

Spring 2013
No. 158
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Bulletin



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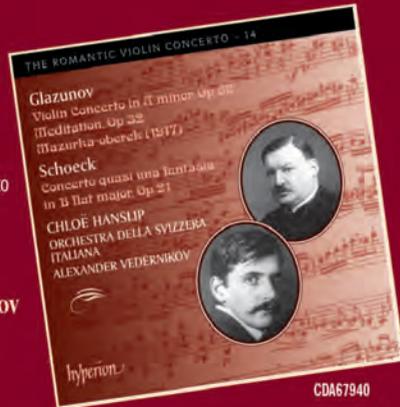
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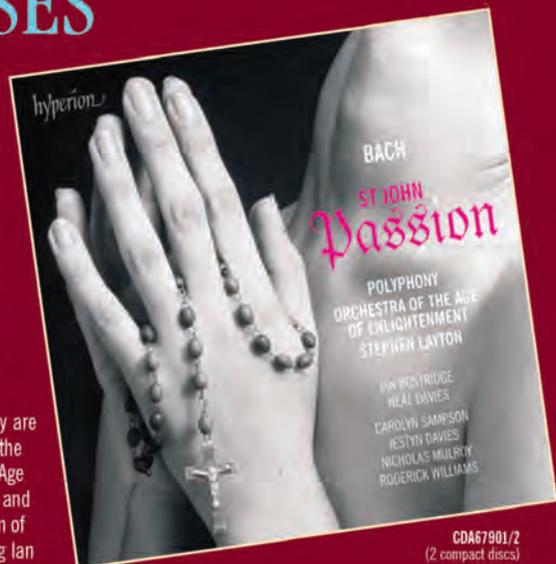
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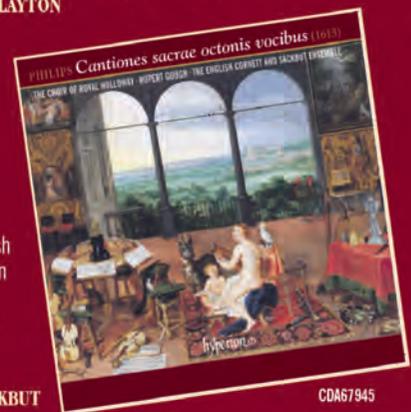
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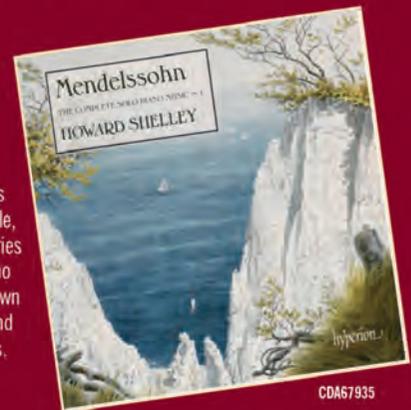
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For more information about the FRMS please go to
www.thefrms.co.uk

The editor acknowledges the assistance of Sue Parker (Barnsley and Huddersfield RMSs) in the production of this magazine.

Front cover: 1870 Philharmonic Society poster, courtesy of RPS Archive/British Library

Forthcoming Events

Scarborough Music Weekend, March 22nd - 25th (page 13)
Scottish Group Spring Music Day, April 27th (page 13)
Daventry Music Weekend, April 26th - 28th (pages 4 & 8)
West Region Music Day, Bournemouth, June 4th
FRMS AGM, Hinckley, November 9th

EDITORIAL Paul Astell

ANOTHER AGM HAS PASSED, as has another discussion about falling membership and the inability to attract new members. The thoughts of Raimund Herinx, our guest opening speaker, are reported on page 4. As President of the now defunct Bath RMS, Raimund had good reason to attempt to make some sense of where, if anywhere, many of us are going wrong in not appealing to the music-loving masses, as was once the case. The follow-up discussion under AoB was equally interesting and fairly lively, but I don't think anybody claims to have all the answers.

Some believe that our kind of music – whatever that is – simply does not appeal to the younger generation, although the idea of playing at least some music that might find favour with that age group didn't appear to go down too well with many members. I would imagine that few societies are so desperate for members that they would turn to pop music in a big way. In any case, the output of those popular-music icons some appeared to have in mind is just as unlikely to appeal to our missing audiences as that of Bach, Beethoven and the rest.

Perhaps the original *raison d'être* of gramophone societies has long since passed. Back in the 1930s, the average music-lover was much less likely to own music reproduction equipment that could match that which could be owned by an organised group of enthusiasts. It is also surely the case that, back then, the record collection of many a home listener would not compare with what many of us have collected on our shelves. Music of all kinds is now widely available and easily accessible as never before. High quality radio broadcasting has long been with us, but the Internet has opened up a vast array of options for us to access music of all flavours from the comfort of our computer chair. Your Federation, though, continues to work hard in promoting our movement and its activities that so many still find enjoyable.

I'm sure I wasn't the only one to watch with interest a recent concert on BBC4 featuring Lang Lang at the London Roundhouse. This pianist, thought by some to be the world's greatest, performed spectacularly, his dazzling style apparently necessitating a backdrop of flashing lasers and (irrelevant) images. The enthusiastic, predominantly young, audience appeared to love every moment, but I couldn't help feeling that this might be a foretaste of what will be demanded in our concert halls of the future.

You may disagree with some or all of the above, and in some ways I hope you do, especially if it prompts readers to get in touch with us. Elsewhere in this issue, that's exactly what I'm urging you to do – on any topic. ●

FEDERATION NEWS

FRMS Vice-President appointed



John Davies has, by a unanimous committee decision, been appointed to one of the honorary positions of FRMS Vice-President. John is, of course, a former FRMS chairman and the success of his tenure of that post over many years is well documented. John has presented many programmes - about ten a year - to societies and U3A Music groups, mainly in the Central and North-West regions. He is a committee member of South Cheshire RMS and a member of Central Region Music Day committee.

John, originally from Wolverhampton, tells us: 'I attended Bilston Grammar school where the music teacher 'forced' us boys to sing 'Little Polly Flinders' in the style of Mozart. It was a form of torture to begin with, but the bonus was that some years later, when I began seriously listening to 'classical', I had no difficulty at all with Mozart. So belated thanks to that music teacher, Mr Stewart.

'My musical interests range from baroque to Beethoven, Shostakovich, Stravinsky and Prokofiev. Songs from the 1920s to 1950s - in particular, those of George Gershwin, Irving Berlin, Cole Porter and Jerome Kern - are great favourites. Light Music is another great love, and I have fond memories of when certain pieces featured on the BBC Light Programme all those years ago. Traditional jazz is yet another area I hold in high regard.'

The Federation committee is delighted that John has accepted its invitation.

A situation becoming vacant!



Graham Kiteley (left) has announced that he wishes to step down as Federation treasurer in a couple of years' time after over ten years in the position. The following gives a brief overview of the work involved in the hope that someone may come forward to take on this important role.

Whilst the Treasury activity in the vast majority of affiliates is mostly confined to membership matters, fund raising and administration, all perhaps amounting to several hundred pounds or so, the Federation's activity is obviously a little more involved.

Using a basic financial structure that has been developed and fine-tuned over the years, the initial book-keeping process continuously accounts for income, expenditure and cash flow transactions, subsequently consolidated into half-a-dozen spreadsheets. These are not over-complicated but are capable of providing all the information that the treasurer needs to report on the Federation's financial performance, quarterly to committee and annually to affiliates. All our financial transactions fall neatly into the regular cost centres that feature in the published accounts, although the monetary numbers are necessarily larger than society treasurers would normally handle.

In addition to the basic accounting, the treasurer is expected to advise the committee on the financial aspects and implications of all Federation activities. He or she also specifically monitors administration overheads, balances the books on the *Bulletin* and the Musical Weekend, looks after the financial aspects of copyright licensing and insurances, and does the number crunching involved in billing affiliates with their respective fees and other charges. This latter process collects cost information from the licensing and insurance agencies and, via a database programme, merges it with membership and other data obtained from affiliates.

The Treasury task would suit someone with a knowledge and good appreciation of basic accounting and computing skills. Ideally, an early approach would enable the committee to organise a shadowing role to work alongside and share the tasks with Graham in the period ahead. Needless to say that all help and assistance would be available to enable a new incumbent to settle in to the duties. Copies of all the Management Accounts are available to anyone interested in this important and rewarding position.

Please apply initially to the FRMS Secretary, Jim Bostwick. Contact details at the back of this magazine.

Corrections

Apologies to **Ted Pezarro** for spelling his name incorrectly on Page 6 of the Autumn 2012 *Bulletin*. Sorry Ted!

John J Davis points to an inaccuracy at the top of that same page. The first performance of the Korpo Trio was in 1887, featuring the composer and his family in the Manor House on the island of Korpo. The next performance to take place there was in 2006, but there had been several performances elsewhere before that, after it came to light in 1982.

Daventry 2013



Photo: Lyndon Jenkins collection

The conductor **Sir Malcolm Sargent** (left), a celebrated musical icon of the last century, is the subject of Lyndon Jenkins's presentation at the **Daventry Musical Weekend, April 26th – 28th 2013**. Don't miss it!

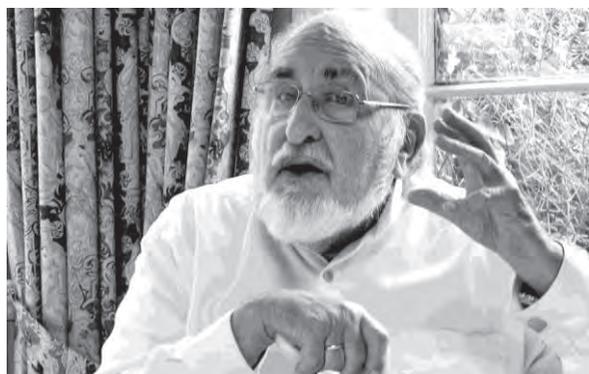
More details on page 8.

