

Spring 2014
No. 160
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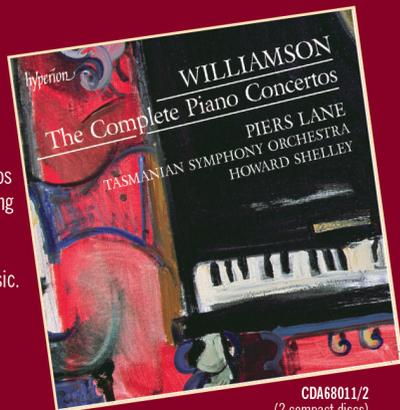
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LA PETITE BANDE / **SIGISWALD KUIJKEN**



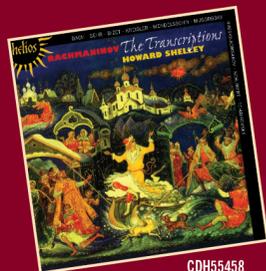
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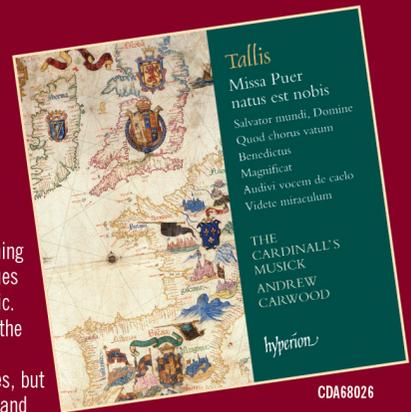
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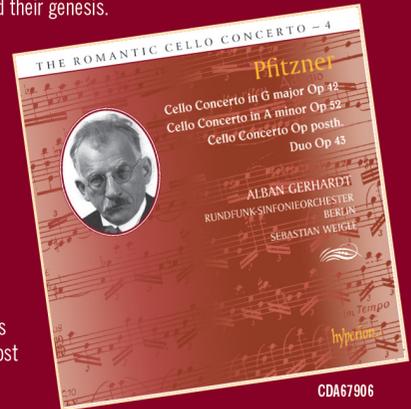
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For more information about the FRMS please go to
www.thefrms.co.uk

Forthcoming Events

Central Region Music Day, April 12th (page 12)
W. Surrey Region 50th Annual Reunion, April 12th (page 12)
Torbay Musical Weekend, November 14th – 17th
Scottish Group Music Day, May 10th (page 13)
FRMS Daventry Music Weekend, May 9th – 11th (page 17)
Yorkshire Group 2015 Spring Music Weekend (page 8)

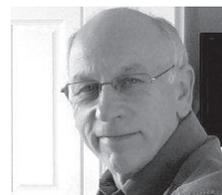
EDITORIAL Paul Astell

I CAN ONLY BEGIN THIS ISSUE by expressing the shock and sadness felt by all at FRMS on hearing of the death of Federation chairman Colin Dancer. There are tributes to Colin in the following pages, so suffice to say here that he will be much missed as an enthusiastic and efficient chairman with whom it was always a pleasure to work.

Just as we are going to press, Allan Child has agreed to take on the role of acting chairman until the AGM. Allan is already a busy and hard-working committee member and we are grateful that he has agreed to fill the void caused by such sad circumstances. The committee is also delighted that our former secretary, Tony Baines, has accepted its invitation to fill the remaining Vice-President position. This is in full recognition of Tony's long and highly successful service with the Federation in his previous role.

When assessing various ideas for this issue's front cover, the possibility of celebrating the anniversary of an instrument-maker seemed a unique and unusual opportunity. My only problem was to find somebody suitably qualified to write an article on the subject. At which precise point, along came some correspondence from Ulverston Jazz Appreciation Society who wished to announce their own anniversary celebrations. So congratulations to them on their 25th birthday and my thanks for agreeing to be that sought-after saxophone authority!

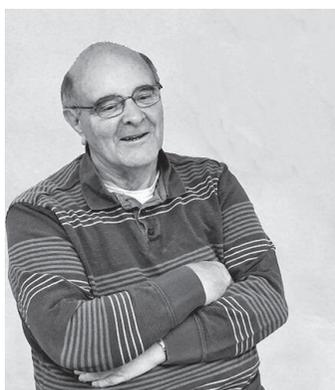
Finally, hearing of Claudio Abbado's passing has revived memories of one of my favourite concert-going experiences. A visit to Berlin, during the 1990s, for an Abbado performance of Mahler's Ninth was, for me, as good as it gets. We heard a wonderful performance, by arguably the best orchestra around, within the magnificent surroundings of the Philharmonie, which the Berliners proudly proclaim 'serves as a model for concert halls all over the world'. I well remember the sensation of hearing my own heartbeat during the long *diminuendo* at that symphony's conclusion, followed by complete silence until the moment the maestro lowered his baton. What followed were scenes I've not witnessed before or since. Eventually, after Abbado had been urged back onto the stage many times by the wildly enthusiastic audience, the orchestra players drifted away. But still, the great conductor was called back time and again to satisfy his Berlin public. I've no idea how long this went on for, having reluctantly departed feeling totally clapped out! ●



Colin Dancer Remembered

Everybody associated with the FRMS was saddened to learn of the death of our chairman in November. Here we reproduce much of the wonderful tribute that was delivered at his funeral. It was compiled by his daughter, Helen Phillips, and is reproduced with her kind permission.

Colin Dancer was an industrial chemist, having a lifelong career in design and development in the battery industry. He designed batteries for use on everything from milk floats to railway engines, sports boats to nuclear submarines, and served on a number of British and International Standards committees. He was an early adopter of computer technology, implementing computer systems for design and mathematical modelling during his time at the Crompton company.



Computing was an interest which he was to continue into later life, most recently being responsible for the websites of the Cardiff Recorded Music Society and the Newport Indoor Bowls Association. He was the first in the family to own an iPad and the only one who knew what to do with one!

Colin met Glenys while they were pupils at Pontywaun Grammar School and they continued their courtship through university and National Service. She was the love of his life and they kept every letter, card and postcard they ever sent to each other. They married and settled in Redditch where their two children, Helen and Gareth, were born. They moved back 'home' to Bassaleg in 1970 where Colin remained for the rest of his life. Tragically, Glenys developed breast cancer and died aged only 50.

Colin was always keen on photography. The family photograph album is full of black and white photographs of the children, which he had developed himself. He then moved on to use colour transparencies for family holidays but, ever one to keep up with the latest technology, he was most recently the proud owner of a number of digital cameras and enjoyed preparing photographs to enter into local competitions.

Colin's love of music started when he attended the local chapel. The chapel organist was a fine musician with a particular love of Bach's preludes and fugues, and Colin would turn the pages for him. Throughout their life together, Colin and Glenys enjoyed going to concerts and opera. They joined the Cardiff Gramophone Society in 1985. When Glenys became ill, it was difficult for them to go to concerts or the theatre, but attending CGS meetings – when she was well enough – allowed them to continue their enjoyment of music together. Colin served for a number of years on the committee of the Cardiff Recorded Music Society and delivered a number of programmes at St David's Hall, and further afield, all of which were meticulously researched and well received. He had a vast collection of classical music CDs, opera videos, and books on classical music.

At the U3A, where he attended a number of music courses, he was known for his bustling entrances, always a couple of minutes late, and for being modest, but exceptionally knowledgeable. If there was a question the lecturer couldn't answer, the chances were that Colin could, and if he couldn't, he would have the answer by the next class.

Colin joined the Federation of Recorded Music Societies committee in 2009, becoming chairman in 2011. Colin believed in team work and was a team player through and through. He led by example and would give freely of his time, knowledge and experience to further the work of the Federation. Even from his hospital bed, he was in contact with committee members, anxious to do all he could to make the AGM a success, even requesting a report on how it had gone.

Colin took up bowls about 20 years ago. Characteristically, he put as much back into the sport as he gained from it. He was competition secretary at Beechwood Bowling Club, and again when he joined Rogerstone Bowling Club, where he eventually became vice-chairman. He took a coaching qualification and encouraged others to take up the sport. In July 2012 he was actively involved in a project to bring youngsters into the game, and helped teach more than 60 ten-year-olds some basic skills over the course of two days. It was hard work, but very rewarding.

The family are most proud of the work Colin did with Macmillan. When diagnosed with prostate cancer, Colin first turned to the Macmillan community for support, but over the years he has helped many more people, with over 2,200 posts on the Macmillan website forum.

In July 2012, friends of Colin decided to do the Race for Life and, in what he described as a moment of madness, he thought he might join them. But when he heard that they were wearing pink tutus he had to back out. In Colin's words: 'Pink is so not my colour, and with three replacement knees I haven't the legs for a tutu in any colour!' Instead, he resolved to walk the Severn Bridge in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support. Walking had always been his favourite form of exercise, but after those knee operations, walking one and a half miles had become a struggle. With the encouragement of his oncology team he gradually increased the distance and the difficulty of his walks, until he could manage a distance of six to eight miles. Having never done anything like this before, Colin set himself a target of raising £50. He was overwhelmed by the generosity of his friends and had to gradually increase his target, eventually reaching £890.

Having recovered from the prostate cancer, Colin was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia in November. Although the results of the initial treatment were encouraging, his chemotherapy did not have any effect on the cancer and he died peacefully in hospital. The care Colin received was second to none, with many individual acts of kindness shown by the nurses. The family were genuinely overwhelmed by the care that was shown, both to Colin and the family, during the last few days. Colin was described by his 'Macfriends' as a true gentle-man who was always ready with a kind word, supporting and encouraging, or a tale to make you smile. His nurses described him as a lovely, lovely, man. ●

FRMS Annual General Meeting 2013

Hinckley Recorded Music Society were hosts for this year's AGM held at the Sketchley Grange Hotel, Hinckley, where around 30 visitors represented 21 societies. Thanks to Allan Child, Jim Bostwick, Graham Kiteley and Mick Birchall for their assistance in compiling the business report.

FEDERATION COMMITTEE MEMBER
Allan Child opened the meeting by introducing the Mayor of Hinckley and Bosworth, Councillor Lynda Watkins, who welcomed delegates to the area and gave a brief description of the Borough. Hinckley was once the centre of the hosiery industry but is now home to a diverse range of enterprises, including Triumph motorcycles. The Motor Industry Research Association (MIRA) is well known as a centre of excellence for vehicle engineering design, test and development, and the Green Tower complex boasts excellent recording studios.

The meeting was informed that both FRMS chairman Colin Dancer and vice-chairman Roger Apps were indisposed. The constitution requires that a chairman should be elected; Allan Child was proposed and he accepted.

Allan began by sending best wishes to Colin and Roger who were both suffering health problems. He then presented what he described as an **Extended Committee Review** rather than an official chairman's report.

All committee members have continued to perform their specialist tasks, as well as bringing to discussions their collective experience of the recorded music movement. **Roger Apps** has been reaching out to unaffiliated groups and working with **Malcolm Lewis** in organising additional music activities in the West Region.

As FRMS secretary, **Jim Bostwick** is an effective and sympathetic earpiece, bringing the enquiries, and occasional problems, of societies to the notice of the Federation. Through him we hopefully distil wise advice, helpful suggestions and factual information to assist them in running their own groups. One task that Jim is relieved of is that of taking minutes of our meetings, and we are indebted to **Mick Birchall** for his work as minute secretary. Mick is also secretary of the Central Region as well as this event's host Society, Hinckley. The Federation's website is highly praised by affiliated societies, and others, its success the result of the constant efforts of our webmaster, **George Steele**. It is not uncommon for new information to be posted on the site within a matter of hours of receipt.

The annual Music Weekend continues to be an important event in the Federation's calendar. **Ron and Denise Beech**, as programme organisers for the Weekend, have now delivered their second successful event. They are ably assisted by Allan Child himself, who deals with the essential administration tasks, as well as **Philip Ashton** and his team of audio technicians who contribute enormously to that success.

Our treasurer, **Graham Kiteley**, has managed the Federation accounts in a highly professional manner for ten years and wishes to stand down next year.

After extensive appeals, a candidate has come forward. After exploratory discussions, the hope is that the prospective appointment will prove mutually acceptable so that an assistant treasurer can be co-opted onto committee to shadow, and actually work alongside, Graham for the remainder of the 2013/2014 year.

Bulletin is the house magazine of the Federation and its editor, **Paul Astell**, does a superb job in producing a highly attractive publication. He also has a certain knack of attracting income from advertisers which makes a significant contribution to FRMS finances. It is important, though, that readers mention *Bulletin* when responding to those adverts. Distribution of the magazine is yet another of Allan's responsibilities and it is he who ensures that hundreds of copies end up in the right place. It is important for secretaries to circulate their Society's copy as widely as possible to its members. Alternatively, additional copies can be ordered or members can take out a personal subscription.

Paul is an appointed, rather than an elected, member of the committee, as is the aforementioned Philip Ashton, the Federation's Technical Officer. As well as his work for the Music Weekend, Philip willingly provides advice with great enthusiasm to any Society who requests it.

Malcolm Lewis is standing down from the committee, which means a vacancy now exists for anyone who has this movement at heart and can spare a few hours to join the management team. The four meetings each year are held in a pub close to Derby railway station where a pint of your favourite real ale (or any other drink) is on offer to accompany a hearty lunch.

Our President, **Lyndon Jenkins**, takes a close interest in the committee's work, attends some of our meetings and offers valuable advice, his involvement with the Music Weekend being particularly valued. Speaking of which, the Daventry Team have already been hard at work preparing for next year's Weekend. An impressive line-up of contributors is on offer and the price has been pegged at this year's level. Note the dates: 9th to 11th May.

