

# FRMS NEWSLETTER



Issue No 10

August 2009

## REG WILLIAMSON

*We regret to record the death on 6<sup>th</sup> June of Reg Williamson; a private funeral took place on 16 June. He was just short of his 83rd birthday.*

*Reg was for many years a member of the FRMS Committee and served the Federation in a number of official capacities. John Phillips, who was a colleague on the committee, over a decade ago, has submitted the obituary printed below. We are happy to be associated with this personal remembrance of someone who did much for the Federation. In addition to John's appreciation of Reg's achievements, we would wish to add the excellent work that he did in establishing the current PRS and PPL licensing arrangements without which affiliates could not possibly carry on their business. We would also add the organisation, along with his wife Marjorie, of the national Musical Weekends that continue to be so successful today.*

*Reg initially recruited the vast majority of the societies that have pages on the FRMS website, and this was the foundation of our current excellent site. Reg was a blunt speaking man who gave robust replies to anyone who questioned his approach; sometimes controversial, he was a larger than life character who will long be remembered. We join John in sending our condolences and best wishes to Marjorie, a former Federation Secretary and one of our Vice Presidents, and the family.*

### **REGINALD WILLIAMSON – An Obituary**

I first came across the name Reg Williamson through my father, who had built a power amplifier as described in *Wireless World* and designed by Reg. It wasn't until many years later that I met Reg through the FRMS, and we became what I considered as good friends.

I mentioned the amplifier for no other reason than to illustrate Reg's long interest in things Hi-Fi, and it

positioned him ideally for his post on the FRMS Committee as Technical Officer, a position in which he successfully helped numerous societies with their technical and other problems.

Reg's history with the FRMS was long and varied, with him holding all Committee positions except Chairman over the years. Whilst some more sensitive souls will remember him as somewhat irascible and stubborn, my overriding memory of him is always helpful in the extreme, a stickler for detail, and with a passion for the FRMS and its correct operation that few could match. Always striving for correct procedures and "the right way to do things" he was of inestimable value to the Federation, particularly when a few years ago it went through a difficult period and was nearly wound up.

During this time he did a wonderful job of carrying out the financial recovery of the Federation, and was responsible for overhauling the procedures, which are partially responsible for the relatively good health the Federation finds itself in today. He also developed the original website, and although this has now been re-developed and re-launched, the original vision of this part of the Federation's activities was down to Reg.

Apart from the shock of learning of his death, it is too soon to miss such a vital character, but as time progresses, we shall, I am sure, begin to appreciate what an important contributor to the Federation and its processes we have lost.

Our condolences go to his wife, Marjorie and the rest of the family who nursed Reg through the last months of his life and to the Douglas Macmillan Hospice which provided him with relief through his illness. May he rest in peace.

*John Phillips, Committee Member FRMS 1995 - 1998  
Vice Chairman FRMS 1998 - 2000*

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## EDWARD GREENFIELD

At the Music Weekend at Daventry in April, our esteemed President Ted Greenfield announced his retirement from the post. Edward Greenfield OBE, joint editor of "The Penguin Guide to Compact Discs" and former music critic and political correspondent of *The Guardian*, joined us in 1997 as successor to Vernon Handley. He was awarded the OBE in 1994 for services to music and journalism.

In the intervening years we have greatly appreciated his outstanding support of our movement. His relaxed interviews with music personalities have become a much-loved feature of our music weekends, and his standing has enabled him to tempt such luminaries as Dame Janet Baker and Dame Joan Sutherland to come and speak to us.

There was one occasion when a guest speaker, who had begun nervously in his chat with Ted, held up his hand to halt the applause so that he could tell us: "Ted Greenfield is the nicest man in the music world." And so say all of us!

In recent years he has found it increasingly difficult to get about, but this has not prevented him from coming to Daventry. Now he has decided it is time to relax. We will miss him greatly and we wish him a happy and relaxing retirement.

## LYNDON JENKINS

We are pleased to announce that Lyndon Jenkins has accepted our invitation to become President of the Federation, in succession to Edward Greenfield OBE.

Lyndon Jenkins is a writer, lecturer and broadcaster on music. From 1972-1987 he wrote for *The Birmingham Post* before becoming a regular contributor between 1983-99 to the BBC Radio networks, in particular Radio 3 ('Interpretations on Record', 'Record Review', 'Mainly for Pleasure' etc) and the BBC World Service. For the Independent Radio Network he was Classical Presenter at Mercia Sound 1980-9, BRMB 1986-9 and BBC Radio WM 1989-92. From 2001-4 he presented a weekly programme on another of his interests, light music, for Saga Radio.