FRMS Annual General Meeting 2012

Bath Recorded Music Society were this year's hosts for the AGM held at the Lansdown Grove Hotel, Bath, where around 50 visitors represented 22 societies. The main business points are covered below, as are the day's other events. Photos: George Steele and Paul Astell.

A distinguished guest

Federation vice-chairman Roger Apps introduced the President of Bath Recorded Music Society, **Dr Raimund Herincx**, who welcomed delegates to Bath and the meeting. Dr Herincx is a world-renowned bass-baritone with an international performing career. He is also a voice teacher, an adjudicator, examiner,



Dr Raimund Herincx

therapist, and a teacher at the Royal Academy of Music and Trinity College of Music, as well as Cardiff and Aberdeen Universities. He has worked in the United States, at Washington University as well as in California. He has also lectured at the Yale Club and the Juilliard School.

Dr Herincx described Bath as a beautiful city, full of ancient monuments ... 'and here you are being greeted by another ancient monument!' Our distinguished guest sounded anything but, as he immediately set out on a most interesting, thought-provoking and entertaining talk. First, he acknowledged the wonderfully detailed recordings we are now able to enjoy, and he sometimes wonders if they are better than the real thing. But we were cautioned against being duped whilst in pursuit of perfection. Dr Herincx related his personal experiences of a certain recording of Mahler's Eighth he was originally to be involved in, but a clash of dates ruled that out. The finished article proved to be unsatisfactory as the tenor was deemed rather inadequate. The solution was to call upon John Mitchinson, supported by our (unrecorded) guest in the baritone part, to be dubbed onto the recording's tenor track during post-production. The resulting disc turned out to be perfectly acceptable, 'but it was false and not really a performance'. It had been manufactured and Dr Herincx wondered how often, in the pursuit of perfection, we end up with construction; 'it serves the composition but it doesn't present it'.

From this, Dr Herincx neatly turned to the ever-present problem of falling memberships for many of our societies. This was particularly apposite given that the very existence of Bath RMS is itself sadly drawing to an end. He proposed that we should, somehow, find a way of attracting a new generation of members. According to his grandchildren, although

they loved the fact that their grandfather had appeared in major operatic productions, they had suggested that perhaps societies should have different sections offering alternative listening choices: R&B, pop, jazz and other forms. To quote these younger music-lovers: 'I'll listen to your *Götterdämmerung* if you'll listen to my Ella Fitzgerald'. Dr Herincx finished by asking us to consider whether we should treat the young in a more tolerant way, in order to improve the lot of our various music groups, which could well prevent us from dying out.

We were to return to this subject later in the meeting ...

FRMS chairman Colin Dancer thanked Dr Herincx for giving us some food for thought. Following the initial formalities, Colin set the day's business running with his **Chairman's Annual Review**. Colin reminded us that, 12 months ago, there had been some changes to the committee. In Ron and Denise Beech we had new organisers of the Daventry Music Weekend, whilst Allan Child had taken up that event's administrative tasks, in addition to his existing duties. Colin was grateful that the new committee had all pulled together, resulting in a very successful weekend. Our new secretary, Jim Bostwick, had settled in and vice-chairman Roger Apps had been extremely busy with outreach, attempting to attract external societies into the FRMS fraternity. He, along with Malcolm Lewis, had also formed the West Region, now with two successful Music Days under their belts. The work of the rest of the committee was highlighted and details of their names and roles can be found elsewhere in this magazine. It's worth mentioning that Colin reported – with barely a smile on his face – that he had been told by members of his own society that the *Bulletin* was worth the cover price for the chairman's column alone!

The FRMS is permitted to make up to three honorary appointments of Vice-President. Former Federation chairman John Davies has accepted the committee's unanimous invitation to join Roderick Shaw in that position. This is in recognition of John's invaluable service as chairman over many years, initially being thrust into the post at a time when the committee 'was at war with itself'. The fact that the current committee works in harmony is in no small part due to John's stewardship over the years.

FRMS treasurer Graham Kiteley was next to take the floor to present his ninth **Annual Accounts and Treasurer's Report**. The role of Federation treasurer has a somewhat wider remit than that of a treasurer of an individual society, although book-keeping routines won't be too dissimilar. As he heads into his 10th year in this role, Graham provided some interesting statistics. In 2004, 222 affiliated societies supported 10,701 members. In 2012, the number of re-affiliated

societies stands at 194, a reduction of 13%. The size of re-affiliated groups, though, has changed and a total of around 7,250 members would represent a 32% fall. However, the true rate of decline is closer to 25% owing to the membership count, especially in some larger groups, having been somewhat overstated before Graham's time. Graham suggested that these findings are not too alarming, considering the wide range of options currently available for people to spend their leisure time. A hard core of affiliates are determinedly pressing on with small numbers and an ageing membership; around a half of those 194 societies are running with 25 or fewer members.

A new development has arisen where the Performing Rights Society (PRS) and Phonographic Performance Ltd (PPL) have changed their licensing arrangements for community halls. The licence will apply to the building rather than the individual activities that take place therein. Some societies have already partially or fully removed themselves from affiliation for this reason.

Total cash flow is in the region of £80,000, with a break-even outcome compared to last year's surplus. Moving the location of the AGM around the country results in varying costs, but the main reason for the reduction is the additional spend relating to celebrations for the Federation's 75th anniversary.

The *Bulletin* again achieved a satisfying surplus, despite increased advertising income being largely outweighed by expenditure. Maintaining this revenue is essential for the magazine to remain profitable and, when responding to advertisers, readers should always mention where they saw the advert.

Postage costs showed an apparent increase. This was owing to the treasurer and secretary buying in bulk to pre-empt Royal Mail's well-trailed 34% rise earlier in the year. (No mention was made that a media wag had described this nation-wide raid on Post Offices as a 'stampede'.) The treasurer's financial strategy deems that General Fund reserves are necessary to the operation of the Federation. This is particularly relevant to the vital four-month period in which around £20,000 cash expenditure is made for licensing, insurance and *Bulletin* costs, before any affiliation income is realised. Our finances will be closely managed so that they remain in the current sound position. The meeting unanimously accepted the accounts in grateful recognition of the superb manner in which Graham carries out his role.

For his first **Secretary's Report**, Jim Bostwick began by explaining that embarking on this role had been a steep learning curve, despite the significant assistance he had been afforded by his predecessor, Tony Baines. The year has got progressively busier,

and has not been without errors. The lack of badges for officers for this meeting became a joke that seemed to run all day!

The flow of emails is fairly relentless but Jim aims to deal with them before 7am, before going for his daily swim. As most online users will know, unsolicited and irrelevant messages (spam) are a real nuisance and occasionally Federation-related items are embedded amongst the junk, which often includes pop music promotions. Jim wondered if he should now take more notice of these. (See opening paragraphs of this report.)

The variety of issues raised by members and the public has been a joy and a challenge, whether it be dealing with constitutional matters or mediating in disputes within societies, sometimes involving lengthy phone calls. Our secretary is pleased to report, though, that our movement is a very congenial one and he is gratified by the positive feedback received.

Although all committee members that needed to had submitted their signed nomination forms within the

deadline, Jim felt that the AGM date, as it currently stands, fell rather early, given that all paperwork had to be distributed, and nomination deadlines met, when many societies are on their summer break. He felt the committee might want to consider moving the date back a little, given that the Constitution allows for a 15-month gap between AGMs.

Jim declared another *faux pas*, as he had not officially invited the President and Vice-President to the AGM! From the floor the President declared that this was no resigning matter! Jim finished by thanking his committee colleagues for their assistance throughout the year. The feeling of the meeting was that the task of secretary is not an easy one and that Jim had done a splendid job during his first year.

June Apps (Bradford-on-Avon RMS) wondered if more use could be made of email when distributing paperwork. It was pointed out that many societies do not have an email facility but this aspect will be kept under review.

The New Committee was confirmed and, in turn, the members stood to make themselves known to the audience. This included John Davies, previously mentioned as a newly-appointed Vice-President. The meeting also approved the **Appointment of Independent Examiners** for Federation accounts.

Any other business

Relating to the earlier discussion, Tony Baines (Torbay RMS) pointed out that, in the past, around half the FRMS Newsletters were distributed to societies by email, although the recipient may not always have been the secretary. This can cause



FRMS officers get down to business; l to r: Graham Kiteley (treasurer), Colin Dancer (chairman) and Jim Bostwick (secretary)

internal ‘difficulties’ for such groups. George Steele (Rochdale GS) pointed out that using multiple recipients of emails at any society would incur no additional cost. The chairman replied that these points will be kept under consideration. He also explained that the Newsletter has not been discontinued; it would be produced, as and when necessary, to disseminate information between *Bulletin* editions. Malcolm Lewis (Cirencester RMS) reported that Stroud RMS had been impressed by Presto Classical’s offer contained in their advert on the back page of the Autumn *Bulletin*.

Jim Bostwick returned to the subject aired by Dr Herincx during his opening remarks, and a lively discussion ensued. Jim, too, hoped that for the survival of our movement younger members could be recruited, although he had his doubts that the ‘iPod generation’ would be interested. Those societies that meet during the day automatically rule out most of the working population. June Apps suggested that perhaps it’s the older generation that might need educating, some of whom don’t take kindly to listening to anything outside the classical mainstream. Mick Birchall (Hinckley RMS) announced that he would be playing an ABBA track in his upcoming Swedish music presentation for the Central Region Music Day. He went on to cause something of a ripple – or was it a wave – by suggesting that many societies rely too much on so-called classical music of the 20th century - which he didn’t think was particularly musical. So much other music is just not played.

Ann Meddick (Bath and Bradford-on-Avon RMSs) wondered out loud how many had enjoyed the John Wilson Prom concerts – a loud murmur suggested quite a few. She had heard several ‘classical aficionados’ enthusing about them. Ann also thought it unfortunate if potential members are introduced at a presentation which turns out to be boring and uninteresting.