Annual Accounts and Treasurer's Report

Graham Kiteley presented his tenth report and began by confirming a steady year in all respects with a satisfactory financial outcome. The year's tasks have included affiliation invoicing as well as dealing with insurance and copyright matters. The welcome addition of three new affiliated societies was, unfortunately, more than offset by 12 closures and a further three withdrawing from affiliation. However, with the re-affiliation process 94% complete, the general picture is of a hard core of societies determined to succeed despite sometimes small memberships. The majority have no more than 25

members and our treasurer does his best to limit any increases to Federation charges. However, a modest increase in affiliation fees has been necessary to balance the books, although higher PRS (Performing Rights Society) and PPL (Phonographic Performance Ltd) charges has only been partially passed on. Society treasurers had an advanced warning that although Public Liability (PL) insurers Aviva had held their premiums, a modest increase is likely for 2014. It is important that societies remember that the Insurance Certificate section of their Affiliation Certificate is evidence of their PL cover and should be carefully preserved.

Total cash flow was down somewhat this year at £70,000, of which 30% was generated by the Daventry Weekend. A surplus of almost £2,000 compared favourably with last year's break-even outcome. The Bath AGM, at a net cost of £1,060, proved to be a low/medium-cost event representing 20% of affiliation income, the usual measure.

The Daventry Musical Weekend incurred a marginal deficit, although the lower attendance was largely offset by reduced administration and technical costs. The attractive programme on offer in 2014 will hopefully restore audience numbers although a ring-fenced reserve fund safeguards against any adverse affect on Federation finances.

Bulletin continues to be an attractive publication for members and is a significant contributor to Federation funds. These are tough times for the recording industry and it is no easy job persuading companies to support us with advertising revenue. Indeed, a slight drop in income has resulted although this has been offset by lower magazine costs. Retaining and recruiting new advertisers will present a stiff challenge for future editions.

Reductions in general administration and committee costs have benefited finances by some £1,000. Overall, the Federation's finances are in a healthy state.

Mick Birchall (Northampton RMS) expressed thanks on behalf of the wider FRMS for the quite outstanding job done by Graham over the past decade, not only as treasurer but also as a former Music Weekend organiser. Bob Drew (CMS Kidderminster) queried how admin costs were so low. The treasurer opined that not all expenses are necessarily claimed by committee members and some supplies are not purchased every year.

Secretary's Report

Yorkshireman Jim Bostwick prefaced his report by suggesting that Richard III's remains should be returned to York. The numerous members from Leicestershire present seemed to disagree!

Jim explained that much of the secretarial work involves managing emails and he acknowledged the prompt attention given when these are referred on to committee colleagues. Telephone calls from Society representatives are far fewer these days, although they can be a source of pleasure and learning! Readers of the secretary's column in the previous *Bulletin* will

know of the catastrophic failure suffered by his computer, an event that did our secretary's stress levels and general state of health no good whatsoever. However, there was a happy outcome with all essential data retrieved and a backup system is now in place to guard against future failures. Like Jim, all committee members who use computers for Federation business use their own machines.

There are the usual reasons given for the Society closures mentioned in the treasurer's report: ageing memberships, mobility difficulties, loss of venues or increased hire charges, and the unwillingness of members to take on officer roles. Retention, though, is generally high with loyal members continuing to enjoy the musical and social benefits, and 183 societies remain affiliated. Our website allows us to view the programmes offered by many societies and a trawl through reveals that a wide range of music is presented week in, week out.

The mailings necessary for this meeting have involved much printing, collating, folding and envelope stuffing. This is all timed to be received after the seasons of most societies have begun, rather than during the summer break. A typographical error had one of the menu choices as moose rather than mousse. At least it wasn't mouse!

There had been an enquiry about the legalities of compiling home-made CDs as a convenient way of simplifying the tasks of the DJ/technician at a presentation. If these are used only for FRMS events and not offered for sale, then no problems arise. Historically, this practice has evolved from when LPs and 78s were transferred to open reel or cassette tapes. Another enquiry had Orpington RMS commenting on the bureaucracy involved when moving to new premises, especially when a Local Authority is involved. It seems that when the nature of a typical RMS event was made clear, a common-sense agreement was reached.

We are occasionally contacted by commercial entities to enquire into the possibility of using our cheaper copyright licences when playing music on their premises. The FRMS is not able to assist in this respect and they are directed to the appropriate bodies.

All officers and committee members had submitted valid nomination papers, no positions were contested therefore no ballot was required. Malcolm Lewis did not seek re-nomination and he has been thanked for his services. The annual return to Companies House had been completed well before the statutory deadline.

When the secretary's report was concluded, Graham Kiteley expanded on the theme of room hire by referring to the 15-page document Kidderminster are faced with for concerts at the Town Hall. There is a model fire-risk policy form on the FRMS website. To clear any confusion about licences, the treasurer stated that meetings of affiliated societies are always covered, including when presentations are made to outside bodies. It should be made clear that an affiliated Society is being represented.

Any Other Business

Philip Ashton (FRMS technical officer) opened by referring to the excellent audio equipment used at Daventry which, other than the speakers, was on long-term loan from Cambridge Audio. Those speakers are from PMC and a 40% discount is available for affiliated societies. Philip is currently compiling an equipment best-buy list across various price ranges.

Brian Somerfield (Loughborough RMS) was seeking an outlet which deals in 78s and it was suggested he checked the classified adverts in *Gramophone*.

In answer to several comments about banking problems, the treasurer suggested opening a business account. This meeting's chairman added that his Society, Jubilee Music Circle (Derby), had such an account with the Royal Bank of Scotland.

Recorded music presentation

Jim Bostwick reports on Mick Birchall's music choices which followed the meeting.

Mick chose as his title 'A Thieving Magpie' and explained that he would be taking his inspiration from the recorded music presentations of recent AGMs with unusual instrumental inclusions. A lively Sousa march, *The Black Horse Troop*, opened the programme to get our feet tapping, coconut shells providing the equestrian rhythmic contribution.

Next to be investigated was the ciaccona, a dance from South America which crossed the ocean following the Spanish occupation in the 17th century. Through Spain and Italy the dance proved popular and was adopted by the French to become the chaconne. To illustrate, Mick chose two items: first an early piece by the Italian composer and lutenist Alessandro Piccinini (1566-c.1638) for archlute, harp and viola da gamba; next, and in contrast, a contemporary jazz piece with Gianluigi Trovesi playing clarinet accompanied by plucked strings.

The Rochdale AGM of 2011 featured composers from the northwest. Hinckley being in Leicestershire, composers of central England would be represented here. A sock manufacturer and amateur musician William Gardiner, born in 1770, the year of Beethoven's birth, was instrumental in giving Leicester the privilege of being the first place in England to hear the music of the great master. He was later honoured for his efforts, being allowed to sign beneath the signatures of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert on a document then sealed in the pedestal of Beethoven's statue in Bonn. Gardiner turned his attention to hymns and his *Give to God our Thankful Songs* recycled a familiar tune from Haydn's Quartet Op. 76, No. 3 – the German National Anthem. Mick told us that Gardiner sent Haydn six pairs of socks embroidered with motifs from his works.

Organ music followed, a piece by French organist Louis Vierne (1870-1937) titled very appropriately *Les Cloches de Hinckley*, composed in 1927 following a recital given in the town. Unfortunately, the church clock kept the composer awake all night

and Mick suggested that this piece might have been his revenge!

Referring to Roger Apps's recent *Bulletin* essay on Czech music, Mick selected composer Jan Dismas Zelenka (1679-1745) who had pipped JS Bach for the prestigious job of court composer to the Saxon Elector in Dresden. We heard three pieces from the *Mass for the Feast of the Purification*.

Eric Coates, born in nearby Hucknall (Nottinghamshire), was represented in a rare piece, his *Saxo-Rhapsody* with Jack Brymer as soloist. Mick's favourite composer is Mozart, but he collects early Italian music and to represent this he played *Regina Coeli* for organ by Graziani (c.1604-1664) and the beautiful voice of Argentinian soprano, María Christina Kiehr. Remembrance Day (Sunday 10th November) was represented by *Where have all the flowers gone?* performed by the Kingston Trio. This piece had been chosen for his own funeral by Harry Patch, the last survivor of the First World War trenches.

Looking forward to Daventry 2014 and particularly to Jeffrey Skidmore, founder and director of Ex Cathedra, Mick chose Latin-American baroque music with a Christmas theme performed by that group: *¡Ay, andar!* by Juan de Araujo (1648-1712). The very close border of Warwickshire, 'Shakespeare country', was represented by Thomas Arne (1710-1778) with his song, *Thou Soft Flowing Avon* sung by Emma Kirkby. In contrast, we then heard a set of variations on a theme by Diego Ortiz (c.1510-c.1570) performed by Andrew Lawrence-King on a baroque harp to include the occasional kick! Two loud firecrackers concluded Mick's programme theme, which featured in the *Bandits' Galop* by Johann Strauss II.

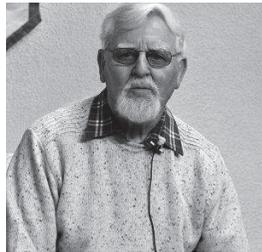
Live music

There followed an excellent dinner, with all the delegates seated at a single large elliptical table, which enhanced the experience (writes Mick Birchall). Taking heed of the views of Raimund Herinx at the previous year's AGM in Bath regarding diversification of the music types played at typical Society meetings, the live music was provided by the **Big Wheel Jazz Quartet**, an ensemble drawn from across Leicestershire, and probably more accustomed to playing at Beer Festivals. The members are Barry Harvey (clarinet and saxophones), Alan Birkinhead (trombone, vocals and 'all-round-good-egg'), Keith Walker (rhythm guitar), and Alan Tomes (bass) who provided a splendidly crisp and springy foundation for his colleagues to demonstrate their virtuosity and improvisational skills. The music drew on the repertoire of the swing bands which were popular when most of our delegates were extremely young, or possibly even a little earlier: *On the Sunny Side of the Street*, *Darktown Strutters' Ball*, *My Blue Heaven*, *Indiana*, and many others. Pure unadulterated nostalgia and judging by the amount of foot-tapping observed, warmly appreciated by a good many, if not all, of those present. ●

REGIONAL NEWS

The Autumn Meeting was in the New North Road Baptist Church, Huddersfield, starting at 10 am with tea. Then David, the friendly caretaker, welcomed us with the obligatory health and safety notices. With suitable accompanying music this would make a good fourth presentation!

Eric Morgan is well-qualified to talk about **The King of Instruments**, having played the organ since the age of nine. At thirteen he was the organist of his local chapel, at fifteen he moved to a larger church and three years later moved again to a church where he remained for twenty-one years. Since retiring he has travelled more and assisted an organ builder with repairs and tuning.



Eric gave a brief history of the organ, starting with the hydraulis, based on water-power, in the second century. A more 'modern' organ was developed in the 8th century but the oldest known today is the one in the Basilica of Valère in Sion, Switzerland, much of which has been replaced during restoration.

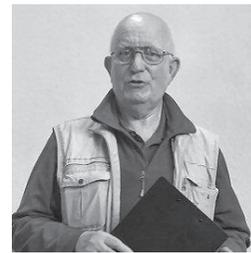
The organ is a collection of flutes and reeds, which Sir Christopher Wren called a 'box of whistles'. Keyboards and pedals were developed in Germany but French and Spanish builders produced lighter, brighter instruments. There were noted builders in England from the time of Queen Elizabeth I and Eric brought sample organ pipes for us to examine. His music examples included the contrasting sounds of French and German instruments built in the 17th and 18th centuries, a *Dance Suite* written by Noel Rawsthorne, *America* by Charles Ives, and *The Joy of the Soul as it enters Heaven* by Olivier Messiaen. Finally, and surely a must for modern organ lovers, Carlo Curley playing the 'Liebestod' from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*.

Lunch was a superb three-course, hot and cold buffet provided by our usual local caterers.

The English Renaissance was presented by **Christopher Richmond** whose eclectic musical tastes go far beyond the neglected, classical 20th-century British composers who were the subject of his talk. Setting aside Elgar and Vaughan Williams, Christopher focused on music by composers like Doreen Carwithen (1922-2003). She was William Alwyn's musical assistant, marrying him in 1961, but was a composer in her own right with 30 film scores and classical works to her credit. We heard the Overture *Bishop Rock* with Richard Hickox and the LSO. Hickox also conducted the BBC National Orchestra of Wales in *Moonlight* from *The Sea*, a suite by Frank Bridge (1879-1941).

Yorkshire Regional Group

This was followed by the Oboe Concerto of Rutland Boughton (1878-1960), *Rosalind* for piano and violin by Dorothy Howell (1898-1982) and the *Petite Suite de Concert* by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912). All worth exploring further if they're new to you. This is also true of the music of John Foulds (1880-1939), Elizabeth Maconchy (1907-1994), William Alwyn (1905-1985), Imogen Holst (1907-1984) and Herbert Howells (1892-1983). Many composers of this period suffered neglect because of the BBC's policy of promoting *avant-garde* composers, and they might not have been heard at all if it were not for records and CDs.



Robert Seager's programme was devoted to the music of Richard Wagner who he said was not 'The World's Greatest Composer', because no musician merited that title. However, the music was great and had a special place in the world's opera houses.

Inspired by the *Choral Symphony* at the age of fifteen, Wagner took Beethoven as his model. Wagner was a selfish and self-opinionated person but Robert said 'his genius was as great as he imagined it to be'.



