

## United Serpents

### Newsletter of United Serpents

April 1, 1992

#### A note from the Editor

Almost a year ago, Craig Kridel started talking to me about reorganizing the structure of United Serpents. When the organization was formed, Craig took on the role of 'one-man show' as an expedient way to get things going. Now the US Newsletter has become better established and has a sound footing; better yet, it definitely has something to say to the Serpent world. The time has arrived for some changes, and they are US!

The most important change is the involvement of more people, through the establishment of 'regional representatives' and other 'officers'. Even more people will be asked to involve themselves and contribute. The current structure includes myself as Newsletter Editor, Dick George as *US* Treasurer, Nigel Nathan as UK Representative, and Ernst Wilzek as Representative for continental Europe. Craig Kridel will remain as President and will continue his efforts with the T.U.B.A. (Tubists Universal Brotherhood Organization).

New post office boxes, new bank accounts, and new addresses are some of the changes you need to know about. This information is included in this newsletter, mostly on pages 1 & 2.

*US* has become, and will continue to be primarily a coordinating group. *US* will not intentionally promote one group, person, instrument maker, composer, etc; over another. Christopher Monk gave us a fine and inspirational example in this regard, which we will endeavor to carry on.

Starting with this edition, The *US* Newsletter will

go on a regular schedule of publication. Initially, there will be two editions per year, with release dates of April 1 (the anniversary of the debut of the London Serpent Trio), and September 27 (the date of Christopher's Celebration).

I want to thank Craig Kridel for asking me to take over this newsletter. The opportunity to further contribute to the promotion of the 'neatest' instrument I play is very welcome. I have already received much correspondence from Serpentists around the world, and look forward to hearing from all of you in the future.

Paul Schmidt

#### About the Organization

United Serpents (*US*) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the support of, and communication between the Serpent enthusiasts of the world. The organization is inspired by Christopher Monk and The London Serpent Trio. All posts are manned by volunteers from the Serpent community, within three loosely established regions. The 'officers', their assignments, territories and addresses are listed below.

(UK Representative)      (Euro. Continent Rep.)

Nigel Nathan  
Wessex Hall  
Whiteknights Rd.  
Reading, BERKS  
RG6 2BQ  
England

Ernst Wilzek  
Graurheindorfer Strasse 8  
5300 Bonn 1  
W. Germany

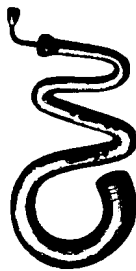
(USA, Canada, other) (Newsletter,  
US Treasurer)

Craig Kridel, president Paul Schmidt, editor  
--Main Office-- Dick George, treasurer

United Serpents  
P.O. Box 8915  
Columbia, SC  
29202  
USA

United Serpents  
P.O. Box 954  
Mundelein, IL  
60060  
USA

phone: 708-362-3047



## Workshops

The 1992 Amherst Serpent Workshop, scheduled for August 9-15, has been cancelled due to lack of response. This American workshop is scheduled every three years, so the next attempt will be August 1995. *US* hopes that in a couple more years, the shock of Christopher's death will have dissipated enough that members will again travel to these workshops. The spirit of Christopher has inspired several incredible meetings in the past, and we know that he would hope for *US* to continue the tradition.

Serpentist Bernard Fourtet has reported that there are two workshops scheduled to be held in France this year. The 'Curso International de Musica Antiqua de Daroca' (Espagne) will take place for the 14th time this summer between August 2 - 12. Bernard will be teaching sackbut and serpent there.

It is also likely that a regular Serpent workshop will take place in the Conservatoire de Toulouse, starting sometime in October. For more information on these, write:

CNSM de Lyon  
Department de Musique Ancienne  
3, quai Chauveau 69009 LYON  
France

or

Bernard Fourtet  
24 rue Capus  
31400 Toulouse  
France

## Money Talks.....

As you undoubtedly realize, it takes a certain amount of time and money to produce this newsletter and mail it. The time is gladly donated by *US* members, and the monetary cost is low, but...*US* is running out of money. There are no dues to pay, but it has come time for *US* to request donations and contributions. Money received will go for printing and mailing expenses, not for profit. Please consider making a contribution of £5, DM20, or \$10, and send it to your regional *US* representative listed on pages 1 & 2. Cheques (checks), postal orders, money orders, Eurocheques, and cash are all accepted. Cheques should be made out to 'United Serpents'.

