

Introduction

The following summaries of ICSOM history by year and by topic are a continuation of compilations prepared for the observations of ICSOM's 25th anniversary in 1987 and 40th anniversary in 2002.

The tangible ICSOM archives that are the source for these summaries—minutes, newsletters, bulletins, correspondence, and much more—have been passed from secretary to secretary, editor to editor, officer to officer as leadership changed. Much of this paper was stored piecemeal in attics and basements and garages—wherever space could be found. Dispersion and consolidation have taken place over fifty years, but until recently these primary source materials were available to few people. Today all back issues of *Senza Sordino* are available on this site, and the complete conference minutes are additionally available to delegates. The current custodian of the George Zazofsky ICSOM archives is ICSOM secretary Laura Ross.

As noted in the introduction to these histories in 1987 and 2002, a review of history helps us to reflect on the past, to see where we started, where we went, where we are, and where we are going.

ICSOM, established in 1962, has found it necessary to recount its history and to define and explain itself to the orchestra profession many times. Reviews of ICSOM history are found in *Senza Sordino* as early as 1969. A clarification of ICSOM's structure and relationship to member orchestras was printed in 1971. There were so many new faces at the 1974 and 1979 conferences that a review of the organization and its purposes was deemed necessary. Beginning in 1983, an updated overview of ICSOM history was provided annually in the *ICSOM Delegate Manual* and is now available online.

This need for explanation is ongoing. Many musicians in ICSOM orchestras were not yet born when ICSOM was founded, and many have never known the experiences that brought their angry and frustrated predecessors together to address problems of fair and competent representation, of earning a decent wage, of having reasonable job security.

ICSOM's dramatically successful approach to these and other problems great and small was to forge a community of orchestras which, through communication and mutual support, could help individual members improve their standing and thus provide a basis for improving the condition of all the others. At different times, different orchestras have courageously faced crises, even to enduring the financial, psychological, and emotional ordeals of work stoppages.

It is beyond the scope of this review to relate the history of local negotiations, work stoppages, and settlements that resulted in well-documented gains in wages and working conditions in member orchestras. Instead, the summaries of ICSOM year by year offer a compact look at the chronological growth of the national organization, and the history by topic examines the major issues that ICSOM has addressed and brought into focus at annual meetings and in communication forums.

As documented in the minutes of ICSOM conferences, ICSOM bulletins, issues of *Senza Sordino*, and additional archival material, this history offers a look at the concerns expressed, issues discussed, actions taken, and results achieved by collective action at the national level.