Robert played a range of extracts: *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, his one comic opera, contrasted with the early Grand Sonata for Piano (1832). Then came *Siegfried Idyll* (1870), his Christmas gift to Cosima Liszt, and 'Siegfried's Funeral March' from the *Ring* cycle. Finally, Solti conducting the 'Liebestod' from *Tristan und Isolde* and Boult the conductor in *Lohengrin*.

It was a good music day and the YRG Chairman thanked and congratulated Wakefield on behalf of the audience for arranging both food and music. Next year Rochdale GS are the hosts. **Tony Pook**

YORKSHIRE REGIONAL GROUP

We are pleased to announce advance information about our 2015 Spring Music Weekend. Presentations include:

- The Kingsway Hall (audio/visual)
- Music of Gordon Jacob
- RCA Living Stereo (audio/visual)
- Review of New CD Releases

Full information available from Geoff Bateman, Event Co-ordinator on 01274 783285 or by email – geoffbateman@blueyonder.co.uk

Adolphe Sax the Accidental Jazzman

The bicentenary of the saxophone's inventor falls this year. Here, Don Samways of Ulverston Jazz Appreciation Society recalls some of the instrument's most important exponents

AS ADOLPHE SAX SAT BACK and admired his gleaming new musical invention around 1840, he must have hoped and expected that his instrument would make a major impact in the classical music world. Jazz was not on the musical horizon. With the first he was to be disappointed: the saxophone has never been more than peripheral in classical music. And of course, jazz didn't arrive until half a century later. But if Adolphe had lived long enough to hear jazz, he would surely have been amazed and delighted at the success of his classically-ignored saxophone because, after hesitant beginnings, it became the iconic instrument in jazz.

Significantly, of the four musicians who have had the most influence in changing the directions of jazz – Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Charlie Parker and John Coltrane – the last two were both saxophonists. However, as jazz began to evolve in

From the mid-1920s through World War II, the Big Band era brought jazz – and dance music as a whole – first, inevitably, to the USA, then throughout the Western world, and even farther afield. It was the popular music of the day, and jazz musicians played a major role. The bands played 'swing' music – Benny Goodman was the so-called King of Swing – and most featured fine jazz musicians, many of them saxophone players. Each band, 15 or so strong, boasted a five-piece sax section – two tenors, two altos, a baritone – and many of the musicians played jazz as well as the arranged dance music. So again, the saxophone took a key role.

Unsurprisingly, perhaps, the end of the war signalled new directions for jazz, and the beginning of the end of the big bands. In their place jazz reinvented itself as be-bop took centre stage, which some argue was an African-American reaction to the appropriation of existing styles by white musicians.



l-r: Coleman Hawkins, John Coltrane, Charlie Parker

New Orleans, the instrument featured only tentatively in the traditional-style bands, to judge from the early recordings. And even in the bigger bands which began to appear, its role was mainly to provide a modest harmony background.

All that changed in the early 1920s with the arrival of Coleman Hawkins. 'Hawk' was a child musical prodigy, who moved through several instruments before alighting on the tenor saxophone. Already possessing a wide musical knowledge, he developed a style which rapidly lifted the instrument from little more than a fluttering vaudeville joke to one of the most important improvising instruments in jazz. To steal an entirely appropriate quote from the *Grove Dictionary of Jazz*: 'Richness of ideas, sensitive tone, rhythmic flexibility...improvising memorable and logically constructed melodies...brilliant musical thinker...relaxed virtuosity, warmth of sound, harmonic ingenuity.'

Another writer, not to be outdone, observes: 'His puissant, Atlantean sonority on the horn made him the envy of his peers.' Pretty fancy footwork, but true enough, and we've lingered on Hawkins because he was indeed the father of the jazz saxophone: every other player since then has, at least to some extent, been influenced by Hawk.

The music required new feats of virtuosity as small groups of highly accomplished musicians took the music into new realms of improvisation, based on chordal rather than melodic structures. Again, though, the saxophone essentially took the lead in the person of Charlie Parker, an alto player of extraordinary talent and imagination, his flights into the wild blue yonder earning him the nickname of 'Bird'. This musical revolution didn't, of course, mean that other forms of jazz disappeared, only that be-bop showed the shape of things to come.

And then ... younger jazz musicians, forever restless and seeking new musical paths, moved on from be-bop into even more controversial territory. Leader of this *avant-garde*, by universal acclaim, was John Coltrane, a tenor sax player of remarkable technical and harmonic gifts. His great achievement was the exploitation of multiphonics and circular breathing techniques through which he demonstrated feats of duration and endurance in his solos, producing glissando and harmonic effects of extreme intensity which came to be known as 'sheets of sound'. To say that he and his playing divided opinion – and continue to do so – is putting it mildly, evoking almost saintly status among his devoted followers, while equally alienating other jazz

enthusiasts who found his falsetto shrieks and overblown dissonance too chaotic for comfort. Coltrane also popularised the soprano, a saxophone previously ignored by most modern jazz musicians, but which has become *de rigueur* in today's scene.

Whether Adolphe Sax would have enjoyed jazz, and Hawk, Bird, Coltrane and the innumerable

saxophone players of jazz, who can say? But surely he would have been mightily impressed by the ingenuity and imagination of the many thousands of jazz musicians who have given his instrument its iconic status in this ever-evolving world of jazz music. ●

TO SIGURD RASCHÈR (1907-2001), pictured, we owe Eric Coates's *Saxo-Rhapsody* for alto saxophone and orchestra. He and the composer met at a concert they shared in Belfast in 1936 where the programme included the Concerto for Saxophone by the Swedish composer Lars-Erik Larsson. Coates was already interested in the saxophone family (shortly before, he had employed the tenor instrument in his *Three Men* suite), and when Raschèr asked him to write a work for him he jumped at the chance. There was a commission promised for the 1936 Folkestone Festival, which Coates cannily agreed to honour so long as they engaged Raschèr to play the work he intended to write. They did, which is how the *Saxo-Rhapsody* came into being, premiered by Raschèr under the composer's baton at Folkestone on 15th September 1936, and recorded by them the next year by HMV (on 78rpm disc C2891). It is unique in Coates's output: he wasn't attracted by the concerto form and never attempted it apart from in this one-movement, abstract work. No doubt Raschèr was glad to add it to the list of works dedicated to him, which eventually totalled over two hundred. **Lyndon Jenkins**



Photo: Lyndon Jenkins collection

Sax and his instrument



Throughout history, the development of musical instruments has been something of an evolutionary process, each new generation of makers and manufacturers building on the achievements of those that went before.

The saxophone's origins, though, can be traced to one particular character who gave his name to his enduring creation. Antoine-Joseph Sax, better known as Adolphe, was born in Dinant, Belgium in 1814, the son of Charles-Joseph, himself an instrument designer who was in the employ of King William I and the Belgian Army Band. These valuable connections did the Sax name no harm at all, and indeed young Adolphe was soon following in father's footsteps. Having presented three of his own designs to the Brussels Industrial Exposition (two flutes and a clarinet) Sax junior went on to study those instruments at the Royal Conservatory. Having left school, Adolphe engaged in a certain amount of experimentation with instruments, this leading to an improvement of the bass clarinet, his first patented design.

In 1841 Sax relocated to Paris. Four years later his work on valved bugles proved so popular they became known as saxhorns, the name they were patented under. His contrabass-clarinet was less successful, but in 1846 Sax lodged a patent on the family of instruments he had been working on for a number of years and for which he is best known. His full range of saxophones comprised two groups of seven instruments, each varying in size and pitch. The saxophone came to the notice of Berlioz who extolled its virtues in an article for a French newspaper, this raising Sax's profile ever higher, eventually leading to a teaching post at the Paris Conservatoire. Adolphe Sax was not without his detractors, some rivals claiming plagiarism of their

designs. On one occasion, Franz Liszt acted as mediator in a particular dispute with Wilhelm Wieprecht, the German designer of the rotary valve system. Further accusations were rife, however, and Sax was twice forced into bankruptcy. Although Adolphe suffered two bouts of lip cancer during the 1850s, he recovered fully and lived on until 1894.

Classical sax

The saxophone never became a standard requirement for the classical concert hall, but there are many examples – apart from Lyndon's example above – where mainstream composers have made use of it. Berlioz is thought to be the first, including one in his (lost) 1844 version of *Herminie*. The soprano sax appears in *Te Deum* and *Les Troyens*. Vaughan Williams included a tenor sax in the scherzo of his Symphony No. 6, and two altos and one tenor in the Symphony No. 9. Rachmaninov uses the alto sax in the first movement of his *Symphonic Dances* as does Kodály in the *Háry János* Suite. Georges Bizet included an alto sax in his incidental music to *L'Arlésienne*, first performed in 1872. Prokofiev included a tenor sax in his ballet *Romeo and Juliet*, and it's no surprise that Shostakovich scored three saxophones in the first Suite for Jazz Orchestra, and four in the second. In Ravel's orchestration of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, an alto sax features in 'The Old Castle'. Debussy's *Rapsodie* for orchestra and alto saxophone was inspired by the composer listening to street-hawkers crying their wares! Milhaud's *Scaramouche* for saxophone and orchestra has the orchestra and sax dance in a Rio carnival. Rio is where Villa-Lobos wrote his *Fantasia for Soprano Saxophone, three Horns and Strings* and dedicated it to Marcel Mule, the French classical saxophonist. Glazunov wrote his *Saxophone Concerto* in 1934 at the request of Sigurd Raschèr, and Puccini requires two onstage alto saxophones in *Turandot*! **Paul Astell ●**

A VIEW FROM YORKSHIRE Jim Bostwick, Secretary

THE FEDERATION HAS LOST a good friend with Colin Dancer's passing. I feel it particularly because the relationship between chairman and secretary has to be a close one for an organisation such as ours to run smoothly and effectively. Humour helps things along, I think, and Colin's ready wit was much appreciated, I am sure, by all who came into contact with him. He is missed.

But the Federation's business providing service to Recorded Music Societies up and down the land goes on. Your Committee will continue to provide that service to the best of its ability but obviously there are now vacancies which can only be filled from members of the Societies it serves. I am very happy to be a point of contact from anyone interested.

I think I can report that substantial progress has been made in finding someone to take on the treasurer's role when Graham Kiteley relinquishes it in 2014 after more than a decade of dedicated service. Paul Corfield Godfrey brings similar accountancy skills with him from his working days with the Inland Revenue and, since then, helping various charities and trades unions manage their funds. He is also a composer and music reviewer. He and Graham are shadowing each other until the next Annual General Meeting of November 2014. The 2013 AGM, hosted by Hinckley RMS, was held early last November and reported on the services which the Federation provides. I am very thankful to those affiliated Societies who attended – or arranged proxy votes because of their absence – to ensure that a quorum allowed for that business to proceed. I am particularly grateful to Allan Child for chairing the meeting because of Colin's illness. I don't think anyone thought that some nine days later Colin would no longer be with us.

The annual return to Companies House, I am happy to report, was filed on the 15th December 2013 and seemed to be a much less stressful process when doing it online than it had been in 2012. I had remembered what to do and didn't panic (as much). It's the £5,000 fine for failing to send it in on time which raises the pulse!

I am aware that this View from Yorkshire has been much more sombre than my usual offering, but it could not be otherwise.



Letters and emails

Federation tributes to Colin Dancer

I did not have enough time, either as a fellow FRMS committee member or as a friend on social occasions, to get to know the 'inner' Colin. The eulogy given at his funeral reveals a far-ranging interest in industrial, mechanical and electrical applications and his actual work had involved him in pioneer design together with invention.

This I had not known of previously, and it is surprising when one delves into the past lives of some of our FRMS members to discover what interesting employment and leisure activities they had. In Maidstone we had a Cold War plane and rocket designer whose top-secret activity was only revealed at his funeral. We only knew this person as one who had enjoyed Schubert Songs!

I first met Colin when he was elected on to the FRMS committee in 2009. We gradually contacted each other, either by phone or email, to discuss our health – we both had prostate cancer, although my prostate was removed in 2002. Colin could not have the operation as he was over age, and I, at a mere 54, was just about one of the youngest to have contracted this condition. We continually updated each other on the latest treatments becoming available, and I believe both of us benefited from these exchanges.

As my wife, June, and I used to go regularly to the BBC National Orchestra of Wales afternoon concerts at Cardiff's Hoddinott Hall, we invited Colin to come to join us for lunch before the concert. June and Colin got on really well and she was as shocked as I was at his passing.

He was a quiet person and an exemplary listener – so vital for a chairman of any organisation – and he

had a slightly mischievous sense of humour, also needed in this position, I believe. Colin will be sorely missed by us all.

Roger Apps, FRMS vice-chairman

When Colin Dancer became chairman of the Federation shortly after I became its President in 2009, I was delighted. Although the chairmanship is a matter for the committee to decide and the President has no influence on the outcome, he would have had my backing simply as a fellow Welshman! I was even more pleased to find my patriotic chauvinism quickly vindicated. I had hardly known him before, but once he took office I was soon to discover that we saw eye-to-eye on many matters of mutual interest and importance, notably those affecting the FRMS. I also realised that behind his modest manner and courteous charm lay a man who, though always open to argument and a ready listener to other viewpoints, held a quiet confidence in following his own thoughts, instincts and ideas. We were developing a fine working relationship together which, to my great personal regret, can never now fulfil the promise it held.

The loss to the FRMS movement is considerable. From all that has been written elsewhere about his work for the Federation and his other areas of activity, it will be evident that both practically and personally he was a tremendous acquisition to any movement in which he interested himself. When I saw him last autumn at Symphony Hall for an opera performance, I little realised that it would be the last time we would meet, nor how soon he would be lost to us altogether. With all my colleagues I mourn him as an invaluable

asset in our business affairs but, more especially, as a true friend to us all.

