



# ROSSINI NOTES

VOL. 149 NO. 1 Newsletter of the Portland Rossini Club

Fall 2019

## From Our New President

It is with tremendous excitement that I take over the reins of the presidency of the Portland Rossini Club from Eleanor Lehmann. First of all, hearty thanks to Eleanor for her leadership over the past two years. Hers are big shoes to fill but I'm excited for the challenge.

I am originally from Princeton, Massachusetts. My piano study began with my grandmother, Georgia Camp who was an accomplished pianist and singer. Her sister, Jessie Peters was a well-known concert pianist who studied with Artur Schnabel in Germany and subsequently toured the world with Ralph Zirkle performing two hands piano. Her other sister was a ballerina who came also from studying in Germany and became a Ziegfeld Follies dancer. (Her parents were not pleased!) I continued to study with private teachers until I attended Skidmore College and minored in music. I especially love composing and was the Vice President of the American Women Composers for several years.

I have recently moved to Falmouth (two years ago) from a small village in the French Pyrenees called Ore, very close to the Spanish border. Although we've always had a foothold here in the United States, my husband, Bill, and I spent much of the past 18 years there. While in France, I became involved with the Royaumont Foundation just outside of Paris. I am their outreach representative in the United States. They call me their 'Ambassadrice Americaine' although you needn't bow or curtsy in my presence. I also organize master classes in a variety of disciplines there...yoga, pleine air painting, music and more. It is one of France's most magical places and one of Europe's finest cultural venues.

The history of the Rossini Club, particularly that it was founded by women, is one of the main enticing factors in my having accepted this position. My husband and I are new to the area and I find this Club to be one of the best things about Portland I

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**To All Active, Privileged,  
Honorary, and  
Associate Members**

## CALL TO OUR FALL BUSINESS MEETING

**Date: Sunday, October 20th**

**Time: approx. 4:30PM  
(following our program/  
reception)**

**Place: Chapter Room,  
Saint Luke's Cathedral**

## BUSINESS AGENDA

**Officer and Committee  
Reports**

**Discuss 150th Anniversary  
location at Historical  
Society and PICK DATE!  
Discuss setting up a host  
committee**

**Discuss setting up a  
membership committee**

have discovered so far. Where else can you get the opportunity both as a performer and as a music lover, to experience such fantastic music in a gorgeous cathedral, with a lovely reception afterwards? All at a very affordable price.

I'm not saying anything you don't all know when I observe that classical music audiences are dwindling. Rarely do you see young people (under age 40) at a classical performance. Also, in a city which is as ethnically diverse as Portland is, it is rare to see any varying ethnicities at our concerts. Therefore, I will be expending much of my new presidential energy trying to bring in more diverse audiences. As a start, I am asking you to please come to Rossini with a friend or two. If you are a performer, I ask you to think of musical offerings which might have special appeal to a younger audience or a particular ethnicity.

The recent sale of the Club's Steinway at the Woodfords Church has given us a shot in the arm financially. To keep the momentum going, we need to think about the health of the Club. Realizing that people of all ages are vital to our Club's health, I ask you again, to think "outside the box" a bit. Invite your friends, family, and neighbors to performances. We will "reap what we sow." And with that adage in mind, I ask for your increased participation in the Club. If you cannot make it to the first Business Meeting after our reception today, please contact me (or anyone on the Board) to find out how you might become more involved.

Sydney Patten  
Portland Rossini Club President  
Email: [sydpatten@gmail.com](mailto:sydpatten@gmail.com)  
iPhone: 978 771 0552

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**From our Treasurer:**

It's that time of year again to pay annual dues to the Portland Rossini Club. There are four membership categories: Active, Privileged, Associate, and Subscriber. For Active Members, dues are \$40 per year. For Associate and Privileged Members, dues are \$30 per year. Subscriber is defined as "Any person who pays an annual fee shall be entitled to free admission to all Program meetings. They would have no voting privileges and may not hold office." Dues for Subscribers are \$30 per year. Those 62 and older who wish to become Subscribers pay \$20 per year.

