The year 1934 marked the turning point of the Great Depression. As part of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s plan to get America back on its feet, the Federal Emergency Relief Corporation included a program to assist out-of-work musicians. In the years leading up to 1929, Hartford had a vibrant arts community that included more than 17 theaters for moving pictures, as well as vaudeville, stage and musical productions. Given the vibrant cultural environment in Hartford, the Great Depression spelled disaster for the city’s artists, who were suddenly out of work. By 1934, Hartford had an unusually large number of unemployed musicians.

Two years earlier, in June of 1932, the first of several band concerts were played in Bushnell Park at the suggestion of Francis Goodwin II, a businessman and amateur musician, who was also a member of the city’s Board of Park Commissioners. The successful concerts, conducted by Angelo Coniglione, eventually led to the construction of a modest bandshell in Bushnell Park.

In 1934, presented with an opportunity to secure funding through the Federal Emergency Relief Corporation, Goodwin saw the opportunity to bring orchestral concerts to Hartford. His application to the federal fund was accepted, and the Hartford Civic Concert Orchestra (the forerunner of today’s Hartford Symphony) was born. After a pair of concerts at West Middle School, the new orchestra made its official debut on November 20, 1934, at the new Avery Memorial at the Wadsworth Atheneum, under the baton of Angelo Coniglione, who served as the Symphony’s First Conductor from 1934 to 1936.

In 1935, the Federal Emergency Relief Corporation was replaced by a larger program known as the Federal Music Project, a subdivision of the New Deal’s...
The Hartford Symphony was permitted to charge a moderate admission price of 25 cents.  

In 1937, changes in WPA policies prevented orchestras from charging admission for concerts. The Hartford Symphony cleverly circumvented the policy by charging patrons 10 cents to “rent a seat” for its summer concerts. But during the first half of the final summer concert that year, performed in the brand new bandshell at Bushnell Memorial Park, Francis Goodwin received a telegram that conveyed frightening news: the fledgling orchestra would have to pay half of its own costs or lose ALL federal funding.  At intermission, a frantic Goodwin stood up and appealed to the audience for financial support.  “The orchestra must go on,” Goodwin pleaded. “Let us here and now form a society to sponsor the Hartford Symphony Orchestra. Will you all contribute whatever you can tonight?” By the end of the concert, a large cardboard box held more than $1,200 in small bills that had been collected from the audience. And the next day, the contributions continued to pour in.

Within a few days, the orchestra was saved from financial disaster, and the near loss of the symphony forged strong and enduring bonds between the HSO and the community.

In the spring of 1941, with the United States’ entry into World War II, the Hartford Symphony was put on hold. Nearly every musician was either in the service or working in one of Hartford’s booming defense plants.

It took more than three years after the end of the war for the symphony to resume. Goodwin recruited a new board, and the orchestra musicians, with approval of the union, agreed to donate their services for all concerts and rehearsals. On January 25, 1949, after a silence of nearly eight years, the orchestra, conducted by the newly-hired Moshe Paranov (the founder of the Hartt School of Music), was heard once again.

Today, under the baton of Music Director, Carolyn Kuan, the youngest and first female Music Director of the HSO, our orchestra reflects her explosive passion, unending musical curiosity, and her unparalleled commitment to engage, serve and energize the community.

More than 80 years have passed since Francis Goodwin implored his audience to help save the symphony. But the bonds forged in 1937 remain to this day. In 2018, as in 1937, the true heroes are the growing number of HSO donors, who continue to open their hearts and wallets to maintain a truly great orchestra in our midst.

Francis Goodwin, known as the “Father of the Hartford Symphony,” was the Symphony’s champion from its first concert in 1934 until Goodwin’s passing in 1970. Today, the mantle of “champion” is worn by thousands of Annual Fund and Encore Society donors, throughout the state of Connecticut and beyond, who consistently, and generously, contribute regularly to ensure that the HSO continues to thrive. What individuals achieve when we band together is astonishing: just recently, in a span of roughly eighteen months, the HSO balanced its budget for...
the first time in a decade, and the new Music Builds Community campaign, which began in April of 2017, has already raised more than $5.9 million of a $10 million goal to help sustain the future of the Symphony. With a challenge grant of $1 million, new donors are stepping up and asking how they can help the HSO secure the $1 million gift within the deadline.

Goodwin’s words, written in the summer of 1936, still ring true today:

“Symphony orchestras are built, not born. The greatest orchestras have reached a state of near-perfection only by years of patient work…. This organization’s future lies with the people of Hartford and is dependent upon their support and their desire for a really fine orchestra within their own community. Your support, in the form of patronage of its concerts, by informing others of its work, and by a… sympathetic interest in its achievements, is earnestly solicited.”