Lyndon Jenkins, FRMS President

Travel to another dimension to give Holst talk!

The journey to Thurso, via Bristol and Inverness from Devon, was long, admittedly, but the weather was warm and the views of the lakes, the fir trees and the rolling landscape bathed in sunlight all the way were sublime. We were received by Antony Samuel-West and his wife Chris at their lovely home and offered a much needed cuppa.

The following day we were treated by Antony to a wonderful trip to John o' Groats. It was sunny, but so blustery that it made our eyes water! The beauty of the area is tempered by a steely quality, and I suddenly understood, for the first time, the much-lauded stoicism of the Scots. On Tuesday evening it was time for me to give my talk. We visited a private house, with an amazingly large living room, built for just such talks and events. The projecting equipment had been kindly hired in and was set up (we had tested it earlier) and it worked superbly, which was a great relief. The audience was small but attentive and very interested in the life of Mr Gustav Holst. I felt very privileged to speak to a group of people who go to such lengths to keep the appreciation of recorded music alive in so remote a location. At the end of the talk, Mike Lunan thanked me and presented me with a gift and a card, which was most welcome.

Holst was such a talent and is so lamentably under-appreciated that I am prepared to travel to another dimension, if not to another planet exactly, to give my Holst talk. Please do get in touch if you want me to come and visit you.

talkingformydinner.vpweb.co.uk

email: marriette@btinternet.com; 07909 655658

Amelia Marriette

Mystery photo solved



In the previous issue, Margaret Turner of Sheffield RMS requested readers' help in trying to identify the musicians featured on page 25. Margaret speculated that perhaps the person in the photograph shown left was a singer at the Three Choirs Festival. It is, in fact, the mezzo-soprano Norma Procter who was born in Cleethorpes in 1928 and had a distinguished post-war career over three decades.

The photograph actually marks the year (1954) when she made her debut at the Three Choirs Festival in Elgar's *The Apostles*. She returned the following year to sing Lennox Berkeley's *Four Poems of St Teresa of Avila*. By that time her career was already quite well established: her recording of *Messiah* with Sir Adrian Boult for Decca had just been issued, and she was about to follow it up with *Elijah* under Josef Krips, also for Decca. She sang with Britten's English Opera Group, and in 1960 joined Peter Pears in the composer's own recording of his *Spring Symphony*. A version of Britten's *Abraham and Isaac*, again with Pears and the composer, remained unissued at the time but achieved CD release in 2001 (Decca 468 811-2).

She also sang at Covent Garden (*Orpheus* in 1961) and recorded widely, including Mahler's symphonies and vocal works with Bernard Haitink, Jascha Horenstein and Rafael Kubelik.

Lyndon Jenkins, FRMS President

Neglected Tchaikovsky

Tchaikovsky composed six symphonies in addition to the *Manfred* Symphony. He had attempted another but abandoned it as not being worthwhile, except for the first movement which he considered as being material for a third piano concerto of one movement only. Subsequently, musicologists completed the symphony – the Seventh – and the piano concerto using the composer's material. My point here is to express my annoyance that those works are rarely heard on the radio. However, other incomplete works such as Mahler's Tenth and Elgar's Third are regularly performed. As Tchaikovsky is such a popular composer, I am left wondering why this should be.

Brian Smith, treasurer Croydon RMS

Central Region's 2013 Music Day cancelled

As affiliates in the Central Region already know, the planned Music Day on the theme 'Aspects of English Music and Music Making' had to be cancelled at short notice. Mick Birchall, the Regional secretary and (more importantly) the cook for the event, was admitted to hospital as an emergency with acute jaundice. Fortunately, the root cause of the jaundice proved to be a liver infection rather than the liver cancer initially suspected. Mick apologises for the disappointment that this caused, and expresses his gratitude for all the many get-well messages he received. As he says, music lovers really are very nice people indeed.

Most of these messages were received at home after discharge, not surprisingly since he was in four different wards over the eight days. Sincere thanks and compliments are due to Regional chairman Allan Child for his prompt communication of the situation to affiliates in the Region.

The event has been rescheduled to take place on Saturday **April 12th 2014** at the same venue with the same theme and presenters. Societies in the Central Region will be (or may have already been) mailed in the usual way. It is hoped that all those who booked for the original date, and possibly some others, will be able to attend.

West Surrey Region's 50th Annual Reunion

The Region (which includes the Music Societies of Guildford, Godalming, Bookham and Haslemere) will be celebrating their 50th Annual Reunion on

Saturday 12th April 2014

at

St Catherine's Hall, Chestnut Avenue, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 4HF

The event will begin promptly at 2.00 pm, with a recital by the **Waterden String Quartet**.

This will be followed by a buffet tea with wine/fruit juice and a 50th Anniversary celebration cake.

The cost of the event will be £5 per person.
Anyone wishing to attend should contact:

Regional Secretary, Roger Saunders on 01428 605002
Or email: rogernsaunders@lineone.net

Numbers will be limited; last bookings by 1st April. Priority given to members of the four West Surrey societies

SOCIETY NEWS

Cardiff remembers Colin Dancer

It must have been in the late eighties that Colin Dancer became a member of Cardiff RMS, despite having a round trip of some 24 miles to travel each week to attend meetings. This was just one of the ways in which Colin demonstrated his dedication and loyalty to the Society. It surprised none of us to learn that Colin wanted to play an active role in the running of the Society and he was soon elected programme secretary, passing it on to new blood a few years later. It was, however, only a short period before he was back in office, this time as secretary, taking on even more responsibility in 2011 when he accepted the nomination for chairman of the FRMS.

Appreciating a wide range of music, Colin was invited to present programmes to several Societies within the Federation in addition to delivering a number of presentations in the Wynne Lloyd Series of annual lectures at St David's Hall, Cardiff. It was there that he was due to present his programme, 'Oratorio: From Bach to McCartney' on January 8th 2014. This programme was given by two of his friends and fellow members and was dedicated to Colin in recognition of the fine member and good friend we, at CRMS, have lost so suddenly.

Rowland Edwards, Cardiff RMS

Sad loss at Burgess Hill

With the death of Geoffrey Wren at the age of 83 on 30th August 2013, the Burgess Hill Music Society lost one of its staunchest members of some 40 years. 18 of these he served as secretary and latterly as annual accounts examiner. A professional railwayman and inveterate traveller, his quick wit and wide knowledge, not only of music, will be sorely missed. He served this Society well and was a great supporter of the local Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra and, from his home town, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra.

Alan Southwell, secretary

The Sound Of Surprise: Jazz at Ulverston

In 1989, when a few local jazz enthusiasts got together casually to listen to one another's records in an upstairs room of an Ulverston antiques shop, none of them considered what they were starting. But now, in 2014, we're delighted still to be alive and well, and celebrating the 25th birthday of the Ulverston Jazz Appreciation Society. As one of the cheerful survivors of those days says: 'We all agreed then that, however much we liked jazz, it was much more fun enjoying its great sounds in the company of like-minded enthusiasts than listening alone at home. We could exchange ideas, experience new sounds, new bands, enjoy music that we'd never considered before. And that's the way we still feel today.'

Jazz is indeed the Sound of Surprise, full of energy, variety, oddity. There's trad, swing, bebop, modern, *avant-garde*, and endless variations in between to please music lovers of all tastes. If you've heard only a few of its sounds on the radio or in TV

ads, you'll be amazed at its infinite byways. If you're already knowledgeable, you'll still be startled when you listen to other enthusiasts' tastes and ideas. And at club meetings you'll always find a genuine welcome. As another member recalls: 'When I moved into the area 15 years ago, I didn't know anyone, but by chance heard about the club and was invited to a meeting. I was warmly welcomed and immediately felt at home and have been a regular ever since. And though I was already a long-time jazz fan, I can honestly say that at every meeting I hear something new and attractive. It's continuing to be a most rewarding experience – lucky me!'

See www.ulverstonjazz.co.uk

Don Samways, press officer

Another successful year at West Wickham

The West Wickham Recorded Music Society in the London Borough of Bromley has enjoyed another very successful year in 2013 with not only the regular meetings, but also concert and opera visits, a musical holiday to South Wales and a weekend in Eastbourne.

Our annual coffee morning in February, with sales of CDs and books, realised over £250 towards Society funds. March saw the annual buffet-supper and concert held each year in the Adams Hall of

FRMS Scottish Group Music Day

Saturday 10th May 2014

DUNDEE UNIVERSITY CHAPLAINCY CENTRE,
University of Dundee
Cross Row
Dundee DD1 4HN

The principal speaker will be Richard Chester, MBE, former principal flautist with the Scottish National Orchestra (now RSNO), a founder member of Cantilena, and director of the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland. Presently, Richard is Chairman of the World Federation of Amateur Orchestras; Board Member of the National Youth Choir of Scotland, the Lochaber Music School Trust and the Scottish School Orchestra Trust. His talk will be based on his own experiences with an emphasis on orchestral music.

The Centre will be open from midday with live music provided by young local musicians.
Conference Fee £12 to include buffet lunch.

A detailed programme will be posted on the FRMS website as soon as details are finalised. Further information from:
John Maidment, Hon. Secretary, FRMS Scottish Group; 01241 853017

Email: johnmaidment@msn.com

Bencurtis Park. The concert was performed by a duo – Gonzalo Acosta (violin) and Caroline Jaya-Ratnam (piano). Gonzalo is the leader of the ENO orchestra at the Coliseum and a BBC Young Musician adjudicator. Caroline has given recitals at Wigmore Hall and the Royal Festival Hall. Their programme included Bach's *Sarabande* in D minor, Wieniawski's *Scherzo-Tarantella* and Saint-Saëns's *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*.

Our annual Musical Weekend, the 30th in the series, was held in late April in the Imperial Hotel, Eastbourne, the theme chosen being A Musical Journey Around Europe. This was based on composers travelling widely on the Continent and music written relating to the countries they visited or being inspired by a different culture. The music covered Bruch's *Scottish Fantasia*, Brahms's Hungarian Dances No. 5 and 7 based on his early tours of Hungary with Edouard Reményi, and Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* Overture, which was the result of his ship having to shelter from a storm in a Norwegian fjord. We also heard excerpts from Bizet's *Roma* Symphony, the product of his winning of the Prix de Rome, and Elgar's *From the Bavarian Highlands*. The weekend ended with Rossini's *Il viaggio a Reims* where characters from seven countries entertain each other by singing their respective National Anthems. This was a DVD presentation onto a large screen.

The main event of the year was the musical holiday which included a visit to the Cardiff Summer Proms, held in the fine St David's Hall. A six-day tour by coach took in four of the evening Proms, with excursions around the area during the day. The first concert featured the Orchestra of Welsh National Opera in songs from West End shows. Owain Arwel Hughes conducted the RPO in the second and third concerts. Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No. 2 with Peter Donohoe as soloist, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espagnol*, and Saint-Saëns's 'Organ' Symphony featured in the former. In the latter, Tine Thing Helseth was soloist in the Haydn Trumpet Concerto, followed by Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Hughes again conducted the WNO Orchestra in the Last Night Prom featuring Arnold's *Four Cornish Dances*, the overture to Verdi's *La Forza del Destino* and Coates's *Knightsbridge March*, ending with a potpourri of songs of Wales.

A Request to Society Secretaries

Occasionally, members tell us that they rarely, or never, get to see the copy of *Bulletin* that is sent to their Society. We would encourage all secretaries to kindly ensure their Society's copy is distributed as widely as possible among its membership.

Even better, why not subscribe to additional copies? Please contact Allan Child whose details are on Page 30.

We explored Cardiff, including a tour of the Welsh National Assembly, the Millennium Centre and Opera House, and a boat trip around Cardiff Bay. We also visited the mighty Chepstow Castle and the beautiful setting of Tintern Abbey, the fairy tale Castell Coch, and a ride on the Brecon mountain railway.

Our traditional Musical Day Out started with a River Thames cruise for nearly 60 members. We disembarked at the Royal Festival Hall for a Philharmonia performance conducted by Yuri Temirkarnov. We heard Rossini's *Barber of Seville* Overture followed by the superb soloist, Maria João Pires, playing Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 20, K466. Sibelius's nationalistic Symphony No. 2 concluded a memorable day.

Three further events were fitted into the year. We visited the BBC Proms to hear Gergiev conduct the LSO in Borodin's Symphony No. 2, followed by Glazunov's Piano Concerto No. 2 with Daniil Trifonov, a recent Tchaikovsky Prize-winner, as soloist. Ravel's orchestration of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* brought the concert to a rousing finish. In October we managed, once again, to get tickets for a Glyndebourne on Tour production: Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore* conducted by Pablo González. Adina was sung by Joëlle Harvey, Nemorino was played by Christopher Tiesi and Riccardo Novaro was Dr Dulcamara in a lively, traditional production. Our final visit of the year was to the Royal Albert Hall to hear Handel's *Messiah* performed by a choir of some 500 – a stirring and moving experience leading up to the festive season.

Our regular fortnightly meetings have included guest presenter Terry Barfoot on Dvořák and the Czech tradition, Peter Lymbery (former vice-chairman of the Torbay Weekend) speaking about The Mighty Five, and freelance author Peter Avis on the many versions of Handel's *Messiah*. Well-attended and enjoyable Christmas events ended a year full of activity. Our membership remains at just over 100.

Phillip Cox, chairman

Spalding Music Club – 67 wonderful years

Spalding Music Club was formed when Mr A Geoffrey Firth, originally from Glossop, Derbyshire and having served in the Fleet Air Arm during World War II, joined the surveyors department of Spalding Urban District Council whose offices were in Short Street. Geoff Firth soon made friends locally and called a meeting in the surveyors' office on the 20th November 1947. Also present were Mr Wilson, Mr Hopcroft and Miss Toulson while Mrs Guy and Miss Egar (pictured below) were invited to serve on the Committee. The membership fee was to be 5/- per season of six months, and 1/- per musical session. The concluding sentence in the original rules of Spalding MC was: 'May I remind you that the Club's meetings are to be informal and sociable. We do not favour cliques or stiff and starchiness'.