June Apps ventured that those societies bearing the word ‘classical’ in their title might be a deterrent. Inevitably, Graham Kiteley, a member of the Classical Music Society (Kidderminster), responded saying that their title was largely historical, but he assured us that many of their presenters often broke into jazz, pop, and music from the shows. They encourage people to come along or to peruse past playlists on their website. It’s unusual to lose any members once they are through the door. Jim Bostwick judged that most recruitment is achieved by word of mouth.

Dr Richard Gilbert-Johnson (Bournemouth GS) felt that we now live in a society where the young and the old rarely meet, as opposed to a time when families of different generations lived together and youngsters met friends and peer groups of older folk. Malcolm Lewis recalled that, when he was a recruitment officer, he attempted to attract younger members. There was much hostility to this idea and it was deemed unnecessary; they were a successful society with plenty of members.

Raimund Herincx came back to suggest setting aside some time during a meeting where invited youngsters - perhaps aged 16-18 - could perform. Jim Bostwick regretted that we didn’t live in an ideal world and used his former teaching experiences to describe how music teaching in schools is much reduced these days. Ron Beech (Solihull RMC) has observed that many organisations of varying types are suffering similar recruitment problems and we are not unique. He added that he would be horrified to have to listen to pop music, and you won’t find anything other than ‘classical music’ at his society. Raimund’s final point was that there are now wonderful opera productions being relayed to cinemas that are not necessarily full of older people. At this point the chairman declared the meeting closed.

Recorded music presentation

Following the meeting we were introduced to Jason Hatton (pictured) of Bath Compact Discs, a business in the city that is well known to many members. Jason’s subject was **A Short History of the Ostinato**, which of necessity was fairly technical at times, but nonetheless very well explained by our presenter. For those that were unsure, ostinato was defined as a melody, motif or phrase that is constantly reiterated, usually at the same pitch. Other forms relevant to this subject are the passacaglia and the chaconne, the former of Spanish origin and often based on an ostinato figure, the latter a musical form



popular in the Baroque era, also consisting of a reiterated harmonic pattern.

Given the complexities of Jason’s chosen topic, only a brief description of the playlist used to illustrate his subject is provided here. His first offering was of African instrumental music by two Malian musicians, Toumani Diabaté and Ballaké Sissoko from their album ‘New Ancient Strings’. Then came the ‘Crucifixus’ from Bach’s Mass in B minor, after which we were invited to listen to the top line of the finale to Brahms’s Symphony No. 4, a chaconne thought to be influenced by a Bach Cantata, BWV150, which was played next.

Jordi Savall is a master of the viola da gamba, the forerunner of the modern cello, and we heard a mostly improvised version of Diego Ortiz’s *Passamezzo Moderno*. Monteverdi’s *Zefiro Torna* is

scored for two tenors and continuo. Most of the piece is in the form of a ciaccona (chaconne), which uses a constantly recurring bass line, and it is the first known example of a vocal duet that uses a ciaccona accompaniment. A ground bass is also known as a basso ostinato and Jordi Savall featured once again in Purcell's *3 Parts Upon a Ground*. Benjamin Britten had a fascination with Purcell and we heard the passacaglia in the vocal part of the 'Dirge' from Britten's *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings*. 'Passacaglia' from Hindemith's *Nobilissima Visione* was followed by an item Jason described as 'a bit mad': Ligeti's *Hungarian Rock*.

Jason's well-received session concluded with two pieces from Handel: *Concerto a due Cori in F Major* and *Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne*.

Live music recitals

Following an enjoyable evening meal and the customary witty contribution from our President, Lyndon Jenkins, it was time for the first of our two guest music ensembles to entertain us. **The Sulis Trio** is based in the area and was formed in 2006. The members are: Peter Rees, oboe, a freelance recitalist and oboe teacher; Wayne Wilkins, clarinet, an IT manager who plays in various groups for pleasure; and Jean Crook, bassoon, a retired teacher and a member of the Bath Symphony Orchestra.



The trio (pictured above) began with *Five Trios* by Handel followed by an arrangement of the *adagio* from Bach's *Trio Sonata, BWV 525*. Two Bohemian Polkas consisted of arrangements by Miloslav Richter: of *Augen der Liebe* by Antonín Dvořák and of *Bergmanns-Polka* by the lesser-known Czech, Karel Kovařovic. Gershwin for Three is Dennis Armitage's arrangement of four of that composer's best-loved numbers: *The Man I Love*, *I got Rhythm*, *Summertime* and *'Swonderful*. This varied and excellently-performed recital ended with Earl North's version of Scott Joplin's *Palm Leaf Rag*.

After a short break we were introduced to four musicians who confessed to something of an identity crisis, but some days later it was confirmed that they now wish to be known as the **Old Bones Trombone Quartet!** That will give some hint that there was much humour and jest throughout this session from a

group of enthusiasts who came together by way of Bath University and Bath Community Big Band. The opening number was a fanfare penned by quartet member Robin Benton who is also a member of Bradford-on-Avon RMS. There were arrangements of many familiar tunes for the players to get to grips with, including *Scarborough Fair*, *Finlandia*, and 'Steal Away', a traditional gospel song famously included in Tippett's oratorio *A Child of Our Time*. Three more of Robin's compositions were performed: *Rhythmic Rag* (in the style of Scott Joplin), *Stately Sarabande* and *Bouncy Boogie*.

A version of Hans Leo Hassler's *Passion Chorale* was followed by something completely different: 'With Cat-Like Tread' from G&S's *The Pirates of Penzance*. This number went down particularly well with the audience and inevitably had feet tapping. The quartet's own arrangement of a 'well-known Thomas Tallis theme' came before the final offering, again one of Robin's own creations: *Birmingham Blues*.

Allan Child's vote of thanks extended the audience's appreciation for the evening's entertainment. ●

DAVENTRY 2013

The ever-popular **FRMS Music Weekend** returns for a tenth year at the Daventry Court Hotel (formerly Barceló) from:

Friday 26th to Sunday 28th April.

Pianist PETER DONOHOE will be one of our presenters this year, together with other guests from the world of music, including of course our President, Lyndon Jenkins. There will also be a live recital by young professional musicians. Come and enjoy this opportunity to meet fellow music lovers, renew old friendships and make new ones.

The cost for the full weekend is £172 in shared accommodation (£194 for a single room). For details of the programme, day visitor charges or to book, please contact the Weekend Administrator:

Allan Child, 12 Highfield Road
Derby DE22 1GZ
T: 01332 332649
email: allan.child@thefrms.co.uk

Programme details also appear on the FRMS website: www.thefrms.co.uk

REGIONAL NEWS

Central Region The venue on November 3rd for our annual Music Day was, once again, the Quinborne Centre on the outskirts of Birmingham. The theme for the day was **Music of the Northern Nations**, more specifically Norway, Sweden and Finland. Central Region chairman Allan Child welcomed participants from across the region as well as a group from the UK Sibelius Society. John Futter (Olton RMS), Phil Ashton (Radlett Record Society) and Graham Kiteley (CMS Kidderminster) report on the proceedings.

Graham Ladley of Oswestry RMS opened the day with a presentation entitled **The Norwegian Tradition**. We were asked to guess the identity of the opening music (the Norwegian National Anthem), and then Grieg's development was outlined. His mother, who had taught him the piano, was from peasant stock and his father was a Scottish migrant. A turning point in Grieg's development was his meeting and friendship with Rickard Nordraak. Together they explored indigenous folk music in the form of 'Romantic Nationalism'. This was some 25 years before Kodály and Bartók collected folk music to incorporate into their compositions. A movement from Nordraak's early First Violin Sonata, which showed the influence of the Hardanger Fiddle playing style, was followed by the funeral march composed by Grieg after Nordraak's tragically early death. After study in Leipzig, where he was unhappy, Grieg tried his hand at a symphony, which showed, not surprisingly, Germanic influence. He was so dissatisfied with it that he inscribed it 'must never be performed'. Two years after writing the symphony, Grieg composed his concert overture *In Autumn*. This included hints of Grieg's burgeoning nationalism and incorporated folk-like melodies.

Graham then turned his attention to Svendsen, a near contemporary of Grieg, who also attended the Leipzig Conservatory. We heard the first movement of his Symphony No. 1 which also showed signs of nationalism. Svendsen was an orchestral violinist and some-time intimate friend of Wagner, but hand problems forced him to switch to composition studies. Eventually, he virtually ceased composing and turned to conducting which continued until his death in 1911.

Returning to the music of Grieg, we then heard 'Solveig's Song' and 'Storm and Shipwreck' from *Peer Gynt* followed by two songs, 'Spring' and 'A Swan', and finally two of the *Lyric Pieces*, 'March of the Trolls' and 'Remembrances' played by Norwegian pianist Leif Ove Andsnes. The presentation then concluded with Svendsen's Norwegian Rhapsody No. 1. Like the symphony excerpt, this was memorable and made one wish that he had not forsaken composing so early. This fascinating journey, showing the growth of Norwegian music during the latter half of the 19th century, was very well received. **JEF**

Sibelius at Ainola was the title for a very informative presentation given by Janet Abbotts of the UK Sibelius Society. Janet told us that, whenever she visits his home at Ainola, she feels the composer's presence. This house is now a museum dedicated to keeping alive our memories of the great Finnish master. For her first musical offering we heard the first movement of his Third Symphony, followed, as a

contrast, by the 'Oriental Procession' from *Belshazzar's Feast*, recorded in the 1930s by the LSO with Robert Kajanus, a conductor whose recordings and concerts had done so much to bring Sibelius to the attention of musical audiences the world over.

Pohjola's Daughter, Op. 49, was dedicated to Kajanus, presumably out of gratitude. This was heard in a modern recording by the Gothenburg SO, conductor Neeme Järvi. Janet's programme ended with a spirited recording of *Finlandia* in its choral version, sung by the YL Male Voice Choir under the direction of Matti Hyökki.

I feel that the purpose of Janet's presentation was to make us think of, and to invite us to explore further, the life and music of Jean Sibelius. **PA**

Mick Birchall's catholic tastes in music are well known, therefore it was no surprise to have heard popular orchestral music from the 1950s alongside pop from the award-winning group ABBA. Most people's knowledge of Swedish music is usually based on the latter along with two or three mainstream composers dating from the late 18th through to the mid 20th century. So it was inevitable that a programme entitled **Swedish Rhapsody** would open with the ever-popular composition of that title, written by Hugo Alfvén (1872-1960) and heard here in an arrangement for wind band.