Under the Bylaws, Article VIII, 5B, "Dues shall be paid no later than November 30."

You may pay your dues using PayPal at our website: [www.rossiniclub.org](http://www.rossiniclub.org). Save postage by paying dues in person at our concerts. By mail, make your check payable to the Portland Rossini Club and send to:

Sheila McGarr  
Treasurer, Portland Rossini Club  
148 Hennessey Drive  
Portland, ME 04103-2037

**From Our Program Chair**

Our September concert was very well attended! We heard a graduating senior from USM and featured a prominent bass, Hidenori Inoue, who has recently moved to our state.

The October and November programs are full. There are several spots for the remainder of the season. Please contact me when you have a date in mind.

The January concert will be dedicated to the memory of Richard Roberts. Please let me know if you would like to be part of that program.

Many thanks to our outgoing President, Eleanor Lehmann, and to our new President, Sydney Patten, for their support. And especially to Sheila and Beth who keep me on my toes!!

Cecile DeRoche-Cain,  
Program Chair  
tel: 332-6117  
[musikmom810@gmail.com](mailto:musikmom810@gmail.com)

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**Plans to Increase audiences at concerts**

Since the 2011-2012 season, when counting concert attendees first began, our annual attendance has increased from 327 per season to 591 in the 2018-2019 season. Of that number, only 24 were students and 104 were under the age of 62. The Club needs to broaden its audience base!

To that end, the Club has become a co-sponsor of the Portland Conservatory of Music's (PCM) Noonday Concert series for the 2019-2020 season. Benefits of sponsorship include the Club's logo on all PCM Noonday marketing materials, programs, and website. Additionally, the Club's advance programs will be available for distribution at the Noonday concerts. <https://portlandconservatoryofmusic.org/noonday-concert-series/>

These free concerts take place on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays from October through May between 12:15-1 p.m. The location of the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday concert is First Parish in Portland, 425 Congress Street. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday concert take place in the Lewis Gallery at Portland Public Library, 5 Monument Square.

A separate initiative is to attract young people and their parents. Portland Rossini Club will place an ad in the 2019-2020 season programs for the Girl Singers of Maine/Boy Singers of Maine. Their first concert take place on Saturday, December 14 at 3 p.m. in the sanctuary of Woodfords Congregational Church, 202 Woodford Street in Portland. The second concert takes place on May 17, 2020 at 3p.m.

**OUR OFFICERS and COMMITTEE CHAIRS  
2019 - 2020**

President:	Sydney Patten
First Vice-President:	Cecile DeRoche-Cain
Second Vice-President:	Barbara Graustein
Recording Secretary:	Susanna Adams
Treasurer:	Sheila McGarr
Assistant Treasurer:	Mathew Nichols
Piano Chair:	Scott Eaton
Candidate Chair:	Barbara Graustein
Communications Committee Chair:	Sheila McGarr
Corresponding Secretary:	Cynthia Henriques

**2019 – 2020  
Rossini Club  
Concert Schedule  
Cathedral of St. Luke,  
Portland, ME  
3:00 pm  
September 15  
October 20  
November 17  
January 26  
February 16  
March 8  
April 19  
May 17**

**Also For Your Calendar**

**Rossini Business Meetings  
will be Sundays,  
October 20,  
and February 16,  
following our regular  
concert/reception,  
downstairs in the Chapter Room.**

**Our Annual Meeting  
will take place Tuesday, May 19,  
time and place to be announced**

**Reflections of Our Past**

**From a February, 1935 review in  
*Portland Evening News*  
by J. Daniel MacDonald**

**“Unusual Features Mark  
Program of Rossini Club**

“A program embracing many unusual and attractive features was presented at the regular fortnightly morning musical of the Portland Rossini Club at Frye Hall, Thursday morning. The first performer was a youthful pianist of great promise, Miss Margaret Knight. Heard in one of the more striking Chopin numbers, *Fantasia in F Minor, Op. 49*, Miss Knight gave evidence of fine musical temperament and excellent training. As her work matures, Miss Knight should be a pianist to be reckoned with.