These principles are still very evident at our present meetings. The Club also became affiliated to the Federation of Recorded Music Societies. Some of the earliest meetings were held in the Church Cote, Priory Road (now demolished), and at a room in Ayscoughfee Hall, Pacey's Cafe in Red Lion Street, and various other venues.

Mr Stanford Robinson, conductor of various BBC orchestras, consented to become Club President. Gramophone records at the time were on 78rpm discs and one symphony could occupy 10 sides, resulting in many breaks in the music when heard in its entirety. Music played at the earliest meeting I have evidence of (2nd June 1948) included the Borodin *Polovtsian Dances*, Mozart's Horn Concerto No. 4, *The Banks of Green Willow* by Butterworth, and Mahler's Symphony No. 4.



Marcia Egar was a founder member when Spalding Music Club was formed 67 years ago. Here, to mark her long and loyal service, she is presented with a certificate by Mick Birchall, secretary of Hinckley RMS and an FRMS committee member.

Spalding is now the last remaining recorded music club in Lincolnshire. We have a group of very loyal members and would welcome any person interested in good music. Please come along to any of our meetings held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 2pm, from September to March, at the Ivo Day Centre in Albion Street. There is no pressure to join and you can always come as a visitor to see if our meetings are of interest. You are assured of a warm welcome.

Keith Dobney, secretary

Torbay Musical Weekend 2013

The 44th Musical Weekend at Torquay was a turning point (10% increase in members attending) in the long-running series of inspiring breaks for those who like their music *à la carte*. The setting of the Palace Hotel combines *haute cuisine*, home comforts and like-minded, free-spirited souls with superb music and erudite enlightenment from enthusiastic experts. This year, perhaps more than most, the programme content was broader but not way out.

We started the weekend with a tribute to our former President, the perfect gentleman Bob Hardcastle, by our new President Peter Gammond and Peter Lymbery, both of whom had travelled to the Weekend with Bob since the founding of the Friends of Torbay.

We have two late night spots for night owls and our first presentation by Mike Price was a well-

expressed and illustrated appreciation of the benefits of vinyl, using top drawer equipment from Rega. Saturday's night spot was devoted to a very stirring introduction to traditional jazz by Ted Pezzaro, so good in fact that some stayed on for a further hour. It is instructive to find that so many actually like and want to hear more of the traditional, rather than the 'head-banging' variety.

A particular highlight of the Weekend was the presentation given by Tony Scotland, a former BBC Radio 3 broadcaster, whose gift in the use of language and intimate grasp of his subject made the private world of Lennox Berkeley a gripping story. The list of other contributors is a *Who's Who* of talented presenters. Ian Lowes gave an illustrated talk on the French horn that was graphic and so informative that it made one's understanding of what goes into producing the heavenly sounds of variety and intensity so much more exciting.

The variety of presentations is apparent when one considers Andrew Keener, an independent recording producer with inside insight to many top names; Dr Natasha Loges with deep understanding of Wagner and his influences; and film and concert composing from Richard Blackford. Chris de Souza showed how Britten got the headlines but George Lloyd, his contemporary, was similar but on the lines of Verdi.



Ian Lowes talks about the French horn

Our last afternoon presentation came from Rod Dunk, composer, arranger and conductor, giving a selection of his favourite music and anecdotes that proved to be very well chosen and enjoyed by all.

There was a delightful live performance of a varied selection of music by Syrinx with Holly Cook on flute and Tamara Young on harp on Saturday evening, whilst our closing live musical experience

on Sunday was some light banter in the style of Victor Borge followed by some brilliant virtuoso piano playing from Nigel Clayton.

The Weekend proved to be one of the most enjoyable of recent years judging by the feedback from the Friends, and if you have not been to a Weekend then you have missed a treat. Why not put a note in your diary now that 14th – 17th November 2014 will be an occasion not to be missed. (See fot.org.uk).

John Isaac, chairman

Lewisham half century

1963 witnessed some momentous events. April saw the end of one of Britain's worst winters, the Beatles released their first album, *Please Please Me*, which soon topped the charts, Philby and Profumo were exposed, the Beeching report was published, and in August, Buckinghamshire played host to the Great Train Robbery.

Well, not quite as momentous perhaps but nevertheless significant to a small band of south-east London enthusiasts, the autumn of that year saw the birth of the Lewisham Recorded Music Society, launched in a local branch library in the Catford suburbs. To celebrate that founding day, some 30 or so members and friends came together on December 5th at the Society's regular venue, appropriately named the Jubilee Room, in the St Laurence Centre, Catford.



Vice-chairman Bernard Smith (left) and chairman Anthony Walker cut the celebration cake.

Chairman Tony Walker recalled that, back in 1963, many such groups were thriving under the banner of 'Gramophone Society'; Lewisham however looked to the future and from the beginning was a recorded music organisation. Born under the wing of the Local Authority's Library Service, and with assistance from nearby Dulwich and Forest Hill GS, the club met at Bromley Road Library, strategically

placed between Catford bus garage and the Robertson's Jam factory! A great attraction for members was the stereophonic equipment, including two Garrard 301 turntables provided by the Council. Few could boast such riches at the time. Our first secretary was a library administrator, Audrey Rhys-Tyler, who will be remembered affectionately by many from the Hoddesdon and Fitzwilliam College weekends. If a presenter hadn't a required disc, it was often ordered by Audrey and placed into general stock after the programme. It's a great pity that some



Society member Reg Grainger greets Teresa Cahill.

traditions appear to have died! The Society nevertheless went from strength to strength, encompassing evenings of Morris dancing, Victorian and Edwardian musical boxes, cylinder and early flat-disc horn gramophones, and a pianola recital (in the adjacent church with the indefatigable Rex Lawson). This is not to mention an explanation and guided visit to the wonderful collection of musical instruments at the Horniman Museum in Forest Hill.

After some years, however, our base changed and, in the early nineties, we moved a few hundred yards north to the St Laurence Centre where LRMS has now celebrated its 30th, 40th and 50th birthdays.

The chairman drew his remarks to a close with grateful thanks to all the members who had assisted in the celebration. Tony also gave a warm welcome to all those present, from neighbouring Croydon, Epsom and Orpington Societies, as well as special invited guests soprano Teresa Cahill, composer Robert Saxton, record producer Andrew Keener and broadcaster and sleeve-note writer Peter Avis. He was then joined by Bernard Smith, the only other remaining founder member, to cut a celebratory cake.

Our sincere thanks must go to our local labels Hyperion and Meridian Records, as well as their more distant colleagues at Nimbus and Vivat, for their kindness and generosity in providing many of the recordings. This is a genuinely heart-warming gesture given the difficulties of the present economic situation. LRMS continues and will, in its modest way, continue to contribute to enlightenment and entertainment, doubtless witnessing ever more significant events and unfolding history in its wake.

Ian Bailey, LRMS committee member •

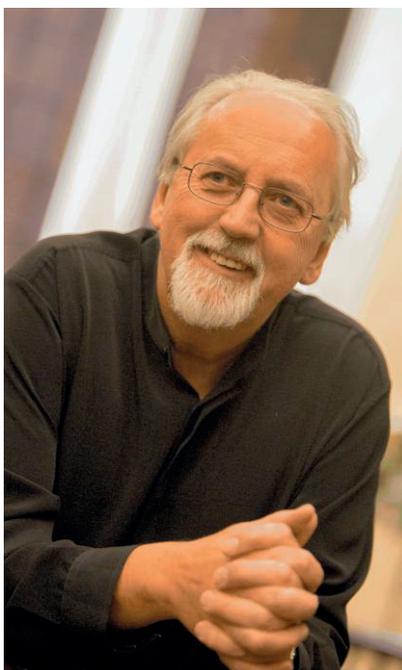
FRMS Music Weekend Daventry



**May 9th – 11th
2014**
*Daventry Court
Hotel*



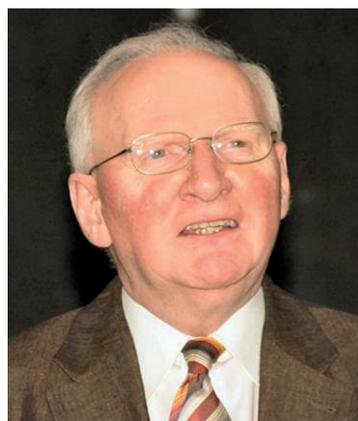
MICHAEL KENNEDY CBE
Strauss at 150: 'A Hero's Life'
One of the foremost experts on the subject assesses Richard Strauss's position among the pantheon of the great romantic composers



JEFFREY SKIDMORE
Founder and artistic director of early music ensemble Ex Cathedra



TAMSIN WALEY-COHEN
Acclaimed violinist in conversation



LYNDON JENKINS
FRMS President

... and much more, including former Gramophone editor Malcolm Walker on the history of Abbey Road studios, and a live music recital.

Prices unchanged from last year. £172 per person (two people sharing). Single occupancy £194.

Conference fee £40 per person. Day visitors welcome.

Further details from Allan Child on 01332 332649

A first album, inspired by Delius and Gauguin, from violinist Midori Komachi

Violinist Midori Komachi has recorded her first album which has been inspired by her project 'Delius and Gauguin – a conversation', a programme of music expressing the exchanges between composers and artists. She is



accompanied by pianist and Steinway Artist, Simon Callaghan (pictured left with Midori). The three sonatas for violin and piano – the third Sonata by Delius, Debussy's in G minor, and Ravel's in G major – are characterised by their contrasting sense of languid impressionism, complexity of musical language, and extravert jazz-inspired immediacy. Midori's sense of freshness and intuitive approach to each of the different technical demands presented in these works offer a wonderfully contrasting programme which any music-lover would want to have in their collection.

The context of the album is based on the exchanges between the composer Frederick Delius and painter Paul Gauguin, who met in Paris in 1894. A circle of artists expanded around them – composers, painters and writers, including Ravel, Munch, Rodin, Ibsen, Hamsun and Grieg. The works which are at the heart of the

connection between these artists are Delius's Third Sonata and Gauguin's painting *Nevermore*, which depicts a naked reclining Tahitian girl and which Delius purchased from Gauguin in 1898. The picture was displayed in the composer's music room and became his most treasured possession. 'I was particularly interested in the way Delius's harmony begins to evoke darker, mysterious colours after this period', says Midori. 'At the same time, Gauguin's palette starts to create expressive colours like music, as he put it: "Colour is the language of the listening eye." This is the concept of the album, and also formed the way I approached these works.'

Colours of the Heart is available now as a CD and download from Amazon, iTunes and through Midori's website www.midorikomachi.com where tour dates are also listed. **Karen Fletcher** ●

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‘Sounding the Century’ with Terry Barfoot & Ian Lowes

The 20th century covers the widest stylistic diversity in the musical repertory, and our weekend will explore the rich variety of experiences on offer. The event is designed as an informal house party, and the music examples will be provided on excellent equipment.

Tuesday 1st–Thursday 3rd July: Burley Manor Hotel, New Forest

Burley Manor is a splendid country house hotel set in the heart of the New Forest, in its own grounds. For nearly 200 years, Burley was a Royal Manor, and the current building dates mainly from 1852. The facilities are particularly well appointed.

‘Romanticism in Music & Poetry’ with Terry Barfoot & Karen Hewitt

We will explore a varied and representative selection of poetry and music associated with **Romanticism**, with illustrations on excellent hi-fi and visual equipment. The featured poets and composers will include Wordsworth, Byron and Coleridge, Berlioz, Wagner, Liszt and Tchaikovsky.

Price: £275.00 per person (twin/double rooms), £299.00 (single rooms) to include all meals, wine with dinner, course fees and accommodation.

For further information and booking contact:

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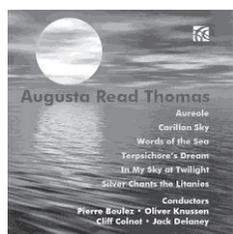


REVIEWS

CDs reviewed by Tony Haywood and Thelma Shaw

AUGUSTA READ THOMAS Selected Works for Orchestra

Various artists and orchestras

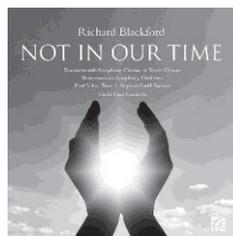
Nimbus Alliance NI 6258 79:50

This very generous CD showcases the work of American composer Augusta Read Thomas, whose teachers include Yale's Jacob Druckman and our own Oliver Knussen. She is beginning to make real inroads into the mainstream concert repertoire and discs such as this can only help her cause. It opens in grand style with her most recent work *Aureole*, a fizzing curtain raiser whose punchy rhythms and brass fanfares recall Copland at his most outgoing, maybe spiced with bits of her older contemporary Christopher Rouse. Her admiration for Alban Berg is evident in parts of the following piece, *Words of the Sea*, a 17-minute symphonic suite inspired by a Wallace Stevens poem.