Neither Johan Helmich Roman (1694-1758) nor Erik Gustaf Geijer (1783-1847) rates a mention in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Music*. The former's reputation is based on his *Drottningholmsmusiken*, written for performance in the opera house at Lake Mälaren. Geijer was an accomplished amateur musician and his song *Skärslipargossen* (The Little Knife-Grinder) proved to be a delightful piece.

Largely self-taught, Franz Berwald (1796-1868) was professor of composition at the Swedish Royal Academy of Music. His own works were largely neglected until recently, although two of his four symphonies have become relatively popular. His chamber music is particularly rewarding and we heard two movements from the Third String Quartet. In contrast to that, ABBA's ballad *Our Last Summer* had the audience quietly swinging along as the lyrics recalled a romantic summer visit to Paris. Next was an excerpt from the *Christmas Oratorio* by Andreas Hallén (1846-1925) which provided an apt reminder (as if any were needed) of the approaching festive season.

The 20th-century composer Lars-Erik Larsson (1908-1986) had a most varied career: chorus master, critic, conductor and professor of composition. We heard the 'Trumpet Concertino' from his Twelve Concertinos, Op. 45, before coming to *Midvinter* for

choir and orchestra by Wilhelm Stenhammar (1871-1927). Stenhammar was a major figure in Swedish music. His works include symphonies, piano concertos, piano sonatas, operas, and string quartets. However, it was Hugo Alfvén's music once again that brought the programme to a close. This time the Swedish Rhapsody No. 1, 'Midsummer Vigil' was performed in the original symphonic version. It is a programmatic work that includes many folk music influences depicting a midsummer dance, riots when it all goes wrong, lovers escaping to the woods (don't ask!) and returning at dawn to continue the dancing.

This was an exhilarating conclusion to a most interesting, varied and entertaining presentation. As ABBA had expressed it many years ago, Mick: 'Thank you for the music'. **GJK**

And so the day came to a close. Allan Child thanked the presenters who had made the day so interesting, and expressed special thanks to Mick Birchall who in addition to being one of the presenters had not only undertaken, as Regional Secretary, most of the organisation of the event, but also provided the splendid lunch complete with Nordic specialities. We look forward to the next event.

Yorkshire Regional Group YRG's *Autumn Day* was held on 13th October in the New North Road Baptist Church, Huddersfield. Societies in the Group take turns to host the event and this year it was Wharfedale Recorded Music, and didn't they do well! The administration, catering and entertainment - all provided by members of the Wharfedale Society - were excellent and reflected great credit on them. Tony Pook reports ...

Our first presenter, Stephen Cameron, sought to keep us **On the Tracks**. The railway is one of his great enthusiasms, music another. Wharfedale do not stint on information so the first thing we learnt was that this year is the 150th anniversary of the start of the Flying Scotsman service from Kings Cross to Edinburgh, which was inaugurated in 1862 by the Great Northern Railway. Fortified by this information we then heard that the main constituent parts of the railway were the rails, the signals and the locomotives, all leading to our first piece of music, *The Iron Foundry* by the Soviet composer Alexander Mosolov. This was literally a thumping great piece, dominated by a steam hammer amidst a cacophony of clanking, heavy machinery. More familiar territory was *Pacific 231* by the French-Swiss composer Arthur Honegger, himself a train enthusiast who is reputed to have said, 'I have always loved locomotives passionately. For me they are living creatures and I love them as others love women or horses.' Stephen's favourite recording of this was made in 1954 by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Hermann Scherchen - a powerful, mono recording made using only one microphone. We then heard one of the best-known railway pieces, Villa-Lobos's *Little Train of the Caipira*, a contrasting and more peaceful work, and very tunefully going on its merry journey until its final collision with the buffers. This time Enrique Bátiz conducted the RPO.



Stephen Cameron

Although not stated, Stephen is obviously an Elgar fan. He told us about a strange steam whistle sound that is only heard in the recording of the *Enigma Variations* made by Pierre Monteux and the LSO. He played it, I couldn't hear it, but it was a jolly good excuse to play the final three variations of the *Enigma*. Benjamin Britten wrote several works with railway associations, the best-known probably being *Night Mail* for the GPO. He also set eight poems by Thomas

Hardy, two of which, *Midnight on the Great Western* and *At the Railway Station, Upway* we heard sung by Mark Padmore accompanied by Roger Vignoles. We then went from the sublime to the ridiculous with *Bound for Glory*, which only lasted 36 seconds. Antonín Dvořák was a well-known train spotter and had enjoyed visiting New York's Grand Central Station to see the trains during his three years as Director of the National Conservatory of Music. That was sufficient excuse to play the *Furiant*, the third movement scherzo of his Seventh Symphony. Little of Sir Arthur Bliss's music seems to be played in the concert hall these days. The *Colour Symphony* and *Morning Heroes* are heard occasionally but not much else. We heard 'In the Tube at Oxford Circus', the fifth movement of *Conversations* for Flute, Oboe, Violin, Viola and 'Cello, which Bliss wrote in 1920. This was on a Naxos CD with members of the Maggini Quartet, Nicholas Daniel and Michael Cox. David Lean features trains in many of his films, the best-known being *Brief Encounter*. So this rather tenuous connection gave licence for us to hear the third movement of Rachmaninov's Second Piano Concerto, played by Martino Tirimo with the Philharmonia Orchestra. As Stephen said, 'the movie would be lost without it'.

After a splendid three-course buffet we returned for **Innovations from 1830**, two presentations linked by Berlioz's 'March to the Scaffold', the fourth movement of his *Symphonie Fantastique*. Given that our two presenters' favourite composers are Mozart and Bach respectively, the choice of Berlioz and Liszt as their chosen subjects was refreshingly unbiased.

Catherine Clarke's subject, **Berlioz: New Directions for Orchestra**, covered an exciting and rich period of development in the type of composing, the instruments, the equipment and the size of orchestras. It was the full flowering of the Romantic era, and a natural development from the Classical period, in which music became more expressive and passionate. It created new forms of composition and explored harmonies in ways not attempted in earlier times. As an example of this new development Catherine chose a section of Berlioz's *Grande Messe*

des Morts, written in 1837, only ten years after the death of Beethoven. This new individual sound was not loud, as might have been expected, but a delicate and innovative setting for high flute, violas, four violins and tenor voice. Berlioz was an excellent orchestrator and it was said that this was partly due to the fact that he was not hampered by playing the piano. Hector Berlioz was born in 1803 into a



Catherine Clarke

household of conflict: his father, Louis-Joseph, who was responsible for most of his education, was a doctor and an atheist with a liberal outlook; his mother, Marie-Antoinette, was an orthodox Roman Catholic. Berlioz was not an infant prodigy, first studying music at the age of twelve, when he learnt to play the flute and guitar (there was no piano in the house) and started to write small compositions and arrangements. His father intended him to be a doctor so, at the age of seventeen, he went to Paris to start his medical studies. Here, for the first time, he heard an orchestra – a revelation – and at the Opera he found he was more interested in what was happening in the pit than on the stage.

Berlioz did not like his first medical dissection and soon realised that music was his main interest. He had some success as a composer, and probably more as a music critic, but continued to learn, for example, sitting in with the orchestral players and turning pages, to get the feel of live music. He began to attend the Paris Conservatoire and asked fellow-students to play through his early compositions, and this included Chopin for piano works.

In 1828 the Conservatoire Orchestra performed all the Beethoven symphonies, which was another revelation, and at that time Beethoven and Shakespeare became his idols - the latter probably as a result of performances in Paris by an Anglo-Irish company of actors, including Harriet Smithson, with whom he became obsessed. His *Symphonie Fantastique*, first performed in 1830, was a new departure for the symphony: very passionate, rhythmic and melodic, it followed through with an idea linking the movements (episodes in the life of an artist). It also explored new techniques, for example, dividing the violins so that their two parts intersected. From this we heard the fourth movement, 'The March to the Scaffold'.

This was a very productive time for Berlioz, including his marriage to Harriet Smithson. They had one son but, for two temperamentally fiery characters, it was not a happy marriage. Still, Berlioz had a wife and son to support and he could not manage on his earnings from music, so he started to write for the press. He wrote articles on instrumentation that became the basis of his book, *A Treatise on Instrumentation and Orchestration*, which was to influence musicians for the next 100 years. New developments came to the fore at this time with the introduction of the double-action harp, and valves for

brass. Berlioz admired the work of Adolphe Sax who invented the saxophone, basically using a clarinet mouthpiece instead of the traditional brass mouthpiece. Berlioz did not actually use Sax's instruments in his works, but he did introduce the bass trombone to France, hitherto only used in Germany. In the 1840s Berlioz travelled extensively in Europe as a conductor in performances of both his own music and that of other composers, and it was at this time that he gave a number of concerts at the Drury Lane Theatre, London.

Catherine spoke of the importance of building structures on the performance and sound of music, and to illustrate this she played the *Agnus Dei* from Berlioz's Requiem, which starts very quietly. On 4th December 1830, the day before the premiere of the *Symphonie Fantastique*, Berlioz met Liszt and they became life-long friends. In fact Liszt was one of the few people whom Berlioz addressed as 'tu'. In 1834 Liszt, at his own expense, published a piano transcription of the *Symphonie Fantastique* years before proper publication of the orchestral score. He did this to promote the work, not to upstage it.

Although we had a short break between them, the transition from Catherine's programme to Caroline Moseley's was seamless because **The Widening of Horizons for the Piano** started with Liszt's transcription of Berlioz's 'March to the Scaffold', played by Nicolai Petrov. The transcription of the Berlioz work was done in 1834. Liszt's transcription



Caroline Moseley

of the Beethoven symphonies had to wait until 1876 when he considered the piano had been developed sufficiently to be able to reflect the subtle nuances of the works. These transcriptions were not to everyone's taste: Clara Schumann said she hated Liszt from the bottom of her heart, whereas Robert Schumann had welcomed the earlier

Berlioz transcription as the work of a master.