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– FRANCIS GOODWIN

The HSO exists because passionate citizens built a symphony for us to inherit. Our gratitude extends to them and to each of you, loyal partners and new friends, who support our symphony and invest in the cultural abundance of our community. Together, we keep the music playing, and ensure that tomorrow’s audiences will be the beneficiaries of the rich symphonic inheritance we share today.

$1 MILLION CHALLENGE GRANT FOR MUSIC BUILDS COMMUNITY: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR DONOR IMPACT

A n exceptional gift to the HSO’s Music Builds Community campaign comes with exciting “strings attached”: raise new campaign gifts amounting to $750,000 by the end of 2018 and turn it into $1,750,000! The gift celebrates HSO’s 75th season.

In late June of 2018, a group of passionate but anonymous donors notified the HSO Board of their decision to honor the HSO’s 75th Season with a unique challenge grant: raise $750,000 by December 31, 2018 and receive an additional $1,000,000 from these generous supporters.

The one-time challenge is inspiring many people to join the initiative to build the Symphony’s future. We were given a six-month window to meet the challenge but have already raised 65% of the goal! As of September 17, 2018, the challenge grant is exceeding expectations: after less than three months, we have already received $494,585 of the $750,000 benchmark.

Music Builds Community seeks to raise $10,000,000 by 2022. In just eighteen months, since April of 2017, MBC has reached $5,947,750 representing almost 59% of the goal. MBC’s three defined objectives are to raise:

- $6.0 million to build the HSO’s endowment
- $2.0 million to increase Education and Community Engagement programs
- $2.0 million to create innovative programs

MBC Campaign Chair Rebecca Corbin Loree, an HSO director and Founder and CEO of Corbin Advisors in Farmington, sees the challenge as a wonderful reinforcement to a robust campaign:

“As the HSO heads into our 75th anniversary, the challenge will focus attention on HSO’s great music and its community impact as a leading arts organization in Connecticut. We look forward to meeting and exceeding this challenge!”

Rebecca and the MBC Committee (Board Chair, Jeff Verney, and Board members, Karen Sprout, Bob Bausmith and David Roth,) along with a team of Board volunteers, are seeking gifts of all sizes to meet the challenge. To help us qualify for the $1,000,000 prize now within our reach, please consider making YOUR generous pledge to the Music Builds Community Campaign. Your gift made between now and December 31, 2018 will be MORE than doubled!

More information on MBC may be found on the web site: www.hsombc.org. For additional information about participating in the campaign, contact Campaign Manager Ted Bruttomesso, Jr. tbruttomesso@hartfordsymphony.org or 860-760-7309.

We are going strong, but with YOUR help, we will be even stronger!
An interview with HSO’s assistant principal clarinet, Ron Krentzman, in the early winter of 2018, focused on his many years as HSO’s orchestra librarian. Ron, who retired as librarian in June of 2018, was already in the process of searching for and training the individual who would succeed him. As our conversation progressed, we decided to pull back the curtain and offer donors the opportunity to learn more about the complexities behind an orchestra concert. Parts 1 and 2 of this series (in the Spring and Summer 2018 editions of Quarter Notes) covered the challenges of selecting the best edition, correcting the score and ensuring the best possible legibility of the music for each musician. The librarian’s final tasks, detailed in this last installment, brings the music to the stage.

Many symphony patrons, whether seasoned audience members or newcomers, observe the uniformity with which string players simultaneously “bow” their instruments. First violins, second violins, violas, cellos and basses all follow a uniform pattern of bowing. The coordinated bowings, which appear flawless and effortless, do not happen by accident. Contrary to common belief, preferred bowing choices are not necessarily noted in the music. Bowings must be marked for each of the five string parts, and this process is coordinated by the librarian. Once the music is properly assembled, bowings for each string instrument must be indicated, cuing each musician when to use an “up bow”, a “down bow” or when a series of notes should be slurred (played on a single bow.) The Principal of each section makes all initial bowing decisions, which may or may not be changed by the conductor during rehearsal.

The ‘bow marking’ process begins with HSO’s Concertmaster, Leonid (Lenny) Sigal, but first, the librarian must remove all “residual” markings made by the orchestra that last rented the music. While extraneous markings are supposed to be erased before rented music is returned, all too frequently, old pencil marks fill the pages. The markings might include bowings, time and key signature reminders, cuts in the music or other notes taken by a musician during rehearsal or practice.

Each June, at the end of the Masterworks season, the librarian sends Lenny an enormous pile of music, containing the entire repertoire for the new season that begins in October. Lenny then begins the tedious process of examining each measure, and, in pencil, carefully notes his chosen bowings in the first violin part and the orchestral score. When his markings are finished, Lenny returns the music to the librarian, who then sends the score and second violin part to the Principal second violin. The Principal Second Violin then marks the score and the second violin part with the chosen bowings and returns it to the librarian. The score and viola part are next sent to the Principal violist. The back-and-forth process continues until all the string markings are indicated for each instrument’s part and the score.