## Just the Facts

With the change in personnel (EC Representatives and Newsletter Editor), several of *US* think it would be nice to compile a new listing of *US* members. Besides your name and address, we would like to add the following information.

Occupation(s)  
Instruments(s) owned  
Instruments(s) played  
Home telephone number  
address (corrections)  
Musical Organizations (groups)  
comments & suggestions

Please try to send this information to your appropriate regional representative soon (see addresses on pages 1 & 2).

Also, if you have a Serpent and have not previously sent in a photograph of yourself with horn in hand, please try to do that as well. Craig Kridel will be the eventual keeper of the information and pictures.



CHRISTOPHER MONK

## Memorial for Christopher Monk

*On the 27th of September, a musical memorial celebration was held for Christopher Monk. Many of his friends and acquaintances were in attendance, and music performed on the Serpent was the order of the day. Christopher's daughter Philippa Lunn contributed this account of the event. She sends her regrets that it was impractical to mention everyone who participated.*

Dad always said he wanted a party when he died: his family decided to give him one.

Friday 27th September was a beautiful, crisp day; the final day of a late summer; a wonderful dog-walking day that Dad would have loved! By 3 o'clock St Alban's Church, Hindhead, was full to capacity: three generations of close family and distant relations; neighbors; former teaching colleagues; friends from across 50 years; musicians of all varieties - the obscure amateur to early music luminaries. And, most important, the 40 musicians taking part. Dad's life in summary.

The concert mixed pleasure with poignancy, music with memories. Great thought had gone into the programme and everyone taking part had

made a real effort to be there, some magnificently so. The speakers, both taped and live, touched by the enormous affection, respect and gratitude they showed their departed friend.

But music dominated, as it should. First, pieces carefully chosen and introduced by the four members of the London Serpent Trio. Later, it was wonderful to hear massed serpents again - for the non-musicians, a taste of St-Saens and Tchaikovsky on 18 serpents (with balloons as cannon) was a revelation - for everyone an enormous pleasure.

Meanwhile, there were cornetts, sackbuts and recorders, beautifully and movingly played. Hearing the glorious sounds that Friday in September was the greatest possible tribute to this very special man.

As they made their way home, many said "what a shame Christopher wasn't here - he would have loved it". We think he was, and did.

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## Thanks for the Memories

All of us have been influenced by Christopher Monk in one way or another. Many of us have had the opportunity of meeting and playing with him. Those who have experienced his wit and generosity can readily remember those acts which make the Serpent more enjoyable.

United Serpents openly solicits all members to contribute their anecdotes pertaining to Christopher. It will be a nice memory to read these in every edition of the Newsletter. Please drop *US* a letter whenever you remember.

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## Where Serpents Gather

One of the special things about playing the Serpent in public is the uniqueness of the occasion. *US* would like to hear about public performances, radio & television broadcasts, recitals, etc; you have been involved with or have witnessed. All accounts will be gladly received and published, as they will doubtless be interesting and encouraging. Since there are no such accounts currently awaiting publication (the 400th Anniversary Festival notwithstanding), the following is offered as an example.

Over the course of three weeks in the Spring of 1991, a small group of Serpentists and friends gathered in the far northern suburbs of Chicago for two afternoon sessions. In attendance were Craig Kridel/serpent (visiting from South Carolina), Gary Gallt/lysard, Jerry Schmeltekopf/serpent, Keith Ryder/cornetto, Dick George/ophicleide, Daniel Heiman/lysard, John Weber/serpent, and Paul Schmidt/serpent. Many selections including those for tuba & trombone quartet, brass quintet, and recorder consort were played. In addition, Phil Humphries generously sent over his arrangements for serpent quartet which were previously used at Christopher's workshop in 1990. The sessions were held in the gardens of Dick George and Daniel Heiman, to the confusion and surprise of the neighbors.