A further development of the piano was demonstrated with an early EMI recording of Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No. 10, played by György Cziffra. This was followed by Liszt's Variations on a Bach Cantata, a Naxos recording of Andreas Rothkopf on the Sauer Organ of the Evangelische Stadtkirche, Bad Homburg, Germany.

Caroline mentioned the animosity which was directed at Liszt from various quarters, which puzzled Berlioz: was this because of envy or in response to Liszt's rather pointed wit? Whatever the reason, Liszt still had many admirers, and continued to demonstrate his skill both as a pianist and a composer. This was further demonstrated in the final music example, Marc-André Hamelin playing Liszt's *Reminiscences of Don Juan*, which is more than a transcription, rather a personal portrayal of Mozart's infamous hero. ●



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

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A VIEW FROM YORKSHIRE Jim Bostwick, Secretary

Reflecting on my first Annual General Meeting as Federation secretary, two things occur to me. First, that the frenetic activity leading up to it, which started last August and really took on apace from September, was not too strewn with errors, save for not remembering to invite the President and Vice-President! Second, that once in Bath, all seemed to progress smoothly, and that feeling of satisfaction, not to say relief, was encouraging. Of course, the representatives from affiliated societies are absolutely vital for the Federation's major business meeting of the year and I thank them all for their attendance and participation. To those Lansdown Grove Hotel guests who, like me, contracted the winter vomiting bug norovirus on arriving back home – how considerate in their timing are those miniscule scraps of DNA – I offer my belated condolences. I wonder how the other hotel guests managed (a Shearings coach party, I think); they were moving on as we were leaving. Perhaps it's best not to dwell on it.

Another aspect of the Federation secretary's role is to ensure that the annual return to Companies House is not late. Last year's return nearly was. This is important, because lateness results in a hefty fine, and I mean seriously hefty, whereas the fee required for an online return is a mere £13 which I reclaim



from our treasurer. The Companies House return requires that details of the Federation's directors (i.e. its officers and committee) are up to date. But for me, and I suspect for many readers, the interaction with some remote computer (I think 'server' is the correct term) can be accompanied by a range of emotions, from mild anxiety to seemingly complete nervous breakdown, accompanied by intense use of expletives directed at a totally inanimate object.

It is usernames, passwords and security codes that are the usual suspects which make one ponder one's sanity. You only have yourself to blame if you can't remember them from one year ago; after all, it was you that decided what they should be. How did/do we manage without the home computer? My local adult learning centre puts on special free courses for 'more senior learners' who wish to come to grips with the technology. I haven't enrolled yet but I have my 'Your State Pension – Your options – Your decision' booklet to ponder, and it emphasises how convenient it is to 'do it' online. For me or for them, I wonder. Perhaps I should be reassured by the photo, on the cover, of a smiling fair-haired woman who looks quite young. I'll let you know how I get on because if I don't make a claim, I won't get any money. They don't say much in the booklet about making a late return.

The weather must have affected some affiliated societies across the land although, surprisingly, correspondence and emails haven't reflected this at all. Yorkshire is quite hilly but vulnerable in certain areas, and York particularly so. The River Calder, which flows through Brighouse, has reached record levels over the wettest months in my lifetime. Fortunately, it is wide and fairly deep on our stretch so we have been spared; not so places like Hebden Bridge, Todmorden and Mytholmroyd which, being further up the Calder Valley where the river is faster and shallower, have really caught it. And of course, we've seen news coverage of the floods further south. Anyway, I hope any affected readers are coping. No doubt insurers will want any claims, initially at least, to be made 'online'!

FRMS YORKSHIRE REGIONAL GROUP MUSICAL WEEKEND

THE CROWN SPA HOTEL, SCARBOROUGH
FRIDAY 22ND TO MONDAY 25TH MARCH 2013

Geoffrey Kinder: Sir Charles Mackerras
Peter Bacon: Gems From a Treasure Trove
Ruth Waterman: Grappling with Bach
Geoff Scargill: Bernstein: Beyond West Side Story
Raymond Watton: Stravinsky Under The Microphone
David Denton: An Update on Naxos
Alan George: The Fitzwilliam Quartet - My English Friends
Gary Midgley: From Foreign Lands & People

Book for two or three days, or for single sessions.
Full details available from
JIM BOSTWICK, YRG Secretary
6 OAKROYD CLOSE, BRIGHOUSE HD6 4BP
01484 717865 jim_bostwick@hotmail.com

FRMS Scottish Group Spring Music Day

Saturday 27th April 2013
Sandison Hall, St Fillans PH6 2NF
from 1 pm

St Fillans is a village in the central highlands of Scotland, in the district of Perth and Kinross. It lies at the eastern end of Loch Earn, 6 km west of Comrie on the A85 road.

- **Landmarks in Recorded Music** presented by John Southorn of St Fillans Music Circle
- **FRMS Scottish Group AGM**
- **Second speaker to be announced**

Conference Fee £12 (*includes buffet lunch and tea*)
Further information from John Maidment

Tel: 01241 853017; email: johnmaidment@msn.com
Booking forms can also be downloaded from the FRMS website.

Royal Philharmonic Society Bicentenary

RPS Press Consultant Sophie Cohen celebrates 200 years of a major force in British music

EXACTLY 200 YEARS after the first public concert by one of the world's most illustrious musical institutions, the Royal Philharmonic Society (RPS), the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment played the RPS-premiered Symphony No. 2 by Schumann at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, London on 8th March 2013. Bicentenary celebrations throughout the year will put the spotlight on the Society's unparalleled contribution to music, with the emphasis as much on the music of the future as on the many triumphs of the past.

The year brings together new commissions from leading and emerging composers, and reaches out to audiences through live performances, debates, exhibitions and broadcasts. A new website offers digitisation of the extraordinary RPS Archive at the British Library, which provides a unique insight into two centuries of concert-giving and concert-going in the UK. A new iPad app dedicated to the Society's most famous commission, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, will be available. The Society's extended support of young artists will be celebrated through a series of awards and bursaries: from practical support, with the purchase of the very tools of their trade – quality instruments – to mentoring and opportunities for further study with the best in the business. An RPS Bicentenary Appeal has already raised over half of its target of £270,000 to invest in talented young musicians and composers. The RPS receives no public funding. It is a registered charity supported by member subscriptions, partnerships and the generosity of individual donors.

History

The Royal Philharmonic Society was born on 24th January 1813 when a group of professional musicians met at 17 Manchester Street, London, the home of Henry Dance. The annual Philharmonic season of concerts neatly coincided with the 'London season', when Parliament sat and high society was in town. Mendelssohn's final concert with the Society in 1847 attracted 'numerous attendance of rank and fashion'. An early Philharmonic superstar was the virtuoso double bassist Domenico Dragonetti. He brought his dog Carlo to performances and commanded higher fees than almost any other player. The Philharmonic Society received its Royal moniker in 1913 to mark its centenary; the Society's Patron is Her Majesty the Queen. Its first Royal Command performance was in 1843.

The history of the Royal Philharmonic Society is also the history of two centuries of classical music in Britain. In 1813, the aims of the fledgling Philharmonic Society were 'to promote the performance, in the most perfect manner possible, of the best and most approved instrumental music' and

to 'encourage an appreciation by the public in the art of music'. The Philharmonic Society was determined to make a case for serious music and lost no time in forming associations with composers, including Beethoven. Audiences for Philharmonic Society concerts were unified in 'one great object: the love of their art.'

Wagner was musical director of the 1855 Philharmonic Society Season and conducted all eight concerts. To Wagner, the worst thing about London was 'the worthlessness, insolence, venality and vulgarity of the press'. He hated the weather too!

The Society's rarely-seen 19th-century Schaller bust of Beethoven (pictured below) will take pride of place at celebratory concerts nationwide throughout 2013. Given to the Royal Philharmonic Society in 1870 in commemoration of the Centenary of Beethoven's birth, the marble bust used to be a regular feature at Philharmonic Society concerts in the 19th and 20th centuries, but has only made one public appearance in the past three decades. The bust was given to the Philharmonic Society in 1870 in recognition of its kindness to Beethoven during his final years. The Society's conductor, the indefatigable WG Cusins, volunteered to collect it and made the journey to Budapest 'without any difficulty, though trains were delayed on account of the conveyance of troops'.



Image courtesy RPS

The RPS continued to give concerts throughout two world wars. During World War II, the Society stepped in for the BBC to mount the Proms of 1940 and 1941. During World War I, as well as underwriting every season, Sir Thomas Beecham conducted all but five concerts. A performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony scheduled for March 1916 was cancelled due to the problems of assembling a chorus at a time of 'difficulties of transport and the abandonment of railway concessions'. The first public performance of Gustav Holst's *The Planets* - minus 'Venus' and 'Neptune' - was given in London under the auspices of the Royal Philharmonic Society on 27th February 1919, conducted by Adrian Boult.

By founding the Philharmonic Society, British musicians opened the doors to the world's best music and performers, and created a channel of communication that has hummed ever since. These aims hold true today and 200 years on, the Society still stands at the heart of music in the UK. Today, RPS membership is a 50/50 split between professional musicians and music lovers.

Pianist Alfred Brendel, speaking at the launch of RPS200, said: 'I feel privileged to be able to say a few words about a Society which has commissioned and premiered so much important music. Throughout its history, the Society has made choices which today may seem prescient, but at the time were brave and

bold – wonderful pieces by Beethoven and Mendelssohn, but also by Bartók, Elliott Carter or Lutosławski which brought the shock-of-the-new to audiences, yet have become part of the repertoire and continue to resonate, enthrall, or at times, tantalise and frustrate, today. It's good to hear that the RPS is continuing to stir things up, and growing old disgracefully: please keep commissioning composers, keep supporting musicians, keep talking about music and keep championing excellence. It needs organisations like the RPS to remind us that young artists take time to develop, that composers require opportunities for their voices to be heard and that serious music and musicians are vital, and should be valued. Great artists never stop learning, and great musicians never stop listening.'