A thornier, more modernist language can be discerned in the miniature French horn concerto *Silver Chants the Litanies*, as it can in the spiky little chamber orchestra work *Terpsichore's Dream*, where the propulsive rhythms and instrumental colour recall Knussen himself. *Carillon Sky* is another miniature concertante work, this time with solo violin. Finally, and in many ways most impressive, is *In My Sky at Twilight*, a setting of Neruda and Sappho. The liner notes aptly describe this as a 'dream sequence with changing moods and colours', and it is expertly performed by Christine Brandes and none other than the Chicago Symphony under Pierre Boulez – some measure of how seriously Read's music is now taken. Other conductors here include Knussen, Cliff Colnot and Jack Delaney, and the ensembles range from the Chicago SO to various top grade university ensembles. Given the wide variety of sources, the sound is remarkably consistent and top quality, serving this most interesting composer very well indeed. *AH*

RICHARD BLACKFORD Not in Our Time

Bournemouth SO, Chorus, Youth Chorus & soloists, Gavin Carr (conductor)

Nimbus Alliance NI 6161 54:13

At the 2013 Torbay Music Weekend the eminent British composer Richard Blackford gave an illustrated talk on his work, including his third major oratorio, *Not in Our Time*, given its first recording by Wyastone on the Nimbus label. *Not in Our Time* is a breathtaking and blatant plea for pacifism in a torn world beset with violence, opening with a statement on the global aftershock of the Twin Towers in New York in 2001.

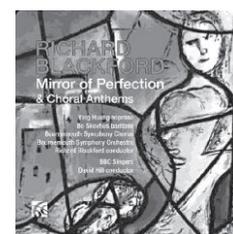
Other world conflicts covering a thousand years are featured in the following five parts. In his comprehensive notes, Blackford says: 'the texts deliberately juxtapose speeches and poems on holy war and divinely sanctioned violence ... from the First Crusade to 9/11.' The opening cello theme builds up to

strident orchestral unrest followed by tenor and baritone solos, the tenor singing the Christian text and the baritone the Islamic. Blackford contrasts each inflammatory passage with Hilda Doolittle's moving poem *Not in our time O Lord, the ploughshare for the sword*. This powerful choral and orchestral masterpiece goes beyond the bounds of pure entertainment and its message needs to be heard. *TMS*

RICHARD BLACKFORD Mirror of Perfection and Choral Anthems

Bournemouth Sinfonietta & Bournemouth Symphony Chorus, Richard Blackford (conductor)

BBC Singers, David Hill (conductor)

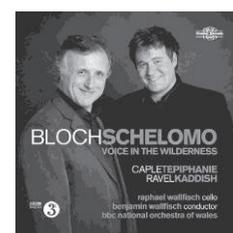
Nimbus Alliance NI 6205 66:41

A complete contrast to the *Not in Our Time* CD is Blackford's music on the album entitled *Mirror of Perfection*. This is a beautiful collection of seven canticles and five choral anthems. The canticles are settings of previously unknown poems by St Francis of Assisi, while biblical text and William Blake's poem *On another's sorrow* provide the lyrics for the anthems. Collectively these exquisite works bring a heart-lifting message of hope in the midst of despair.

Blackford's two CDs are a perfect foil for each other and I, personally, feel that having listened to one it is important to listen to the other. *TMS*

BLOCH Voice in the Wilderness; Schelomo**CAPLET Epiphanie RAVEL Kaddish**

Raphael Wallfisch (cello), BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Benjamin Wallfisch (conductor)

Nimbus Alliance NI 5913 72:45

Ernest Bloch's Hebraic Rhapsody *Schelomo* is by far his most popular work and is in the repertoire of all the great cellists, past and present. It's not hard to understand why: the intoxicating blend of kaleidoscopic orchestration and intense, yearning cello lines pulls in the listener and holds them through a wide variety of mood changes. The work is meat and drink to the father-son partnership of Raphael and Ben Wallfisch, and the latter must especially be commended for the wonderful, perfectly judged support he gives his father. The much less well-known *Voice in the Wilderness* shares many of *Schelomo's* qualities: a series of six 'meditations' fashioned into a sort of symphonic poem with cello obbligato, where intense introspection rubs shoulders with joyous rapture, all thrillingly conveyed by these artists.

The *Epiphanie* (1923) by André Caplet is new to me but fits with the other pieces like a glove; there's even a hint of Bloch's *Wilderness* in places. The weird and wonderful inspiration here is the Adoration of the Magi and birth of Christ – in an Ethiopian setting! Caplet's orchestral gifts were admired by Debussy so it goes without saying that there are some evocative and ear-tickling sonorities in this late work. I especially like the

excitingly rhythmic finale, with its Holstian five-in-a-bar pulse, and the very virtuosic cello part is brought off with aplomb.

Ravel's little *Mélodie hébraïque, Kaddisch*, an arrangement of one of his Jewish folk songs, rounds off a stimulating release. It's not without severe competition, especially the two Bloch works, but in outstanding sound and with excellent liner notes, it's well worth investigating. *AH*

BEETHOVEN Piano Sonatas Vol. 4 (nos. 11, 18, 28)

Angela Hewitt (piano)

Hyperion CDA 67974 72:28



Angela Hewitt's slowly unfolding Beethoven sonata cycle for Hyperion has now reached volume 4. As with previous releases, she prefers the 'mix'n'match' approach rather than any chronological or stylistic pairings, something favoured by other

artists such as Jonathan Biss, who also has an ongoing cycle for Onyx. So here we have the B flat Sonata, Op. 22, the E flat, Op. 31, No. 1 and the A major, Op. 101, a programme that neatly encompasses Beethoven's three periods.

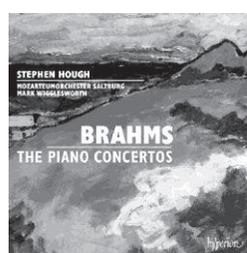
The first thing I have to say is that the recorded sound is exemplary, with Hewitt's preferred Fazioli grand captured in all its rich, tonal glory by the engineers. I admit this is the first disc of Hewitt's Beethoven cycle that has come my way, but I have been an admirer of her playing for many years, particularly her Bach, so it's no surprise that one thing immediately apparent is the clarity of passagework and scrupulous attention to even the tiniest details of phrasing and dynamics. I've rarely heard the hairpins and *sforzandos* of Op. 22's first movement as acutely observed. The downside is that this can become a mannerism or simply seem too fussy, but Hewitt is too thoughtful an artist for this to happen.

The great Op. 101 Sonata finds perhaps her best playing here, with tenderness, warmth and a dazzling fugue. She does tend to play the slow movements very slowly, and some of the more turbulent sections in these sonatas might benefit from greater abandon, the sort you hear from Kovacevich or the young Barenboim. Perhaps the closest comparison that springs to mind is Richard Goode, and his Nonesuch cycle is one of the finest in the catalogue. Ultimately, if Hewitt's urbane, tasteful readings are to your liking, you can't go wrong here. If you prefer a more 'unbuttoned' approach, look elsewhere. *AH*

BRAHMS The Piano Concertos

Stephen Hough (piano), Mozarteumorchester Salzburg, Mark Wigglesworth (conductor)

Hyperion CDA 67961 [2 discs] 97:53



Having loved these two great concertos since childhood, my shelves are bulging with a variety of recordings from over the years. A quick browse revealed: Curzon and Szell; Ashkenazy with Haitink; Gilels and Jochum; Brendel and Abbado; Kovacevich and

Sawallisch. Finally, and in many ways most pertinently, Stephen Hough and Andrew Davis from 1990, versions still to be reckoned with to my ears. Twenty-some years on and Hough has chosen interesting partners for his new Hyperion recordings, which, despite some minor reservations, are worthy successors.

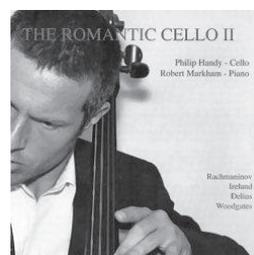
In the D minor's thrilling opening *tutti*, Wigglesworth is firmly in the Szell camp, with plenty of forward momentum and crisply articulated trills. Hough's piano entry is as magical as it should be, and broadly speaking his interpretation has not altered a great deal over the years. As anyone who knows his Rachmaninov concertos for this same label will realise, he is not afraid to take risks with rubato and little inflections here and there, but these never interfere with the shaping of the whole, and this D minor is as exciting as any in the catalogue,

The B flat concerto is even more successful, with Hough and Wigglesworth more relaxed yet never losing sight of the longer-term goals. The Mozarteumorchester is new to me, and if I have a reservation it is that if you expect string tone like the Berlin Phil or Concertgebouw, you won't get it here. Instead, there's a touch of period performance about this playing, with minimal vibrato and clean, clear textures. It doesn't detract from the enjoyment, and the strings make up in suppleness and agility what they may lack in sheer weight or sonority. The recording faithfully captures everything and as a two-for-one this is desirable. It may not displace your longtime favourites but is worthy to sit alongside them. *AH*

RACHMANINOV; DELIUS; IRELAND; WOODGATES The Romantic Cello Vol. 2

Philip Handy (cello); Robert Markham (piano)

VIF Records VRCD082 61:33



This is an enterprising programme from two artists new to me on record. The big item is the Rachmaninov G minor Cello Sonata, completed in 1901, so very close to his famous Piano Concerto No. 2. The same sense of brooding melancholy

is present, and the cello proves the ideal instrument for the composer to spin those long, soulful lines that we all love so much. Handy and Markham make an excellent job of it, balancing the exciting abandon of the scherzo with the intense lyricism of the glorious slow movement. The outer movements yield nothing in virtuosity to the more famous accounts of this wonderful work that litter the catalogue.

The other major item here is the John Ireland Cello Sonata of 1923. It's a rhapsodic piece, full of turbulence and occasional anguish, possibly reflecting Ireland's personal circumstances. Hints of Debussy can be glimpsed here and there, but with its striking finale this is a work well worth getting to know, and is played here for all its musical worth.

The two short fillers include the Delius Serenade from *Hassan*, a lilting encore piece, and the simple, affecting Serenade for solo cello by the young composer Benjamin Woodgates (b.1986) which takes as its inspiration a short Burns poem. The recording is slightly bass light but captures the artists clearly and truthfully.

AH •

FRMS Presenters Panel

Societies are invited to recommend successful presenters for inclusion in this section. Please note, there is a modest charge of £10 per entry per annum for presenters who charge a fee (as distinct from reasonable expenses). A free entry on the FRMS website is also offered. Officers and committee members of the FRMS are experienced presenters and – if not listed here – can be contacted at the addresses at the back of the Bulletin. This supplement is intended to be a general guide to programme planning. Reasonable care is taken to ensure accuracy of the details given but neither the FRMS committee nor the editor can accept responsibility for any circumstances subsequent on the use of the supplement. Thanks go to Allan Child who maintains this list.

LORD ABERDARE – The Berlioz Society

16 Beverley Road, London SW13 0LX
Tel: 020 8876 8398; mobile 07768 397190
email: alastair@aberdares.co.uk

Talks with visual and music illustrations include Berlioz from B to Z: an overview of the composer's life and works; Berlioz in England: his five visits from 1847-55; The Musical Madhouse: on my translation of Berlioz's book *Les Grottesques de la Musique*; Berlioz's songs for voice and piano. Expenses only; willing to travel.

KENNETH ALWYN, FRAM

Horelands, West Chiltington Lane, Broadford Bridge, Billingshurst RH14 9EA

Tel: 01403 741348 mobile 07403 892415;
email: FilomusicUK@aol.com

website: www.impulse-music.co.uk/kenneth-alwyn.htm
Conductor of recordings with the LSO, LPO, RPO, Philharmonia and Bournemouth SO;
1998 Gramophone award winner.

Talks include: The Hiawatha Man – Bryn Terfel as Coleridge-Taylor's hero, A Baton at the Royal Opera House, Friday Night is Music Night – is Auntie still breaking records?; Tchaikovsky – the Myth.

Reasonable expenses and accomodation (where applicable) negotiable.

ROGER APPS

2 Spring Meadows, Upper Studley, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 0HD

Tel: 01225 768098; email: roger.apps@thefrms.co.uk
FRMS vice-chairman; Joint Founder and co-chairman FRMS West Region; a founder member of the Dvořák Society of Great Britain.

Recent programmes include: British Women Composers; 20th -Century American Pianists; Czech Composers Abroad; Movement in Music; Spillran - The Swedish Four; Inspired by the Sussex Downs. Others upon request.

No fee: minimal expenses outside immediate area.

TERRY BARFOOT

25 Mulberry Lane, Cosham, Portsmouth PO6 2QU
Tel: 0239 238 3356

email: terrybarfoot@artsinresidence.co.uk

Author, contributor to leading music periodicals and to the New Grove; presenter/lecturer at conferences and other musical events, many organised by his own company, *Arts in Residence*.

Reviewer for the Musicweb-International website.
Regular presenter at societies in southern England.

Recent presentations include studies of Dvořák, Elgar, Mozart and Richard Strauss.

Repertoire list on request.

GEOFF BATEMAN ACIB Cefa

34 Frizley Gardens, Bradford, W. Yorks BD9 4LY
Tel: 01274 783285

email: geoffbateman@blueyonder.co.uk

Chairman of Huddersfield RMS and secretary of former

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Tel 01462 434318 Mobile 07703 584152

email: Boughtontrust@btinternet.com

website: www.rutlandboughtonmusictrust.org.uk

Under the title Rutland Boughton: Beyond The Immortal Hour, Ian gives talks on the life and music of his once famous grandfather. Expenses only.

ALLAN CHILD

12 Highfield Road, Derby, DE22 1GZ

Tel: 01332 332649 email: allan.child@thefrms.co.uk

FRMS committee member and Central Region chairman.

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Fee £60 plus negotiated travel expenses.

THE DELIUS SOCIETY

Speakers from the Delius Society or Delius Trust are available to give presentations. No fee, expenses only.