On March 21, 1992 a quartet of players from the above sessions performed a recital at Regenstein Hall on the campus of Northwestern Univ. in north suburban Chicago. Players were Dick George/ophicleide, Paul Schmidt/serpent, Keith Ryder & Gary Gallt/cornetto & lysard. In addition to pieces more or less appropriate to the horns, the pop tunes Yellow Submarine and Do Wah Diddy were performed. As a result of this performance, this ensemble is now receiving booking in the Chicago area through the end of the year.

On March 28 - 29, 1992, a small Serpent seminar was held at the Conservatoire National Superior de Musique de Lyon, France. The seminar was headed by Bernard Fourtet, and concerned work on intonation and uniformity relating specifically to plain-chant. More workshops have been scheduled involving Mr. Fourtet; refer to the article on Workshops.

### Where did you get that thing?

Every Serpentist has probably had to answer this question many times. But many Serpentists, new, prospective, and experienced, have been asking a similar question lately; 'Where do I get a Serpent now?'. Besides getting lucky and finding a playable historical instrument nailed to a pub wall somewhere, the choices are few. The list follows (no preference implied):

Christopher Monk Instruments  
(*Jeremy West, maker*)  
47 Chalsey Road  
Brockley  
London SE4 1YN  
England

Please note that the long established address at Stock Farm House is no longer valid. Jeremy worked with Christopher for some time and now carries on the Monk line of instruments.

Currently, resin cornetts and lysards (Zink) are being produced, with plans for recorder maker Keith Rogers to begin building serpents by Summer, using Christopher's tools, patterns and machinery. Jeremy reports that he will do the tuning himself, initially with test playing by experienced players.

David Harding  
56 Netherton Rd.  
Appleton, ABINGDON  
Oxon, OX13 5JZ  
England

David Harding has been producing quality serpents for quite a while, and is still in production. These instruments can be heard in recordings, and are well respected. Reports indicate that the Harding instruments are evolving somewhat, with newer horns building on the experience of earlier ones to the improvement of those now available.

Robb Stewart Brass Instruments  
140 E. Santa Clara St. #18  
Arcadia, CA 91006  
USA

Robb Stewart does not produce wooden Serpents, but does make a beautiful copper (or brass) instrument copied from an historical example. Also available are "English" bass horns (upright serpents) and similar instruments. The main line of horns consists of copies of keyed brass from bugles to ophicleides, and valved instruments from the American Civil War.

## New Materials

Craig Kridel reports that Alan Lumsden has recorded a new CD which involves the Serpent. This is available from Nimbus Records, catalog number 5318. The recording is with the Hanover Band, playing Felix Mendelssohn's Symphony No.3, "Calm Sea & Prosperous Voyage". Please refer to the Serpent Discography article on page 6 of this newsletter.

Simon Proctor reports that he has composed two new works for Serpent and Piano. The works, which are dedicated to Christopher Monk, are entitled 'Elegy' and 'Mamba Samba'. Elegy is a serious piece which reflects Christopher's dignity, while Mamba Samba is light hearted and upbeat to reflect his sense of fun. Both are designed to be playable by any serpentist and should appeal to all playing members of US. The Serpent parts are easy to follow and may be shifted up or down an octave to suit the individual player's range.

To obtain copies of the sheet music in England and the rest of Europe, send a cheque for £7 to:

Simon Proctor  
2 Yew Tree Cottages  
Heath Road  
East Farleigh  
Kent ME15 0LR  
England

To obtain copies in the USA, Canada, etc; send a check for \$10 to Craig Kridel (address listed on page 2).

Simon also reports that his new Concerto for Keyed Bugle and Orchestra was premiered by Ralph Dudgeon on March 17, 1992.

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## Serpent Marketplace

US has available several nice articles of clothing which have been made with Serpent patterns. Neckties are available in dark blue, 'power tie' red, and maroon. These are the normal long shape, and 3/8" tall serpent patterns are scattered around the entire surface; very attractive, tasteful and durable. Anaconda Scarfs are available in white with red trim and white with black trim. The serpent T-shirts are not available at the moment, but will be announced when more are made.

To buy these items in the UK or European Continent, write to:

Prelude  
36 Searchwood Rd.  
Warlingham  
Surrey CR6 9BA  
England

Ties are £8 , scarfs are £6, plus £1 postage and handling.

If you live in the USA, Canada, or the rest of the world, order from Craig Kridel (see address on page 2). Ties are \$20, and scarfs are \$15. Make checks payable to 'ASP'.