Beethoven's Ninth Symphony

The Royal Philharmonic Society enjoyed close links with Beethoven right from its foundation, giving first performances of his Fifth and Seventh Symphonies and the First, Third and Fourth Piano Concertos. In 1817, the Society paid Beethoven 50 guineas as a commission for a new symphony: the monumental Ninth Symphony. One of the greatest works of art to celebrate humanity and brotherhood, Beethoven's Ninth continues to inspire people of all ages around the world, providing the anthem for the European Union and even hitting the right note with myriad celebrities, who have made it the most requested work on BBC Radio 4's *Desert Island Discs*.

In 1827, when the Society learnt that Beethoven was both ill and much in need of money, the directors decided that a sum of £100 should be sent to him 'to be applied to his comforts and necessities'. The money, held up en route, reached him only a few days before he died, but time enough for him to express his heartfelt appreciation to the Society. Anton Schindler, his amanuensis, reported that 'the Society had comforted his last days, and that event on the brink of the grave, he thanked the Society and the whole English nation for the great gift, God bless them.'

RPS Gold Medal



Photo courtesy RPS Archive/British Library

The RPS Gold Medal is one of the most privileged honours in music; fewer than 100 medals have been presented since 1871. Pianist Mitsuko Uchida is the most recent recipient; others include Sir Simon Rattle, Dame Janet Baker, Thomas Quasthoff, Sir Colin Davis, Bernard Haitink, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Alfred Brendel, Plácido Domingo, Pierre Boulez, Claudio Abbado, Henri Dutilleux and Elliott Carter.

Honorary Membership of the RPS is awarded in recognition of services to music. Since 1826, when the first recipient was Carl Maria von Weber, Honorary Membership has been awarded fewer than

130 times. Recent recipients include conductor Sir Mark Elder and composer George Benjamin.

RPS Awards, Commissions and World Premieres

Stephen Hough, Alina Ibragimova and composer Julian Anderson are just a few of the world-class musicians that the Society has supported with grants and awards during their formative years. Conductors Edward Gardner and Gustavo Dudamel, and tenor Ian Bostridge are amongst those spotted by the Society early in their careers and awarded the RPS Music Award for Young Artists.

RPS Music Awards speakers have often raised debate - and an eyebrow or two. Artist Grayson Perry remains the only speaker to date to wear an inflatable PVC dress!

Commissions and world premieres include: Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 4 in A, 'Italian', as well as his Trumpet Overture in C and Concert aria 'Infelice', Op. 94. Parry's Symphony No. 3 in F, Dvořák's Cello Concerto and Delius's Song of the High Hills are other examples, as are Holst's *The Planets*, Vaughan Williams's Symphony No. 9, Walton's *Variations on a Theme of Hindemith*, Bartók's Concerto for 2 pianos, percussion and orchestra (revised edition), Hoddinott's *Variants for Orchestra*, Musgrave's Clarinet Concerto, Lutosławski's Cello Concerto and Elliott Carter's *Of Rewaking*.



Early directors and conductors were given engraved ivory tickets for Philharmonic Society performances. These are now housed in the RPS Archives. Photo courtesy RPS

Into the third century

John Gilhooly, chairman of the RPS, comments: 'The Royal Philharmonic Society is that rare beast: an organisation that has stayed true to its founding principles, yet has a distinctive voice that speaks loud and clear in the 21st century. We continue to be bold of ambition, a guiding hand to younger musicians and a partner to distinguished artists. We unashamedly beat the drum for excellence and creative thinking and 200 years on, musicians and those who love music remain at the very heart of our work. As we move into our third century, we will continue to champion excellence and to be an independent voice for "the love of our art", so that the composers and musicians that we support today will become the history-makers of tomorrow.'

More information at www.rps200.org ●

SOCIETY NEWS

News from Sheffield

There were, for many years, two societies in Sheffield. The Sheffield Recorded Music Club no longer exists and we have changed our name from Sheffield Gramophone Society to Sheffield Recorded Music Society.

2012 has been a very successful year for Sheffield RMS. We have had a number of guest speakers, as well as members presenting, who have introduced us to a variety of music. With the individual approaches to their programmes, they have enhanced our appreciation, understanding and pleasure.

The 75th Anniversary of the founding of the Federation of Recorded Music Societies occurred in 2011 and the Federation asked societies to put forward the names of any members who had



particularly long service records. One belated nomination was made for Ray Cottam, who had originally joined Sheffield Recorded Music Club in 1956 and subsequently joined the Sheffield Gramophone Society (SGS) in 1974. Ray was secretary of the Yorkshire Regional Group (YRG) from 1976-1986 and treasurer of SGS from 1995-2010. Our picture shows Ray with his certificate, which was presented by Jim Bostwick, current secretary of both the Federation and the Yorkshire Regional Group, at YRG's Autumn Music Day in Huddersfield.



Unfortunately, our season was marred by the death of one of our long-standing members and former chairman, Peter Roscoe. He joined the Society in 1956 and passed away in May this year at the age of 81. Peter (pictured) was a man who, together with his erudition, brought a sense of humour to our meetings. He produced a wide range of programmes, but had particular

passions for French and British music. Peter was able to convey his enthusiasm with a relaxed style of presentation, which concealed a most meticulous preparation, as witnessed by the copious notes found following his death. Annually he would travel to present programmes to the Derby and Ripley Societies. For some years Peter was the secretary of the North Midlands Gramophone Group, which in 1965 became the Yorkshire Regional Group. He received his 50-year certificate in his home, since he was no longer well enough to attend our meetings. As well as listening to music, Peter also played various instruments and was the musical director of the Sheffield Branch of the Society of Recorder Players. For many years he taught music in a Sheffield primary school and also gave private lessons. Peter was an inspirational teacher and in recognition of this was awarded the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal in 1977.

Margaret Turner, secretary

Street and Glastonbury RMG celebrates Diamond Anniversary

Street and Glastonbury Recorded Music Group was formed in 1953 by Percy Candy of Glastonbury, with the aim of meeting with other music lovers to listen to recordings in a friendly and informal atmosphere. Initially meetings were held in Percy's home in Roman Way Glastonbury, but soon other members offered to accommodate the group. Sixty years on, meetings are still held in members' homes, about half of them in that of the secretary. Presenters are drawn from the membership with a sprinkling from similar groups in the area and other guests. Joining the group does not commit a member to hosting or presenting programmes, although anyone wishing to do so is doubly welcome! As with most societies, the membership is drawn mainly from the senior stratum of the population, but unlike some of those, the group has managed to retain numbers in the mid-twenties. Being in a fairly rural district the catchment area is quite wide; members are drawn from as far afield as Wells and Bridgwater! Meetings are held once a month throughout the year.

An important aspect of the group is that it enables members to widen their musical horizons and to hear works that they otherwise might not make the effort to listen to when they are played on the radio. The choice of music covers a wide range and the aim is to cater for all tastes. It has to be admitted, though, that the more avant-garde composers tend to be somewhat neglected.

Initially, programmes were planned by the small committee but, when Percy Candy died suddenly in 1960, I was asked to take over as secretary. Apart from two short breaks when absent from the area, I have held the post ever since. There was never a formal structure to the committee and eventually I was asked to undertake the planning and admin alone, thus being in the enviable position of heading a committee of one! Since expenses are low, the

group can operate on a small budget with the subscription being a modest £5 per annum, which works out at about 42 pence per evening. How many societies can beat that for value for money?

As to the future, there are no plans to attempt to enlarge the group since everyone is happy with the informality of the meetings. It is feared this would be lost were the group to move to larger premises, not to mention the additional burden and expense of purchasing, storing and insuring equipment.

Brendan Sadler, secretary

Long service Bath RMS

Doreen and Len Farthing recently received their FRMS Long Service Certificates after 61 years' continuous membership. They are pictured here with



FRMS vice-chairman Roger Apps. Sadly, the Bath Society has since disbanded.

West Wickham RMS

The West Wickham Recorded Music Society can report another very active year in 2012, with regular fortnightly recitals throughout the year, concert and opera outings, a musical weekend, and a musical holiday abroad.

The first main event in the year was the Society's annual buffet-supper and concert in March held in the Adams Hall of Bencurtis Park, West Wickham. A large group sat down to a very varied meal. The concert was given by the Siskin Trio - clarinet, viola and piano - from the Trinity School of Music, based in the Old Naval College, Greenwich. The programme commenced with Mozart's Trio in E flat, K. 498, 'Kegelstatt' and Schumann's *Fairy Tales* Op. 132 closed the first part of the concert. The evening continued with the Trio playing an arrangement of Waldteufel's waltz *The Skaters* and Debussy's 'Pagodes' from the *Estampes* suite. Finally, the very enjoyable concert ended with the witty Trio for Clarinet, Viola and Piano by Jean Françaix.

Our annual musical weekend was held at the Imperial Hotel, Eastbourne in late April. Over 50 members attended the event, the chosen theme being 'Commemorative Choice' which celebrated the two main highlights of the country's year. Members of the organising committee presented CD programmes to include an item with a Royal connection to mark

HM the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, and another item to feature the London Olympic Games. A wide variety of pieces resulted, reflecting the musical experiences of the presenters. These included Eric Coates's march *The Princess Elizabeth*, the Intermezzo from Sibelius's *Karelia Suite* (to mark the Olympic Games in Finland in 1952), Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance* March No. 1 and Vaughan Williams's Mass in G, which formed part of the Coronation ceremony in 1953.

The weekend closed with a large-screen presentation of the Coronation Scene from *Boris Godunov* by Mussorgsky. The customary walk along the promenade on Sunday morning was rained off, but this did not dampen the enjoyment of our 29th musical weekend, and gave more time for socialising.