Percussion poses different challenges. The principal percussionist must be involved as soon as music arrives from the publishing house. He examines the music, determines which percussion parts will be assigned to the various musicians in his section, and decides how many percussionists will be needed for the piece. If the score involves harp, the harpist must be involved immediately. Why? All too often, Ron explained, harp music is so poorly written that harp players are obliged to rewrite their part to make it workable! (Fun fact: Unlike keyboardists, harpists do not use their pinkies to play their instrument.)

Invariably, the above process continues throughout most of the summer.
Cooperation is key: the librarian’s ability to perform his job at a high level depends on the speed and efficiency with which other members of the orchestra perform their tasks. It is a team effort, coordinated entirely by the librarian. Adding to the complexity, the librarian also attends to the needs of individual musicians. For example, Carmina Burana, performed on our June 2018 masterworks, called for both an E-flat clarinet and bass clarinet, in addition to the three regular clarinets. Hiring additional clarinet players would be costly, so it is the librarian’s job to create a solution. Cognizant that HSO’s bass clarinet player (who also plays E-flat) could play two instrument parts, Ron painstakingly rearranged the music, inserting the bass clarinet part into the E-flat clarinet part, so all the parts could be performed by the three musicians in the section.

When all markings are ready, the librarian makes copies for all the musicians. Instead of “Xerox” copies, music reproductions use special paper with the look and feel of original music. The librarian then creates a ‘bound’ book for each musician, taping all the pages for each instrument into a book-format which allows the completed volume of music to lie flat on the music stand. Once the music is bound, each is carefully reinforced, so the book will not fall apart with the first page turn. All the music for each program must be organized, in order of performance, into a folder for each musician (or each stand, as string sections share stands.) The objective: when a musician opens the folder, everything needed for that performance is right in front of him/her, in the proper order.

The librarian makes the music available to every musician, with adequate time to practice and prepare for the first rehearsal of the concert, as well as the performance. The most challenging aspect of an already-complex job? Ron chuckles: “A good librarian never assumes anything and triple checks everything.”

“...and triple checks everything.”

– RON KRENTZMAN

The process of copying, assembling and binding the music is considerably more tedious than it sounds. While a Masterworks concert might have three or four selections on a program, a POPS concert often has up to 25 pieces, making the preparation of a POPS program infinitely more arduous and time-consuming.

The librarian must know there are three different versions of that piece, and then ask the guest soloist which version is preferred. Through painful experience, I’ve learned to insist upon direct communication with the guest artist (and not his/her manager) to avoid unpleasant surprises when the guest artist arrives. An attentive librarian wants questions answered by the musician directly, to ensure a satisfactory result that meets the approval of both the artist and the conductor.

Ron will be missed by every member of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, musicians and staff alike. But his attention to detail ensured his legacy: Ron’s insistence on the highest level of competence in his successor brought us Scott A. Switzer, already a skilled orchestra librarian with the Norwalk Symphony. With additional training under Ron’s watchful eye for more than six months, the HSO has been left in competent and capable hands, ensuring the continuation of a tradition of excellence that Ron instilled in all of us.

SAVE THE DATE!

Join the HSO and party with us to raise funds for Music Education at the Bravo! Gala – April 27, 2019 at Exhibit Hall in the CT Convention Center.
TAX TIPS: APPRECIATED STOCK – or, THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

If you’ve watched the value of your stock or mutual fund investment increase, you also know that when you sell the stock, those great gains will be subject federal and state taxes. But there is GREAT news.

If you’ve held the investment for over a year, you avoid taxes by gifting a portion of the shares (not necessarily all of your holdings in the asset) to the charitable organization of your choice. It’s a double win: you pay NO tax on the transaction, AND you deduct full market value of the stock on your tax return, up to a total of 50% of your adjusted gross earnings for the year.

Imagine you want to give $5,000 to a charity. Years ago, you bought 50 shares of stock (at $20 per share) and today, the total value is $200 per share, or $10,000. To make the gift, don’t write a check. Instead, transfer 25 shares (now worth $5,000) to the charity and deduct the entire $5,000 as a charitable contribution. You just used $500 (your initial investment in the 25 shares) to make a gift of $5,000 – and you also received a tax deduction on the higher amount.

How does it work? Don’t sell the stock yourself! If you do, you’ll wind up paying the gains tax on the sale. Instead, call the charity of your choice and explain your plan to gift stock. At the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, stock gift information is clearly posted on our website. https://hartfordsymphony.org/individual-support/stock-donation/ Or just call Ruth Sovronsky, Development Director, at 860-760-7321 or email her at rsovronsky@hartfordsymphony.org, and she will walk you through the process.