There has been some interest in the Serpent Festival videotape. This tape includes scattered material from the 1990 Serpent Workshop at Stock Farm, and also has various excerpts from performances & incidental antics from the South Carolina Festival of 1989. Included is the premier performance of Simon Proctor's Serpent Concerto, with Alan Lumsden soloing. A 'PAL' format VHS copy of the tape was made for Christopher Monk's family, but arrangements have not been made to duplicate it for European members. Any members in the USA, Canada, or other countries using the 'NTSC' video format may obtain VHS copies by sending \$10 to Paul Schmidt (see address on page 2).

Please be aware that most of the tape for the South Carolina portion was shot in low light conditions, so video quality is compromised; still, there is a lot of memorable material here.

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## Late Arrivals

Robert Steadman, composer of "The Year of the Serpent", reports that he and a friend have set up a small music publishing company. They have launched a specialty Serpent Catalog which currently lists 15 selections for Serpent. Included are solos, duets, trios, quartets, and quintets. In addition, "The Year of the Serpent" is also listed, with orchestral accompaniment. There is currently a 20% discount introductory offer in effect. For a full catalog and price list, write to:

Claire Phipps Music  
11 Warbeck Road  
London W12 8NS  
England

## Serpent Discography

updated in February 1992

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Nimbus NI 5175                          | <i>Berlioz, Grande symphonie funebre et triomphale</i><br>The Wallace Collection; serpentist: Stephen Wick                                       |
| Erato/Musifrance<br>2292-45607-2        | <i>DeCaurroy, Missa Pro Defunctis</i> , Ensemble Vocal Sagittarius<br>serpentist: Bernard Fourtet  |
| Musica Mundi 314011                     | <i>Fress-und Sauflieder der Renaissance</i> , Musica Canterey Bamberg<br>serpentist: Enrique Crespo  |
| Vanguard VSD 71176                      | <i>Handel, Royal Fireworks Music</i><br>English Chamber Orchestra, Somary  |
| ASD 3395                                | <i>Handel, Royal Fireworks Music</i><br>London Symphony Orchestra, Mackerras   |
| Accent ACC 8860 D                       | <i>Harmonie und Janitscharenmusick</i><br>Octophoros; serpentist: Andrew van der Beek  |
| also<br>Musical Heritage<br>MHS 512700Y | <i>Music for Harmonie and Janissary Band</i><br>Octophoros; serpentist: Andrew van der Beek  |
| Label la Lichere<br>LLL 37              | <i>Le Chant du Serpent (avant garde jazz)</i><br>Michel Godard; serpentist: Michel Godard  |
| Nimbus 5318                             | <i>Mendelssohn, Symphony No. 3, Scottish</i><br><i>"Calm Sea &amp; Prosperous Voyage,"</i><br>serpentist: Alan Lumsden, The Hanover Band         |
| CBS S 61238                             | <i>Musique Pour les Instruments Anciens</i> ,<br>Le Florilegium Musicum De Paris<br>serpentist: Frantisek Pauk                                   |
| Saydisc SDL 360                         | <i>Under The Greenwood Tree: Music from the Time of Thomas Hardy</i><br>Mellstock Band; serpentist: David Townsend                               |
| Scalen'disc/<br>Ariane 152              | <i>Villancicos, les Saqueboutiers</i><br>serpentist: Bernard Fourtet   |
| Titanic Ti-100                          | <i>The London Serpent Trio: Sweet and Low</i><br>London Serpent Trio; serpentists: Alan Lumsden,<br>Christopher Monk, Andrew van der Beek        |
| CMS Recording                           | <i>Christmas Cheer</i><br>London Serpent Trio; serpentists: Alan Lumsden,<br>Christopher Monk, Andrew van der Beek                               |
| Saydisc SDL 361                         | <i>Fill Your Glasses: convivial English Glee</i> s<br>London Serpent Trio; serpentists: Clifford Bevan,<br>Christopher Monk, Andrew van der Beek |
| Music Masters<br>MMD6-0236 F            | <i>Music of Francis Johnson and Contemporaries</i><br>Chestnut Brass Company; serpentist: Jay Krush  |