Perhaps the most ambitious event of the year was the musical holiday to the opera season in Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia. A five-day, four-night tour by air was arranged in late June to take in three operas and one ballet. These were attended in the evenings at the two opera houses, with visits to places of interest in Bratislava during the day. On the first and second evenings, the group went to the Slovak New Building, first to see Verdi's *Otello* with superb singing, costumes and settings in a finely-realised production sung in Italian. Next evening was Tchaikovsky's ballet *Sleeping Beauty*, the choreography by Marius Petipa. This was a colourful performance with excellent soloists and the Corps de Ballet of the Slovak National Theatre Ballet.

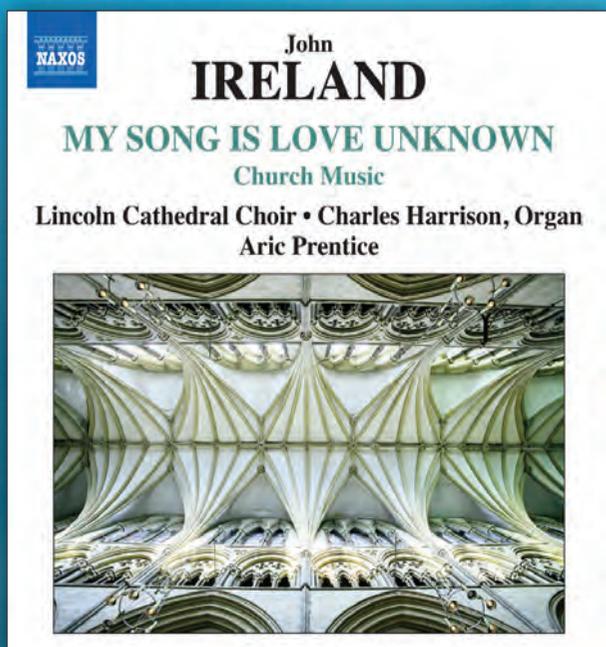
On the third and fourth evenings the group attended the historic Opera House of 1886, decorated in the Neo-Renaissance style with a magnificent auditorium. Members saw *Nabucco* by Verdi, sung in Italian, in period costumes of 600 BC, telling the story of the Babylonians entering Jerusalem. The famous 'Va, pensiero' (also known as 'Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves') in Act III was a very moving part of the opera. The final visit was to Donizetti's *La Fille du Régiment* (The Daughter of the Regiment). This *opéra comique*, set in the Tyrol, was an elaborate production played in high spirits, almost as a pantomime.

During each day, members had a walking tour of the historic city, set on the River Danube, which included the 11th-Century St Martin's Cathedral. Beyond the city, the party went to Červený Kameň (Red Stone Castle) of the Renaissance period, with its art gallery. There was a wine-tasting session and a boat trip down the Danube to the Gothic Devín Castle, built on a 200-metre cliff. This was our 23rd musical holiday and the eighth abroad; many members considered it the best yet.

Our summer outing, to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, was to the Royal Festival Hall on the South Bank, for a concert specially arranged by the Philharmonia Orchestra, under Sir Andrew Davis. The programme of English music commenced with William Walton's coronation march *Crown Imperial* followed by Natalie Clein as soloist in



BRITISH CHORAL MUSIC



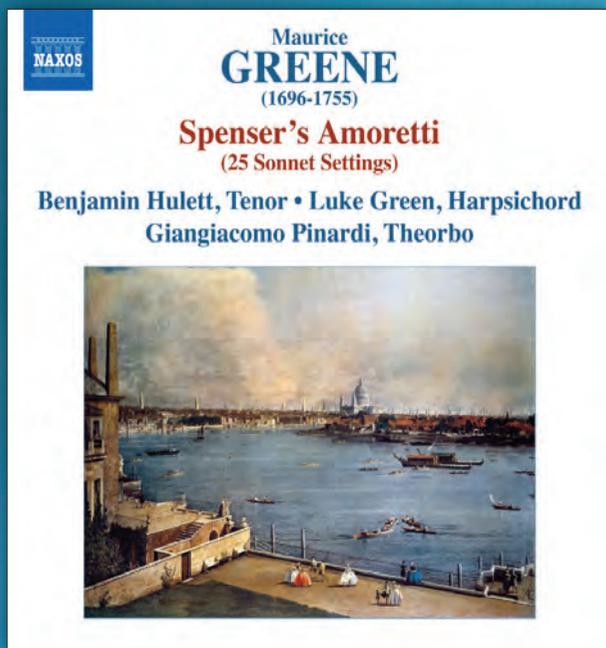
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Hailed by the RSCM for their 'sumptuous' sound, the Lincoln Cathedral Choir breathe new life into the much-loved works of John Ireland.



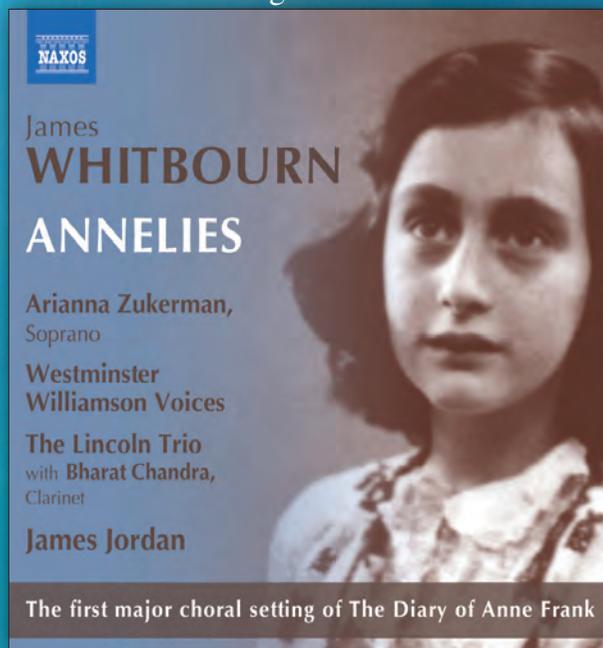
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These powerful settings, with their rich variety of vocal colours and textures, are a testament to John McCabe's status as one of Britain's leading musicians.



8.572891

A master of word-painting technique, these glorious sonnet settings underline Maurice Greene's historical importance in English music.



8.573070

Whitbourn's music for this first major choral setting of *The Diary of Anne Frank* has been described as 'woundingly beautiful'.

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Elgar's Cello Concerto in E minor. The celebratory concert ended with Gustav Holst's suite *The Planets*.

The concert was preceded by a cruise for nearly 60 members on the Regent's Canal from Little Venice, through Regent's Park to Camden Lock and return. The Society also had outings to the Royal Albert Hall for a BBC Promenade Concert - the main work being Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5 - as well as to Glyndebourne on Tour at Glyndebourne for Dvořák's *Rusalka*.

Our final event was a pre-Christmas visit to the Royal Festival Hall for a semi-staged performance of Franz Lehár's *Merry Widow*. The Philharmonia Orchestra, soloists and chorus were conducted by John Wilson in a sparkling production to a sold-out hall. This was hugely enjoyable.

Membership remains steady at 110 and plans are already in hand by the committee to repeat our annual events and visits, which are very popular and add a vital dimension to the Society.

Phillip Cox (chairman), Eileen Taylor (vice-chairman)

Torbay Music Weekend

Many Music Societies are represented at this annual musical weekend in Torbay. The Palace Hotel is a delightful venue in which the gracious comforts, and many facilities, enhance an intense weekend of listening to music from top quality (Bowers & Wilkins) reproduction equipment. The programme meets all tastes and 2012 was breaking new ground.

We opened on Friday evening with soprano **Charlotte de Rothschild** playing some beautiful but not necessarily well-known music; some was written by her composer ancestor. Charlotte told many background stories of her family's contribution to patronage of composers and conductors of their day.

The Tingle Factor by Colin Stanley was a wide-ranging, entertaining and emotive conclusion to the first day.

Saturday began with Tim Porter looking into the mysterious origins of the **Three Choirs Festival** and its place in social history, illustrated with exquisite performances. This was followed by Robert Reid whose programme, **Piano in Jazz**, proved very popular. There was an informal DVD session when we watched Tony Palmer's film, *Ladies and Gentlemen, Miss Renée Fleming*. This was an opportunity to hear some Verdi, Strauss, Mozart, and others, by a world-class artist, accompanied by glimpses of a family life.

The longest-serving member of Torbay Recorded Music Society, John J Davis, returned to share one of his passions: **Leopold Stokowski**. John included Stokowski's first and last recordings from 1917 and 1977, giving us a broad and varied selection of great music. Seasoned presenter **Terry Barfoot** explored the nature of Ravel's genius and examined the scores of *Mother Goose* and the Piano Concerto for Left Hand. **Hidden Delights**, featuring an intriguing selection of music, was presented to the late night audience by Peter Lymbery.

The **AGM** was held on Sunday. A decline in numbers had made future financing of the Weekend potentially unviable, but a proposal to curtail future Weekends did not get the required two-thirds majority. Guarantors were found to take on a possible deficit and volunteers for the committee were sought – and found – to replace those retiring.

The day continued in an upbeat mood, with Lynne Plummer looking at **Conductors – Who Needs 'Em?** Her presentation included a number of interesting interviews, and it appears that we do need them!

Adrian Farmer of Wyastone/Nimbus, who is also an accomplished accompanist, was well-equipped to explain **How Great Pianists Become Great**. This was followed by a feast of music and anecdotes by **Peter Yeman** drawn from his pre-concert interviews with the famous.

The Weekend concluded with a rousing and totally enjoyable entertainment of traditional songs, dance tunes and readings by the **New Scorpion Band**. The Weekend was judged by some to be the best yet; why don't you come next November? More details can be found on the Friends of Torbay website at www.fot.org.uk

John Isaac, chairman

Sad loss at Horsham

It is with sadness that I report the death of Peter Dinnage following ill health over several years. Peter, who joined the Horsham Recorded Music Society in 1963, will be known to many members of other societies who will remember him as a guest speaker. He was the guiding light of our Society and he served progressively as secretary, chairman and latterly, President.

We will miss his unfailing good humour, displayed in both the running of the Society as well as the range and depth of knowledge of the music that he shared with us.

David Goddard, Treasurer

Did you know?