EXTRA BONUS: Do you (or did you) work for an employer that has a matching gift program? If you’re unsure about matching gift opportunities, even as a retiree, please use our website to check it out. https://hartfordsymphony.org/individual-support/matching-gifts/ With a one-to-one match, your initial investment of $500 (using the example above) just became $10,000. What a great way to support the Hartford Symphony and help keep the music playing!
TO CELEBRATE HSO’S 75TH SEASON,
JOIN 75 FOR 75!

Want a great way to celebrate HSO’s 75th Anniversary? Become a legacy donor – and a member of 75 for 75!

What is 75 for 75? Legacy donors are members of HSO’s Encore Society, and know that legacy gifts are critical to the orchestra’s future stability. Including the HSO in your estate plans is the best way to support music for the next generation. In honor of our 75th Anniversary, we set a goal: add 75 new Encore members. Many of you already responded; in just one year, Encore Society membership doubled! But, we still have further to go. Irrespective of the amount of your legacy gift, when you join the Encore Society, you become part of a treasured group of donors who already include the HSO in their estate plans. There is no better way to mark the HSO’s 75th milestone!

OK – I’m interested. Next steps? You may have already named the HSO as a beneficiary of a retirement account, a life insurance policy, or another asset. Or, you may have named the HSO in your will. If you let us know of your plans, you will qualify you as one of the “75 for 75.”

The impact? Your gift ensures music continues for future generations, and it offers an opportunity to advance the values most important to you: maintaining music in our community. Haven’t thought about it yet? We would be happy to chat and share the many ways your support can build a bright future for the HSO.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, please contact Ruth Sovronsky, Development Director, at 860-760-7321, or rsovronsky@hartfordsymphony.org

“The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit.”
– NELSON HENDERSON

Are you interested in getting more closely involved with the HSO?
Do you have an extra bedroom and bathroom? We are looking for volunteers to become hosts for musicians who live outside of Connecticut. If you might be interested, call Ruth Sovronsky at (860)760-7321 for more information!
SScott AARON SWITZER
HSO’S NEW ORCHESTRA LIBRARIAN

Scott, who regularly “subs” with the HSO on bassoon and contrabassoon, is HSO’s new orchestra librarian, taking over for Ron Krentzman, who retired from that position in September of 2018. With the conclusion of our three-part series about the orchestra librarian, this was the perfect moment to introduce Scott, who joined the HSO in 2014, and also performs with the Norwalk Symphony, the Eastern Connecticut Symphony and the Cape Symphony.

Quarter Notes: We are so excited to have you with us! Tell us how you selected bassoon.

Scott: My mom was my first music teacher, and my first instrument was piano. In fifth grade, my school principal demonstrated the bassoon. I thought the sound was cool – and when he said colleges offer scholarships for bassoon, I decided that was the instrument for me!

QN: And did you get scholarship offers?

Scott: I did! In 9th grade, I was offered a full scholarship to a local college. I had to explain that I wasn’t yet a senior!

QN: Where did you study music?

Scott: I attended the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan from 10th grade. We lived in Georgia and my bassoon teacher encouraged me to apply to Interlochen “if I was serious.” When I was accepted, my entire family moved to Michigan! It’s a boarding high school for the arts – and I was one of 12 “day” students. Undergraduate was at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY and graduate work was at Yale for two degrees: Masters of Music in Rochester, NY and graduate composition and arranging, and, upon moving to CT, I became the librarian at the Norwalk Symphony, where I am also the principal bassoon. You really have to be a music nerd to be a good librarian – you must be curious about music, notation and composition – in ways that would bore most other people!

QN: What’s the most fun about being a music librarian?

Scott: Finding hidden mistakes in the scores, especially the things no one else might notice, but which stand out to me because of my understanding of the piece and of music in general.

QN: Do you have pets?

Scott: We have three cats, two boys and a girl, all siblings and named after composers. With a small hint, maybe readers can guess the composers! The cats are: Fred, Clara and Tony.¹

QN: And tell us a few things we would never guess about you?

Scott: Well, I have moved 22 times! When I was accepted to attend the Interlochen Arts Academy, my parents were getting ready to move again, so we all just picked up, and the entire family moved to Michigan. Something else you might not guess: my wife has never seen me without a beard. It’s my “distinguishing feature.” And something that irritates me: unnecessary traffic, which is the kind not explained by an accident or construction. On second thought, if I could choose another career, I might want to design a system to move traffic more efficiently!

¹Scott’s cats are named for Frederick Chopin, Clara Schumann and Antonio Vivaldi!

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please contact Ruth Sovronsky. Call 860-760-7321 or e-mail rsovronsky@hartfordsymphony.org and provide your e-mail address.