He specialises in British music, British artists, and British musical history and has made documentary programmes about Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir Malcolm Sargent, Sir Yehudi Menuhin, Paul Tortelier, Maggie Teyte, Eric Fenby, E J Moeran and Glyndebourne among others. He lectures widely on these and a range of other subjects, and has written extensively on musical subjects for specialist magazines as well as hundreds of CD booklets. He gave the first Adrian Boult Lecture in Birmingham in 1986, and was a founder member of The Delius Society and its chairman between 1994-2000.

A study by him of the relationship between Frederick Delius and his music's greatest interpreter, Sir Thomas Beecham, was published in 2005 and won the Award for Excellence in Historical Recorded Sound from the American Association for Recorded Sound. He has also made contributions to books about the music of Arthur Bliss and William Walton. Outside the UK he is especially interested in Scandinavian composers, and has broadcast on Finnish and Danish Radio about Sibelius, Nielsen and others. His work in promoting Danish music has been rewarded by the honour of a knighthood from H.M The Queen of Denmark for services to Anglo-Danish Cultural Relations in the field of music.

He is Music Adviser at Symphony Hall and Town Hall Birmingham where he advises on programming, interviews many of the world-famous artists appearing there, introduces concerts and arranges special events.

Lyndon Jenkins describes himself as a life-long 'record man', and has been a long-time supporter of the work of the Federation. He is keen to play his part in seeing the recorded music society movement continue to flourish despite all the obvious difficulties facing community groups generally. He has appeared at FRMS societies as far apart as Thurso and Torbay, and has made important contributions to the very successful Daventry Musical Weekends.

*We look forward to continuing this association.*

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## Yorkshire Matters

### Scarborough Spring Musical Weekend 2010

The Scarborough Spring Musical Weekend 2010 is from Friday 26 March to Monday 29 March 2010 and will be at The Crown Hotel, Scarborough, now enjoying its 4 Star status!

Em Marshall, director of the English Music Festival makes a return visit to talk about Gustav Holst.

Bjorn Bantock, great-grandson of the composer Sir Granville Bantock will present a programme of his music.

Ray Wood, a very popular Scarborough presenter, will be in slightly more serious vein with a personal tribute to Vernon 'Tod' Handley.

Eric Illingworth, a Scarborough stalwart of many years on the technical side, will open the Friday evening with 'Transport of Delight'.

Geoff Bateman is to investigate the legacy of 'The Mercury Years' – the record label, not Freddie.

Wyastone Estates (alias Nimbus) will be the resident CD company and with material from 160 different CD labels they manufacture, it promises to cover wide ground as well as providing an opportunity to buy usually at lucrative rates.

Brenda Dean has founded festival events around the music of French composer Jean Langlais (1907-1991) and makes her Scarborough debut with a programme of his music.

We believe within our diverse programme, there is something for everyone so the Yorkshire Regional Group is hopeful of another successful weekend, repeating 2009's increased patrons across the nation from Surrey to Scotland!

Full details and booking forms will be available from Saturday 17 October 2009 and previous attendees will be mailed, otherwise contact Jim Bostwick, YRG Secretary (contact details at the end of following item).

### Yorkshire Autumn Day

YRG's Autumn Day will be held on Saturday 17 October 2009 back in Huddersfield starting at 10.00 a.m. at the Brian Jackson Centre, very close to the previous venue and one again very convenient for both rail and bus stations. Following an eleven year gap, Barnsley RMS are hosting the day with three contrasting presentations by its members.

Peggy Child will present a programme on the poetry and music of Bob Dylan;

Sue Parker, "An Equal Music" will be taking some of the themes (musical and literary) as inspiration from Vikram

Seth's 1999 novel of the same title. The third presentation is by

Gary Midgley – "Old Wine in New Bottles" where he finds examples of composers using music composed by earlier composers – so called "borrowed" themes. He lists Tchaikovsky, Mozart, Beethoven, Hindemith amongst others.

Cost for the Autumn Day is £14.50 which includes refreshments and 3-course lunch. Details and Booking Form available now.

Send S.S.A.E. to Jim Bostwick, Secretary YRG,  
6 Oakroyd Close, Brighouse, HD6 4BP.

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### Music weekend 2010, Daventry

The 2010 Musical Weekend will take place over the Friday to Sunday of April 23rd/24th/25th. For our seventh year, we shall be at the Barcelo Daventry Hotel in Northamptonshire. The programme planning has commenced in earnest and further details will be announced as they become available. Regular patrons will already be on the MW mailing list but if you want your name to be added simply contact the Federation Secretary on 01782 251460 or email [secretary@thefrms.co.uk](mailto:secretary@thefrms.co.uk)

### MUSIC MATTERS

Of course it does, you say. Music, together with painting and literature, is a vital part of our artistic and cultural life. These are just some of the important things by which we define ourselves as 'civilised'.

