of the English horn. Some composers, who have created gorgeous passages for the instrument, must agree.

Being a member of the Blawenburg is important for me. Firstly, I take delight in the audiation of some of the best music we play, which accompanies me in my daily life. Secondly, the Blawenburg Band affords the possibility of playing with talented and dedicated musicians with a great variety of experience. The Band is so unlike certain professional music ensembles, in which members feel the need to protect turf. In contrast, Blawenburg Band members are supportive of each other, in good times and in bad. The Band is like a big family with younger members as young as teenagers and older members (ah, well, we won't say!), who give and share what they know with each other. We are also very appreciative of the commitment of Jerry and Leslie to the Band. It's a good kind of family to have.

Proof-reading

Thank you to Laraine Schwartz

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FROM THE EDITOR

Please let me know what you would like to include in the next newsletter. I am always looking for material.