Contact one of the following or see the Society's website, www.delius.org.uk

Martin Lee-Browne, Chester House, Fairford, Glos GL7 4AD. Tel 01285 712102;

email: chairman@thedeliusociety.org.uk

Lionel Carley, Old School House, Sheepscombe, Stroud, Glos. GL6 7RH Tel: 01452 812735; email:

l.carley@yahoo.co.uk

Mike Green, 4 Caxton Close, Beeston Regis, Sheringham, Norfolk NR26 8SY. Tel: 07833 300450

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email: secretary@dvorak-society.org;

website: www.dvorak-society.org

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GL5 2RP Tel: 01453 882091

North West: Mrs Pat Hurst

60 Homewood Rd., Northenden, Manchester M22 4DW.

Tel: 0161 998 4404

East Anglian: Robin Self

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Tel: 01728 621577

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17 Lonsdale Avenue, Cosham, Portsmouth PO6 2PU

Tel 02392 389410

South Western: John Hammond

19 Carleton Road, London N7 0QZ Tel: 0207 609 2787

Yorkshire and North East: Rev Mark Seccombe

39 Marlborough Road, Town Moor, Doncaster DN2 5DF

Tel: 01302 321505

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8 Gloucester Place, Desford, Leics LE9 8HQ

Scotland: Sharron Bassett

9 George Street, Dunfermline, Fife KY11 4TQ.

Tel: 01383 727491

Dr CHRISTOPHER FIFIELD

MusB GRSM ARMC M ARCO

80 Wolfington Road, London SE27 0RQ

Tel: 0208 761 3600; mobile 07752 273558

email: cgffifield@btinternet.com

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DR DAVID FLIGG

Leeds College of Music

3 Quarry Hill, Leeds LS2 7PD

Tel: 0113 222 3423

email: d.fligg@lcm.ac.uk

website: www.impulse-music.co.uk/fligg.htm

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website: www.talkingformydinner.vpweb.co.uk

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15 David Avenue, Wickford, Essex SS11 7BG

email: jimjprmusic@gmail.com; website:

http://seenandheard-international.com/tag/pritchard-jim/

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MISS JOY PURITZ

149E Holland Rd, London W14 8AS

Tel: 020 7602 4187; email: jepuritz@btinternet.com

Granddaughter of Elisabeth Schumann and translator of her biography (written by the singer's son, Gerd Puritz). Illustrated presentation entitled *A Portrait of the Soprano, Elisabeth Schumann* has been well received by the Friends of Covent Garden, the National Sound Archive and many recorded music societies.

Fee negotiable.

PETER WALDEN

2 The Drive, Colletts Green, Powick, Worcester

WR2 4SA.

Tel: 01905 830592 Mobile 07890 728556

email: peterwalden@hotmail.co.uk

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The above listings, subsequent updates, and much more can be found on the Federation's website: **www.thefrms.co.uk**

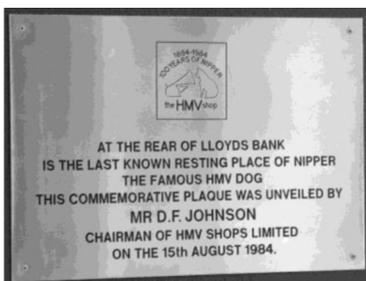
THE FINAL RESTING PLACE OF NIPPER, THE HMV DOG

By Harold Hughes

The AUTUMN 2013 EDITION of *Bulletin* contained a most informative article on the origins of Francis Barraud's painting of Nipper the dog listening to a gramophone, which became the world-famous HMV trademark. The editor used Berlioz Society routes to ask me, as a resident of Kingston-upon-Thames – the last-known resting place of Nipper – to research anything that was known about the exact location. As mentioned in that article, the family of the artist went to live in Kingston, moving there from Liverpool, and the dog belonged to them. So I set to work trying to find what records existed of the family and their home and where the remains of the dog might be. I contacted Kingston Museum, Kingston Historical Centre, and Kingston newspaper archives. At one point I also contacted the archivist of Lloyds Bank, for reasons which will become apparent.

The Historical Centre proved to be the best source of information and in fact they maintain a file of all Nipper-related cuttings and records. I will ensure that copies of *Bulletin* also find a proper home there, particularly in view of the help their librarian gave me. From their newspaper cuttings (not always identifiable as to date and/or source) a letter from Peter Wymer, who was Press Officer of HMV in the 1970s, confirmed that Nipper had died where the family then lived – 77 Clarence Street. He had been buried at the base of a mulberry tree in the garden of the house which was eventually acquired by Lloyds Bank. Clarence Street has subsequently been redeveloped and the locality is now a modern town street, relatively featureless architecturally.

The garden of number 77 had first become the car park for the original bank, and when I visited the site I found there was a branch still there. When I explained to the staff what I was looking for and why, they were immediately helpful and showed me to a plaque on a rear wall which commemorated Nipper's last resting place. From the picture of this plaque it can be seen



that it was unveiled in 1984 by Mr DF Johnson, then chairman of HMV Shops Ltd. The plaque occupies a thoroughly unromantic place at the back of commercial buildings. I was then shown another, which was unveiled at the same time, at the front of the branch, which draws attention to the one at the rear.

So, is this really the spot where Nipper was buried, or is it just a best approximation? To be honest, it's probably the latter. The only certainty is that poor Nipper's last resting place is certainly now under concrete or buildings, and its precise location could only be obtained by a proper surveyor's exercise informed by original drawings of Clarence Street and its houses.

But there is more of interest to record here. HMV's Peter Wymer had first seen reference to Nipper's burial site in *The Children's Newspaper* – remember that? – and had contacted Enid Barraud, the grand-niece of the artist. She first told him about Nipper's burial by the mulberry tree, the stump of which was still then identifiable. This must have been while the original house still remained. Mr Wymer then got Enid's and Lloyds Bank's permission to attempt an exhumation, even with the involvement of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons to supervise! The press was invited and it was widely reported. The car park was in regular use so they were given only two days, but sadly were unsuccessful. Both Mr Wymer and Enid Barraud were convinced that, had the search been widened a little and with more time, it would have succeeded.

A photocopy held in the Kingston Historical Centre appears to be of a two-page spread from an issue of *Gramophone*, annoyingly undated but possibly issued for the centenary of EMI and its antecedent companies. It recorded the history of Nipper and the trademark, and provided a photograph of the aforementioned mulberry tree stump. This picture is not good enough for reproduction here, but it was said to date from 1950.

Two snippets remain. The first concerns the dog itself. It was not named casually – it always exhibited the unwelcome habit of nipping at the legs of any passer-by who came too close! The second concerns the painting itself. In a clipping of a letter by a Mr George Drew of Manchester, published in August 1993, he points out that Barraud's original painting pictured Nipper sitting on top of a coffin. This was always edited out for subsequent trademark use, although it can be seen in the cover picture of the Autumn 2013 *Bulletin* – if you already know what you're looking for! To my mind this adds a different and perhaps additional sentimental aspect to the painting: a dog listening, sadly, to the voice of its recently dead master, through the workings of this strange new machine.

Dr Harold Hughes is a former administrator of the Berlioz Society and a chartered chemical engineer. •

This press cutting extract, from the Brisbane Courier Mail of March 18th 1991, was unearthed by the late Colin Dancer and proved to be his final offering to this magazine:

NIPPER THE FOX TERRIER PUT DOWN

LONDON. Nipper the fox terrier, renowned for decades as the dog listening to his master's voice, has been dropped from Britain's EMI record labels. The president of EMI Classics, Richard Lyttleton says Nipper has been dropped to avoid confusion about the company's trademark, which [now] shows a cherub on compact discs and the dog on cassettes. The President of the National Federation of Recorded Music Societies [sic], Mr Roderick Shaw, mourned Nipper's passing. 'It's an awful pity that gramophone companies should turn their backs on the history of recording' he said. 'We have all grown up with the dog and that horn.'

Peter T Cork teacher and composer of some note

YOU COULD CERTAINLY be excused for not recognising the name of Peter Cork as a composer of much fine music for radio, television and film. His music often harked back to an earlier era and Peter was the consummate gentleman, always praising others but possibly shunning the limelight himself. Nevertheless, his own life was lived to the full and he enriched the lives of so many people who came to know him over the years.

Born in 1926 at Waterbeach in Cambridgeshire, he died aged 85 in 2012. The lone child of a Baptist minister, he and his father enjoyed visiting the cinema in Lowestoft where they were unlikely to be recognised, for it was not thought entirely proper for a minister of religion to be seen frequenting such establishments. Young Cork acquired a love of films and his lifelong ambition was to write film scores. His parents encouraged his love of music by buying him a piano and arranging for local piano lessons, at which he excelled.

Peter studied to become a music teacher at Goldsmiths, and also under Gordon Jacob at the Royal College of Music, who confirmed his student's love of traditional musical structure. His first teaching post was at the County High Grammar School in Dagenham during the 1950s, where his most famous pupil was surely Dudley Moore. Teacher and pupil kept in touch by letter even when Moore eventually moved to California. All the letters from Moore were published in 2006. Brian Astell, the clarinettist [*who appeared at Daventry last year, Ed*], was a pupil at the same time as Dudley and their names appear on the same bill for a 'Pastorale' concert given at the Kingsley Hall in May 1954. Another of Cork's pupils was Norma Winstone, the jazz singer who won the title of Best Vocalist in the BBC Jazz Awards of 2001.

After a spell in Australia, where he taught at a high school for girls in Sydney, he returned to become Director of Music at Clapham County School for Girls in 1969. Cork wrote three full-length musicals so that the girls could perform in a proper musical or operetta without taking male roles, with performances taking place every other year. The first, written in 1971, was *The Bells of Craxminster* based in an Edwardian village and including two friendly aliens; remember this was long before the film *E.T.*! I first met Peter Cork in 1972 when I joined the teaching staff at Clapham County and we became firm friends. Two further musicals followed, *The White Bird* and *Halfway up the Mountain*, each more ambitious than the one before.

There was one last musical, but this was written for a mixed cast rather than the girls alone. *The Will*

and *the Way* was performed by the Avalon Light Operatic Society of Streatham at the Stanley Halls in 1979. Sadly, the days of the inner city grammar school were coming to an end. Both Peter Cork and I left teaching to pursue different careers. For Peter, it meant making his way as a composer in the commercial world of music.

Peter Cork had never stopped composing since his own student days; I can testify to that as the caretaker of all his musical manuscripts going back to the mid-1940s. Now, though, he had to earn a living and turned to writing library music for Standard Music, Chappell, Bruton Music, Studio G and so forth. This was the art of pastiche, of writing in the style of existing works but avoiding plagiarism at all costs. The music was used in television, in films and on the radio, being less expensive for producers than commissioning new works. Sometimes, only a few seconds of a recording would be needed but, if used during peak-time viewing, the rewards could be substantial.



Cork's music is still used all over the world but sadly his name is never mentioned.

With guidance and help from another dear friend, Piers Plowright, then a BBC Radio producer, Cork was able to write many new works and get them accepted by the BBC. There were too many to name them all but *The Wartime Picnics* and *The Road from Marriage Farm* were probably the most successful. Some, like his *Country Calendar*, never did get an airing; a great disappointment. In these productions Cork wrote both the libretto and the music. He also wrote instrumental music for small orchestra and often financed the production and recording costs himself. *Through The Looking Glass* and the *A Man Of Kent Suite* fall into this category.

Peter Cork was pleased to be invited to speak to the Canterbury Recorded Music Society on the 3rd October 2006. His presentation was entitled 'From the English Countryside' with a narrative to accompany the playing of a selection of his own compositions.

I am now embarking on a second year of attempting to catalogue all of Peter Cork's musical manuscripts. I also hold a large collection of recordings of his music in various formats: vinyl LPs, ¼ inch reel-to-reel tapes, the almost inevitable music cassettes, DAT tapes and CDs.

For more information about Peter Cork, please visit his website at www.peter-t-cork.com where I may also be contacted concerning any specific requests for copies of his manuscripts or recorded music. ●

Peter Cosker

HAPPENINGS IN FINLAND 2013

John J Davis (Torbay RMS) reports on the latest of his regular visits to pay homage to his hero

ONCE AGAIN, along with close friends, I made my annual visit to the Sibelius Festival in Lahti. The Festival's theme this year was 'Sibelius and the Theatre'. Consequently we were treated to the concert suites of *Pelléas and Mélisande* ('At the Castle Gate' bringing back memories of the great Sir Patrick Moore and *The Sky at Night*) and *King Christian II*, the Nocturne being my ultimate *pièce de résistance*.

We heard the original scores of *Kuolema* and *The Tempest* which included several soloists, as well as *Belshazzar's Feast* and the *Lemminkäinen* Suite, the score of which was originally planned for an unfinished opera. All this took place in world-class Sibeliusstalo with its perfect acoustic properties, as did 'Sibelius on a Sunday Morning' which included works for solo voice and chamber ensembles.

One event, as always, took place in the smaller Kalevi Aho Hall and this was a piano recital that included a rarity: a piano duet version of Sibelius's Third Symphony. To add to these glories, we experienced unusually tropical weather which allowed us a voyage on Lake Vesijärvi.