Of course, music comes in many shapes and sizes, but for the purposes of these notes, without wishing to dismiss jazz, folk, popular, cross-over or any of the many other types of music, I am going to concentrate my thoughts on the narrow field of classical music.

Perhaps the United Kingdom is not quite so well off for orchestral resources as Europe or America, which is why so many of our young conductors and instrumentalists go abroad to find well-paid, satisfying careers. But we do have some of the world's leading professional orchestras and a very fine amateur tradition. So there are still opportunities to hear live classical music in this country. Unfortunately many of the programmes on offer tend to concentrate on the things that we know and love; they do not stretch our imagination by presenting new and less familiar works and thus we

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do not develop our wider understanding and appreciation of music.

As an example, and there are many others, when did you last hear anything by Louis Spohr (1784-1859) or Eduard Tubin (1905-1982) in a live music programme? I cannot recall having heard anything by either of them in the concert hall. I was aware of Tubin's music and had a few CDs, but Spohr was just a name and I had nothing by him until recently, when I inherited my step-father's collection. Now I have all Tubin's symphonies and concertos and an enormous amount of chamber music by Spohr - endless hours of music to enjoy and listen to, and enough varied and interesting material to make several presentations for recorded music societies.

That is the great value and strength of the Recorded Music movement and one of the reasons why we must not let it disappear. It enriches our lives and gives us an opportunity to explore composers and works which we would be unlikely to hear in a live music concert. Perhaps, more importantly, it keeps the music of lesser-known composers in circulation and helps to preserve them and their work for posterity.

*Tony Pook*

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### **Central Region French Music Day**

*A French day with the French theme reflected in the music and the catering*

Saturday 14 November 2009, 10.30-16.45  
St Margaret's Church Hall, Olton

**Cost including Two-course buffet lunch with drinks and interval drinks, £12.50**

Programme

#### **Berlioz and Gounod.**

These two composers were near contemporaries, and were inspired by similar themes, but their music could hardly be more different, as the recorded examples will clearly illustrate; similarly their reputations during the period from their own time to the present day have followed quite different trajectories.

*Presented by John Davies, a member of South Cheshire RMS (Nantwich), and Chairman of the Federation of Recorded Music Societies. .*

#### **A Musician of Many Parts; The Music of Camille Saint-Saens.**

Camille Saint-Saens' long life spanned a period of immense change in music, and his own compositions embraced almost all forms of music; he was also chief organist at the Madeleine church in Paris for 20 years (his assistant was Fauré). Among the musical illustrations will be an example of Saint-Saens playing one of his own piano works.

*Presented by John Gilks who has been collecting records since he was five; he is a member of York RMS and a former Chairman of the Federation.*

#### **Satie et les Six» -**

Les Six was an informal grouping of composers of whom Poulenc is probably the most familiar and Durey the least well known, united in their reaction against Impressionism. The singular Satie revolted comprehensively against musical orthodoxy.

*Presented by Dr Gary Midgley who comes to us from Huddersfield. The programme will include a visual element using PowerPoint.*

For bookings or further details contact Regional Secretary Mick Birchall, 2 Burley Close, Desford, Leicester LE9 9HX, Tel 01455 823494

Enquiries to Central Region Chairman:

[allan.child@thefrms.co.uk](mailto:allan.child@thefrms.co.uk)

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### **Significant anniversaries 2010**

<b>1990</b>	<b>20<sup>th</sup></b>	Stirling RMS
<b>1985</b>	<b>25<sup>th</sup></b>	Durrington
<b>1980</b>	<b>30<sup>th</sup></b>	Stroud Valleys, Wingerworth, Winscombe
<b>1970</b>	<b>40<sup>th</sup></b>	Felixstowe, Northampton, Norwich Opera,
<b>1960</b>	<b>50<sup>th</sup></b>	Dunfermline RMS, Exeter, Carshalton, Loughborough, Quinborne,
<b>1950</b>	<b>60<sup>th</sup></b>	Olton, Clydebank, Heston & District, Putney, Southampton, Torbay, Nelson
<b>1935</b>	<b>75<sup>th</sup></b>	Bolton

### ***Our Website***

The website goes from strength to strength. The RECOMMENDED LINKS page has been re-designed and some significant new links have been added.

The LATEST NEWS is kept up to date as much as possible but the WebMaster would welcome items of news such as Society anniversaries, long service members, special events, etc.. (including photographs is possible). Space is not really a problem on the website as it might be elsewhere such as in the Bulletin or the Newsletter.

The new President is welcomed with a full article and photographs.

The WebMaster always welcomes ideas as to ways in which the website can be improved and made more useful to affiliates and friends of the FRMS

*George Steele, Webmaster*

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