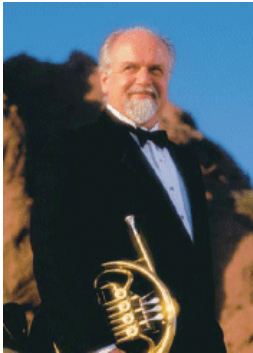


Cornucopia

News and articles for anyone interested in the horn

November 2006



Thomas Bacon

Cornucopia

is published four or five times a season. It is free, although contributions are welcome.

For further information, to add your name to the mailing list, to send a contribution, or to submit material, contact:

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Horn New England site
www.HornNewEngland.org

International Horn Society
NEHS encourages membership in IHS (\$35/year). For further information, contact:

IHS Executive Secretary
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exec-secretary@hornsociety.org

IHS Online
www.hornsociety.org.
previewyoursite.com

The Eliminator

by Thomas Bacon

Horn players can be eliminated from orchestra auditions, wind ensembles, quintets, opera orchestras, etc. if they cannot transpose or read bass clef. Good sound, rhythm, technique, range, and musical phrasing is not always enough. Sight reading, playing from hymnals, fourth horn parts in all sorts of ensembles - someone else will win the gig if you do not have these skills.

When we talk about horn technique, often the first thing that comes to mind is playing lots of fast notes. The fact is, though, we practice many different techniques, even from the beginning stages of learning how to play - tone production, range, and dynamics, for example.

The better we become, the more techniques we must master: articulations of all types, wider range and more dynamics, stopped horn, lip trills, and more. As abilities improve, the difficulty levels of the music we play and the expectations of our teachers and colleagues also escalate. With high school students, and more urgently with college students, the need to address new techniques becomes ever more acute with each tryout, audition, concert, or contest.

In young players' attempts to play louder, faster, and higher than anyone else, less obvious techniques, like transposition and reading bass clef, are often overlooked or avoided. Granted, very young players seldom need to

read bass clef or horn in any key other than F. But soon it does become an issue: when they want to play in an orchestra, when they get that church gig and the choir director passes out the hymnal and says "play along," when they decide to go to ensemble competition as a horn quartet and the fourth part is mostly in bass clef.

Be assured, if players want to keep getting better on the horn, transposition and bass clef are skills they must have, and sooner is better than later. You should practice these skills every day until you achieve proficiency. The great thing is that you can combine them with other things in your practice routine. For example, if you are practicing articulations in an etude, transpose the etude so you are working on articulations and transposition at the same time! ❖

Thomas has been principal horn with numerous orchestras and on the faculties of several universities, and is a world-renowned soloist, a founding member of Summit Brass, and an active clinician. He is the featured artist at the 2007 Northeast Horn Workshop, where his clinic will be "Practice Smarter Not Harder." See page 2 for more on the Northeast Horn Workshop.

See www.hornplanet.com for the complete text of this article and more about Thomas.

Xiao-Ming Xie



A tribute by Eric Ruske

On September 19, 2006, with his family at his side, Xiao-Ming Xie passed away at a hospital in Beijing after a 15-month struggle with cancer.

Xiao-Ming touched the lives of so many people in so many different walks of life that it would be impossible to fully describe his life. He was the son of a famous Chinese horn player and pedagogue, and he attended the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. While only in his late teens, he won the principal horn position in the Beijing Radio Symphony.

However, he decided that he wasn't improving enough, and he decided to leave that job and come to the States to study. He studied in San Diego and Philadelphia before finally settling in Boston in 1992. While here he performed in the Civic Symphony, the Hingham Symphony, the Concord Orchestra, the Cape Symphony, and the Newport Chamber Music Festival.

Xiao-Ming returned to China in 2000 as the Principal Horn of the Shanghai Radio Broadcast Symphony. There he performed the Chinese premieres of many works, including *Eine Alpensinfonie* by Richard Strauss.

While perhaps one of the greatest horn players I have ever heard, his true greatness was achieved in the way in which he lived his life. For all of those who knew him, Xiao-Ming was the personification of dedication and commitment. Never a day went by that began without practicing, and his work ethic was inspirational. He treated all people kindly and with respect, and he was always willing to be there for the many people who were lucky enough to be his friend.

As for me, I have lost my only duet partner, a second father to my sons, my teacher, and my best friend. I consider myself so lucky to have had the opportunity to spend all of the time together that we did. He changed the lives of so many people in the most rare of ways: he led by example. Thank you, Xiao-Ming. ❖

A memorial concert is planned for 8 p.m. on November 10, 2006 at the Boston University College of Fine Arts, 855 Commonwealth Avenue. Eric is an international soloist and a professor at Boston University and the BU Tanglewood Institute.

News and Events

Osbourne MacConathy, former BSO member, died in December 2005. A tribute appears in the October *Horn Call* and *Cornucopia* will have an article on his career in the next issue (January).