After all those wonders, some of us made our way to Helsinki for general exploration and some steady imbibing! The latter took place on the island of Seurasaari where I'd laid on 'wine in the woods'. We drank the health of all UK Sibelius Society members whilst listening to the Nocturne from *King Christian II* on my iPhone! However, while walking in Helsinki with my special friends Janet and David Abbotts (Janet is known to FRMS members for her appearances in both Daventry and Quinton, Birmingham) we had the good fortune to come face to face, by sheer coincidence, with no less a figure than Vladimir Ashkenazy. This occurred next to Jean Sibelius's drinking establishment, the Hotel Kämp. We introduced ourselves and he said that he was in Järvenpää for recording sessions with the Finnish soprano Soile Isokoski. He asked if we'd heard of her. I said yes, very much so, having heard her previously, live in Lahti, and that I had Sibelius recordings of Isokoski with the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra and Leif Segerstam, as well as Richard Strauss's *Four Last Songs* with the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra under Marek Janowski. Janet chipped in with Ashkenazy's Decca recordings of the Sibelius Symphonies and I followed with his Stockholm recordings on Exton. I then brought up the one-off RCA recording of Rachmaninov's Third Piano Concerto with the Philadelphia Orchestra and

Eugene Ormandy. Vladimir referred to us as experts – what a compliment! Both maestro Ashkenazy and his delightful Icelandic wife were charm personified and were obviously delighted to be approached by some dedicated enthusiasts. That was one of those special moments in life that we'll never forget and indeed will cherish for years to come. On the day we were to leave, we were lucky to catch a short organ recital on the Marcussen organ in Helsinki Cathedral, which perfectly gilded the lily.

However, there was an unexpected and totally wonderful moment when, a week after arriving home, I received a parcel containing two CDs, each featuring Vladimir Ashkenazy as pianist and conductor, sent from his home in Switzerland. It included a card saying: 'It was so nice meeting you in Helsinki'. To say that I've been on a high ever since is an understatement! The first disc was entitled 'Rachmaninov Rarities', which is true as all the items were new, at least to me. This is a fairly recent Decca issue from 2012 and contains 24 tracks of some, indeed, delectable and lesser-known pieces. They included *Morceaux de salon* and a



John J Davis (right) and Janet Abbotts meet Vladimir Ashkenazy in Helsinki

Gavotte in D major. However, two pieces need special mention. Ashkenazy's arrangement of *Sad is the Night* where 'a heart full of sadness is compared with the vast lonely steppe', and the 'Nunc Dimittis' from Rachmaninov's *All Night Vigil*, the original of the latter being a long time goose-pimple affair for me with those incredible basses going down to a very low B flat.

The second CD features Ashkenazy when he was the principal conductor of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. Back in 2008 they recorded Elgar's Second Symphony in the Sydney Opera House in SACD format for the Japanese Exton Label. This is the product of a Russian-born musician with a crack orchestra from down below. Naturally, there's something non-English about the interpretation, but for me it's first class, with virtuoso playing and a superbly natural recording. Ashkenazy plays down the string portamenti at the climax of the slow movement (for the full works at that point, just go to Barbirolli!) and it does not, to my ears, include the optional organ part in the fourth movement, as does Vernon Handley on EMI and the recent release by Sakari Oramo on BIS.

All these performances are outstanding achievements. This was, for yours truly, yet another 'happening' during this utopian September 2013. ●

Notable Anniversaries for 2015

Compiled by Brendan Sadler

Two Nordic giants share their centenaries in 2015, Sibelius and Nielsen. Of lesser stature, but enjoying some popularity, we can celebrate Dukas, Goldmark and the French 'Waltz King' Waldteufel. Lovers of Haydn have an excuse to indulge themselves by courtesy of his friend the violinist and impresario, Johann Salomon. We can also note two great, late artists, Sviatoslav Richter (b 1915) and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (b 1925). Others having landmark anniversaries include: Pierre Boulez, conductor, Nicolai Gedda, tenor and Wilma Lipp, soprano (90), Teresa Berganza, mezzo-soprano, and Mirella Freni, soprano (80), Jessye Norman, soprano and Radu Lupu, pianist (70), Sir Simon Rattle, conductor, and Yo-Yo Ma, cellist (60). Finally, the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra clocks up eighty years since its formation.

Composers (b=born;d=died)

21.02.1665	Aufschnaiter, Benedikt	Aust	b*
17.03.1665	de la Guerre, Elisabeth-Claude	Fr	b*
12.01.1765	Molter, Johann	Ger	d*
08.02.1765	von Eybler, Joseph	Aust	b*
13.06.1765	Eberl, Anton	Aust	b*
25.09.1765	Ogiński, Michał	Pol	b*
26.10.1765	Ryba, Jakub	Boh	b*
? ? 1765	Hebden, John	Eng	d*
19.02.1815	von Call, Leonhard	Aust	d*
06.04.1815	Volkman, Robert	Ger	b*
08.04.1815	Ryba, Jakub	Boh	d*
12.04.1815	Pierson, Hugo	Eng	b*
04.09.1815	Mosonyi, Mihály	Hun	b*
15.09.1815	Kjerulf, Halfdan	Nor	b*
28.11.1815	Salomon, Johann	Ger	d
09.06.1865	Nielsen, Carl	Dan	b
10.08.1865	Glazunov, Alexander	Rus	b
01.10.1865	Dukas, Paul	Fr	b
12.10.1865	Wallace, Vincent	Ire	d
08.12.1865	Sibelius, Jean	Fin	b
02.01.1915	Goldmark, Karl	Hun	d
12.02.1915	Waldteufel, Emile	Fr	d*
14.04.1915	Scriabin, Alexander	Rus	d
09.07.1915	Diamond, David	US	b
16.12.1915	Sviridov, Gyorgy	Rus	b

*contributions from Roger Hughes

Selected list of Compositions

(f = first performance; p = published)

1615

Gabrieli, G	Canzoni e sonate p
Monteverdi	Tirsi e Clori, ballet

1665

Lully	L'Amour médecin, ballet fp
	La Naissance de Vénus, ballet fp

Schütz

Four Passions

1715

Handel	Amadigi di Gaula, opera
	Water Music (1715 - 1717)

Scarlatti, A

Tigrone, opera fp
Twelve sinfonias

Scarlatti, D

Amleto, opera fp

Vivaldi

Nerone fatto Cesare, opera fp

1765

Gluck	Semiramide, ballet
Haydn	Symphonies Nos. 30 and 31
Bach, JC	Adriano in Siria, opera
Boccherini	La confederazione dei Sabini con Roma
Gossec	Le Faux Lord, opera
Mozart	Symphony No.5 in B flat maj. K. 22
	Piano Sonata (four hands) K. 19d

1815

Beethoven	Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage
	Cello sonatas Nos. 4 & 5
	Twenty-five Scottish songs
Schubert	Symphonies Nos. 2 & 3
	String Quartet No. 9
	Piano Sonatas Nos. 1 & 2
Rossini	Elisabetta, regina d'Inghilterra, Opera
Weber	Quintet for clarinet and strings
	Concertino for horn & orchestra

1865

Brahms	Trio for piano, violin & horn
Dvořák	Symphonies Nos. 1 & 2
Grieg	In Autumn, overture
	Violin Sonata No. 1
Wagner	Tristan und Isolde, music drama fp

1915

Bantock	Hebridean Symphony
Bartók	Rumanian Folk dances for piano
	String Quartet No. 2
Bax	Violin Sonata No. 2
	Piano quintet in G minor
Bliss	Piano Quartet
	String Quartet
Bloch	Schelomo for cello & orch
Bridge	String Quartet in G min.
Carpenter	Adventures in a Perambulator
Debussy	Cello Sonata
	En Blanc et Noir for two pianos
Dohnányi	Violin Concerto No. 1
Elgar	Polonia
Falla	El Amor Brujo, ballet
Holst	Japanese Suite for orchestra
Ireland	Preludes for piano
Ives	Orchestral set No. 3
	Concord piano sonata
Janáček	Taras Bulba, Rhapsody for orch.
Kodály	Sonata for unaccompanied cello
Prokofiev	Chout, ballet
	The Gambler, opera
Rachmaninov	Vespers
Reger	Der Einsiedler for chorus & orch.
Stanford	Piano Concerto No. 2
Stravinsky	Renard, Burlesque
Szymanowski	Symphony No. 3, Song of the Night
Villa-Lobos	String Quartets Nos. 1 & 2
Webern	Four Lieder
1965	
Berio	Labirintus II for voices, instr & tape
Bernstein	Chichester Psalms
Britten	Songs and Proverbs of William Blake
	The Poet's Echo
Tavener	Chamber Concerto
	Cain and Abel, cantata

ROGER'S NOTES, JOTTINGS AND RAMBLINGS - Part Three

Roger Apps recalls early concert visits and encounters with some of the biggest names in music

1963 SAW ME ATTENDING my first Proms concerts in the Royal Albert Hall, then still with a boomy echo – the 'flying saucers' solution came later. In what proved to be a very long concert, the BBC SO with Sir Malcolm Sargent conducting a first half of Beethoven: the *Coriolan* Overture (my favourite), the Piano Concerto No. 1 with the 22-year-old Stephen Bishop, and the *Pastoral* Symphony. After the interval came Vaughan Williams's Fourth Symphony, this a riveting performance that was subsequently issued on BBC Classics in the mid-nineties. I was still at school then, but when I started work in 1964 my availability for London concerts was naturally curtailed. I had moved from London in 1963 to rural south Kent and transport was a problem. However, I did manage to get to the first-ever Prom to feature a foreign orchestra. This was in 1966 when the Moscow Radio SO with Gennady Rozhdestvensky performed Britten's *Young Person's Guide*, Shostakovich's Cello Concerto No. 2 (which I still find excruciating), and Tchaikovsky's *Manfred* Symphony. Unfortunately, *Manfred* lost its proper ending – no organ entry. Instead, the end of the first movement was tacked on to the finale about half way through! Temirkanov also uses this truncated score – shame on them. The *Manfred* also appeared on the BBC label, so another concert I had attended made it to CD.

After that 1963 concert I never saw Sargent again, and it was a coach party from Maidstone Gramophone Society that enabled me to go to the 1969 Prom to see Barbirolli and the Hallé. It was a Viennese-themed concert with Barbirolli already very ill and gaunt, swaying on the rostrum and looking as if he might expire at any moment. But he gave his all in Haydn, Mozart, the Strauss family (with delayed entries designed to keep the audience fully engaged!) and Richard Strauss's *Rosenkavalier* Waltzes. Barbirolli died the next year, so this was the last time I was to see him. I really regret never seeing Silvestri with his creation, the Bournemouth SO. My school chum from SE London, with whom I attended most concerts, thought that any orchestra outside London was below par!

Much later on, in the early 1980s, I worked in central London and this enabled me to go to record signings at Direction Dean Street (remember them?), HMV and the Music Discount Centre in the Strand. I went to meet Birgit Nilsson who had a lovely, warm personality and was still very attractive at 62. I was 35 but I understood she favoured 'toy boys'! Anyway, she signed my *Scandinavian Song* LP and programme notes. She was most memorable in every way.

I met a formidable Antal Doráti in the Festival Hall. He was involved with our Dvořák Society and was

pleased to be introduced to all the members attending. He had electric-blue eyes that went straight through one like an x-ray. Scary! In HMV, I met Simon Rattle who talked endlessly to me about Janáček and Dvořák, even though there was an enormous queue waiting to see him; he appeared to have all the time in the world and was a very interesting conversationalist. Not so Claudio Abbado at MDC who was very taciturn, although he did sign Tchaikovsky and Mahler discs for me. I also met Zdeněk Mácal, Stephen Kovacevich and Thomas Zehetmair, and more recently Vasily Petrenko in Liverpool. In Prague, I met Radoslav Kvapil as well as Jarmil Burghauer who compiled the new opus numbers for the chaotic Dvořák catalogue and also had the composer's original scores which I was able to view.

I frequently attended Royal Festival Hall concerts and often went scouting for new conducting and solo artist talent. I believe that many, like Esa-Pekka Salonen, had already made an impression early in their

careers. Rattle was a natural as far as I was concerned after he gave a blistering Beethoven Fourth Symphony with the CBSO in Oxford, long before he was their chief. I did get around with my work, even to the Scottish National Orchestra Proms concerts, under Alexander Gibson, in Kelvingrove, Glasgow. A much underrated conductor, I feel.

Times have moved on and some talents have vanished. For example, François Huybrechts who made some good recordings for Decca, especially Janáček and Nielsen. He also gave memorable RFH concerts with the LPO and LSO, but just where did he, and his career, go? He was a disciple of George Szell, so he must have been at least reasonable if Szell was impressed.

Latterly, I have enthused over Yannick Nézet-Séguin, quite wonderful in powerful Haydn with the OAE in St George's, Bristol, and with his Rotterdam band in Prokofiev's Fifth Symphony. Similarly, I have seen Tugan Sokhiev several times with the Philharmonia and never a dud performance. He has taken over Ferenc Fricsay's old band, the Berlin RIAS (now Deutsches SO) so great things might happen. As for soloists, who could resist the charms and artistry of Lisa Batiashvili, now established as my favourite female violinist after the incomparable Ida Haendel, still with us at nearly ninety.

Given a choice of a music-making nation, I would have to plump for Hungary. The 'Magnificent Seven', as I call them, all from Budapest, are unbeatable. Reiner, Szell, Ormandy, Doráti, Solti, Fricsay and Kertész – wow! Their legacies of recordings are unmatched and Doráti was the great all-rounder and a superb trainer of orchestral players as well. The LSO recordings from the 1960s are testament to his achievement. ●



Magnificent Magyars - clockwise top left: Solti, Szell, Ormandy, Fricsay, Doráti, Kertész and Reiner. Photo montage: Paul Astell

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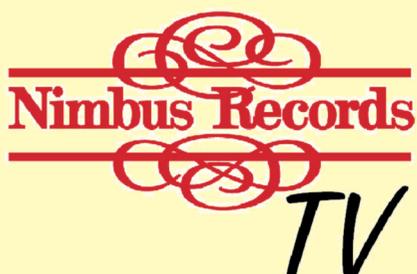
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