Mrs. Mary Churchill, lyric soprano was next on the program and sang three numbers well suited to her light pleasant voice...Miss Susan Coffin lent able support at the piano.

The second pianist was Miss Florence Towle who gave a matured performance of two ultra-modern Russian numbers, by Rachmaninoff and Scriabine [*sic*]. Miss Towle seems to have a certain flair for these modern composers and gave a facile technical reading of both works. We enjoyed her work very much indeed.

An especially striking feature of this program was the appearance of Miss Isabel Jones, lyric-coloratura soprano who was heard in a rare old English ballad, *Sweet Bird* by Handel, that had a flute obligato by Harold Lawrence. Miss Jones sang the long sustained passages with good tone and fine breath control and with proper understanding of the requirements of the song. In the passages for voice and flute the singer imitated the flute with great fidelity. The number was both unusual and enjoyable. Mrs. W. H. Jones was the very able accompanist for her daughter.

A second fine feature of the program was the performance of a trio by the French composer, D'Indy, which had a first local performance by the Misses Frances Woodbury, violinist, Katherine Hatch, cellist, and Ocy Downs, pianist...It was given a performance of great conviction and earnest devotion by the three young artists.

A third most delightful feature was the singing of the *Flower Duet* from *Madame Butterfly* by the Misses Mary Saunders, Soprano, and Marcia Merrill, contralto. This lovely music of Puccini was splendidly sung by the two artists whose voices blended well.

The closing number was the performance of the familiar *Scherzo in C Sharp Minor* of Chopin by Miss Ellen Crafts, pianist. Miss Crafts gave a restrained performance of this rather passionate masterwork, but was technically well done. Miss Louise Armstrong presided in the absence of Miss Julia Noyes.

*Some of you may remember people mentioned in this review. Hint: Katherine Hatch became Katherine Graffam. You may recognise other names as well.*

## Rossini Scholarship Report 2019

The Rossini Scholarship Competition took place Saturday, June 1 2019 at Woodfords Congregational Church in Portland, from 10:00 am until 1:00 pm. Two instrumentalists, three singers (all sopranos), and one pianist competed for the \$1300 First Prize and \$900 Second Prize in each category. The applicants came from Augusta, Buxton, Cumberland, Kennebunk, Portland, and South Portland.

### Emily K. Rand Instrumental Scholarship

First Place Winner was Aaron Emerson of Augusta, who plays oboe. He studies with Neil Boyer and attends University of Southern Maine.

Second Place Winner was Kinnon Church, who plays double bass. A former student at USM, he will attend the Royal Academy of Music in Denmark in the fall, studying with Erik Higgins.

### Barbara C. Littlefield Vocal Scholarship

First Place Winner was Rosemary Crimp, soprano, from Kennebunk, who attends Gordon College. Her instructor is Katherine Whyte.

Second Place Winner was Ida Santos, soprano, from Portland, who attends University of Southern Maine. Her instructor is Scott Wheatley.

Honorable Mention went to Christina M. Gove from Cumberland. A student of David Goulet, she will attend Wagner College in the fall.

### The Lucia A. Wright Piano Scholarship

Second Place Winner was Josie DiPhilippo of South Portland, who attends the University of Southern Maine. She is a student of Laura Kargul. Josie was awarded an additional \$100 over the usual \$900 Second Prize.

**Guest Judges:** violinist Robert Lehmann, soprano Mary Sullivan, pianist Christopher Staknys

**Rossini Member Judges:** Mary Johnston Letellier, Danielle Vayenas, Diane Walsh, and Cecile DeRoche-Cain

**Chaired** by President Eleanor Lehmann

**Registrar/Stage Manager:** Dale Ashby

**Assistant:** Barbara Graustein

**Scholarship Chair:** Elizabeth Harmon