David Battey (Grantham NH), former principal horn in the Dallas Symphony, died in September. His wife, Mary, can be reached at PO Box 1187, Grantham NH 03753.

Jennifer Montone (formerly principal horn in St. Louis and a fellow at Tanglewood) is now principal horn in Philadelphia.

Tom Tritle (thomas.tritle@uni.edu, Cedar Falls IA) has recently retired from the University of Northern Iowa. He got his masters at NEC in the 70's. "I've really enjoyed *Cornucopia* over the years. Fun to see the international and national news, as well as to keep track of things in the Northeast and to see from time to time the names of people I knew at NEC."

George Napuda (gnapuda@waterw.com, Pennsville NJ) has tried to get back into horn playing twice in recent years, but it hasn't worked, so he has a "pristine RB full double descent" for sale. He plans to take his grandson to the symposium in Switzerland next summer.

Paul Mansur (editor of the *Horn Call* for 17 years, now living in Hixson TN) turned 80 last summer. He was playing in a band, and now he is conducting it!

Doug Myers (203-312-8181) is playing piccolo horn concertos with the NE Baroque Soloists at Faneuil Hall on Jan. 7 and Mar. 25, 2007.

Myra Fishburn (myra.fishburn@us.army.mil, West Point) was promoted to Sergeant First Class in September.

Janet Pillsbury (jppills@juno.com) has "moved back to the wonderful state of Maine (Scarborough). Although due to lung problems I can no longer play the horn, I love getting all the news."

Anne Howarth (Somerville), **Pete Exline** (Medical Lake WA), **Helen Brewer Floyd** (Phoenix), **Wayne Barrington** (Austin TX), and **Russell d'Arensbourg** (Columbia SC) have sent contributions. Anne was married in October to Rick Frank, who, though not a horn player, is "quite wonderful." Anne is performing Mozart No. 3 with the UMass Boston Orchestra on Nov. 19th. She writes, "I love reading about what everyone is doing and keeping up with all things horn."

Helen sends her contribution "in memory of my late husband, R. Errol Floyd, who passed away on August 5, 2005 at the age of 65. He was a dear person who was cherished by his family and many friends. He played with the Hartford and Norfolk symphonies, and was always delighted to share his love of the horn. I will miss our evenings playing duets, and our horn quartet will never be the same without him."



2007 Northeast Horn Workshop

February 17-18, 2007, Mansfield University, Mansfield PA

Host: Dr. Rebecca Dodson-Webster, 18 Campus Drive,
Butler Music Center, Mansfield University, Mansfield PA 16933
570-662-4713 rdodsonw@mansfield.edu

Thomas Bacon, Pat Hughes, Kelly Driftmeyer, Tim Thompson
Exhibits, mass choir, solo competitions, yoga, Alexander
Website: faculty.mansfield.edu/rdodsonw/nehw/

NEC Brass Bash

March 4, 2007, 7 p.m, Jordan Hall, Boston

The NEC Brass Bash features the entire brass department, including its BSO horn faculty, in a variety of settings and combinations. See concerts.newenglandconservatory.edu

2007 IHS International Symposium

July 8-14, 2007, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland

Host: Bruno Schneider, Professor in Geneva and Feiburg.
Horn sections of Berlin Philharmonic, Zurich Tonhalle,
and the Swiss Romand Orchestras in addition to soloists, etc.
Daily amateur sessions. www.ihs2007.com

Wayne writes, "My interest is in NE since my growing up and early adult years were in Worcester [near Boston] - 'Horn but not faggotto.'"

Pete writes, "I appreciate what you do and I know it is a lot of work. There may be no postage in the email edition, but the work is still there just the same." Pete publishes a newsletter for members of an Army band he played in during WWII, so he knows.

Russell makes his contribution in memory of his former teacher, David Battey, whom he visited as recently as October. A member of the Nevers Band, in which Mr. Battey played after moving to NH, played Taps on a horn at the memorial service. Mr. Battey had been principal horn in the Dallas Symphony and a tribute to him will appear in the next *Horn Call*.

Lost: Kaitlin Wilson (Acton), David Gasper (Providence RI), Karuna Johnson and Mallory Shipman (Mount Holyoke College), Carol Skoog (Avon CT), Mary Hunt (Fairport NY), Andrea Menovsek (Sparta NJ), Hideka Morimoto (Lexington), Graham Kingsbury (Eliot ME), Minsoo Moon (Madison WI), Jason Dlott (Avon), Stephanie Weintraub (Brookline), Aimee Gambone (Groton CT). **NOTE:** Please notify the editor when you move, change email address, or for delivery by email (see the masthead on page 1 for contact information).

New members: Nelson Lawson, Richmond VA; James Meyer, Yakima WA; Caroline van Renen, Cape Elizabeth SA; Daniel Hrdy, Winters CA, former clinical professor of Infectious Diseases, UC Davis, plays with UC Davis Symphony; and Annie Bosler, USC graduate student. ❖



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Xiao-Ming Xie (Shanghai 2004)