Our website lists every society affiliated to the Federation and provides links to their websites where applicable.

It is possible to browse copies of the *Bulletin* as far back as Autumn 1999.

There are pages providing details of the Federation's strategy policies, and others offering guidance on forming a society from scratch, all you need to know about copyright issues, and much more.

www.thefrms.co.uk

REVIEWS

ERNŐ DOHNÁNYI:**The Complete Solo Piano Music, Vol. 2**

Martin Roscoe (piano)

Hyperion CDA67932 79'47"

Gramophone describes Martin Roscoe as a master pianist and indeed, along with my RMS friends, I have thoroughly enjoyed Martin's visits over the years to the Recital Series in our town. Given that he is an authority on Dohnányi's music, who better to guide me on my

journey of discovery of this composer's music. This disc concentrates on his earliest works.

The opening **Four Piano Pieces, Op. 2**, was written when the composer was in his late teens and it immediately grabs the attention, leaving you eager to explore the other items. Having recently worked my way through the complete works of Chopin, it is soon apparent that Dohnányi's style – at least in these early works – is not a giant leap from that of the Polish master.

The composer was fond of the theme-and-variations form and here, in the **Variations and Fugue on a theme of EG, Op. 4**, 'EG' refers to one Emma Gruber who learned piano with Ernő. She was a promoter of new talent and was a patron of Bartók and Kodály, eventually marrying the latter. **Humoresques in the form of a suite, Op 17**, harks back to musical styles of the past while **Valses nobles** is a transcription of Schubert's work of the same name. This piece makes for a very satisfying final track and I look forward to hearing more of this series.

Ernő's grandson is the conductor Christoph von Dohnányi, well known for long stints at the Cleveland Orchestra and the Philharmonia, and there is a tragic footnote to this family's history. Christoph's father Hans (Ernő's son) was active in the German resistance and was executed in 1944 at Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

PRA

**BRITTEN: Serenade for tenor, horn & strings;
Nocturne for tenor, obbligato instruments & strings;
FINZI: Dies Natalis**

Mark Padmore (tenor); Stephen Bell (horn); Britten Sinfonia, Jacqueline Shave (director)

Harmonia Mundi HMU807552 78'29"

This superb recording of two works by Benjamin Britten is absolute testament to a quote from the *Daily Telegraph*: '...there are few more thrilling and many-coloured things in British music than Britten Sinfonia on top form.'

Serenade and Nocturne are both song cycles of poems by renowned British authors. The Britten Sinfonia strings, horn soloist Stephen Bell, and the internationally acclaimed tenor Mark Padmore complement each other perfectly in a sensitive interpretation that conveys the unique essence of these difficult compositions. Serenade (1942) was written at the request of the brilliant horn player, Dennis Brain. The poems have a common theme of twilight and, by

CDs reviewed by Thelma Shaw and Paul Astell

association, death but without decay. Within the glorious horn solos opening and closing the work is a rise and fall of elegiac passages demonstrating Britten's mastery of linking words and music.

Nocturne (1958) explores the mysterious world of dreams, from the menacing to the tranquil. It was a world that fascinated Britten, who linked poems in a seamless sequence to show how the dreamer is affected. Britten said of the work: 'It won't be madly popular because it is the strangest and remotest thing.' In the event, it was a triumph, premièred by his partner, the tenor Peter Pears.

Finzi's lyrical *Dies Natalis* (1938-9) is a cycle of poems by the 17th-century poet Thomas Traherne, set as a continuous musical expression of joy and wonder at the beauty of God's creation in this mortal world.

This CD is an appropriate release in Britten's centenary year. Members of Britten Sinfonia are soloists in their own right and, rather than having a principal conductor or director, the ensemble works in partnership with each guest artist. On this recording, its superb performance with Mark Padmore and its own Stephen Bell will delight lovers of this genre and is a tribute to its namesake composer. The CD comes with a booklet containing all the poems and comprehensive biographies. Buy it! TMS

**BAX: Phantasy for viola and orch; VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: Suite for viola & small orch;
HOLLAND: Ellingham Marshes for viola & orch;
HARVEY: Reflections for viola & small orch**

Roger Chase (viola); BBC Concert Orchestra, Stephen Bell, Richard Harvey (conductors)

Dutton Epoch CDLX 7295 79'13"

The shadow of the legendary viola advocate, Lionel Tertis, looms large over this CD issue. The Bax and Vaughan Williams are both dedicated to Tertis, as is the Holland to Winifred Copperwheat, a Tertis pupil. The brilliant soloist here, Roger Chase, performs on Tertis's

instrument. In Bax's *Phantasy*, the first of three uninterrupted movements is notable for several solo trumpet entries. The second and third inevitably reflect the composer's affinity with Ireland, the latter featuring a quotation from a Sinn Féin marching song that became the Irish national anthem. Theodore Holland composed in a wide variety of forms, including for the theatre. The beautiful *Ellingham Marshes* evokes the changing moods of the Suffolk landscape. The work first appeared during the 1940 Proms series but has been rescued from obscurity by Roger Chase. The lyrical Vaughan Williams *Suite* was written nine years after his better-known viola work, *Flos Campi*, also dedicated to Tertis. Richard Harvey's *Reflections* was written in 1990 although this is the composer's updated 2012 version. A modern piece it may be and obviously contrasts with what's gone before, but it remains a fairly approachable work. The composer's sleeve note explains that some sections are in the style of TV music that he and Chase had collaborated on in the 1980s and '90s.

Once again, Dutton serves British music in first-rate fashion. PRA

A Special Relationship? A tale of two recipients of the RPS Gold Medal

SOME YEARS AGO I presented a programme on the life and music of Brahms, and for my final musical extract I chose Kathleen Ferrier singing 'O Tod, wie bitter bist du' from the *Four Serious Songs*, in the recording that she made with John Newmark for Decca in July 1950. During my research for the programme I discovered that both composer and singer were recipients of the Royal Philharmonic Society Gold Medal, and I was intrigued by the coincidence. Nor was that the only one I found; further reflection showed me that that particular song was peculiarly appropriate as a means of exploring the different characters and personal circumstances of composer and singer.

The song's text is taken from the Book of Ecclesiasticus and contrasts the prospect of death as it appears to a happy, prosperous and healthy person with how it seems to one who is old and careworn, with nothing left to look forward to. Brahms's setting of the two verses points up the contrast in every possible way: melodic shape, key signature, time signature, dynamics, and accompaniment.

The first verse is in E minor and begins with the composer's trademark chain of falling thirds, accompanied by stark *forte* chords. These, together with the slow triple metre and angular accompaniment, convey a sense of solemnity and foreboding that reinforces the words: the thought of death is bitter to those who enjoy life and have all they need.

The verse ends with a repetition of the opening, then everything changes; the music modulates into a warm and consoling E major, the time signature expands into a broader 4/2 metre, and the accompaniment becomes predominantly *piano*, with a gentle, rocking quality. Whereas the first verse opened with falling thirds, the second begins with their inversion, a rising sixth, followed by a rising fourth, and this, combined with the other changes, immediately lifts the prevailing mood: death is welcome to those who are needy, old and weak and have no pleasure in life.

When Brahms composed the song, in spring 1896, he was within a year of his own death, and when Ferrier made this recording she was a little over three years from hers. Both were probably already suffering from the cancer that would eventually kill them, although in neither case were the signs yet marked. Brahms's condition deteriorated rapidly in the months immediately following the writing of the *Four Serious Songs*, which proved to be his penultimate composition, and the last to be published in his lifetime. Ferrier had a typically busy 1950 which included many months' travelling in North America, Europe and the UK. Reports of tiredness, with hindsight, have been put down to more than the normal stresses of touring; her diagnosis came in March 1951, eight months after the recording.

Once their illnesses were confirmed, Brahms and Ferrier seem to have responded in the same way. They were both very down-to-earth, which perhaps had something to do with being northerners of their respective countries; indeed, Hamburg and Blackburn are on almost

exactly the same latitude! They played down the seriousness of their conditions in a characteristically courageous and nonchalant fashion, remaining thoughtful and generous towards other people while demanding no attention for themselves.

In other respects, though, they were very different. Brahms was quite introverted and inclined to be prickly, even with his friends. He was reluctant to travel far from his home territory of Germany and Austria; Switzerland and Italy were the limits of his comfort zone, and he was unwilling to try to speak English, a combination of factors which led to his declining an honorary degree from Cambridge, which he would have had to receive in person. Ferrier, on the other hand, was outgoing and unselfconscious and would cheerfully talk to anyone. Having left school at 14 knowing just a little French and Latin, she nevertheless established a major reputation in German and, to a lesser extent, Italian repertoire. She willingly undertook numerous long gruelling tours in Europe and North America as well as throughout the UK, only

stopping when her health made it absolutely necessary.

I cannot help wondering if Brahms was thinking particularly of his own situation when he set the second verse of 'O Tod, wie bitter bist du'. Although he was not yet weak nor apparently ill, nor old except in his own view of himself – he was just 63 – and certainly not destitute, he was at heart tired of life and had little to look forward to. Some half-dozen of his family and close friends had died between 1892 and 1894, and he was becoming more and more lonely. For some time he had been talking of giving up composition, and had destroyed much of his unpublished work which he thought unworthy of publication. When Clara Schumann suffered a stroke in March 1896 Brahms probably believed – correctly – that she would not recover, and that event triggered the composition of the *Four Serious Songs*, although such a work had been in his mind for some time and was clearly a response to many other losses too.

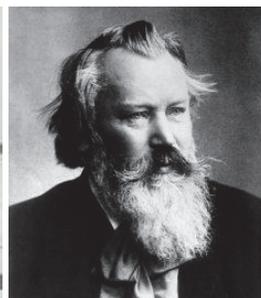
If the second verse in some way 'represents' Brahms, then the first verse may perhaps equally be said to 'represent' Ferrier. Apparently healthy when she recorded the song, and certainly happy, with an enormous appetite for life, she had every reason to look forward to a long, successful and fulfilling career. She had the support of a loving sister and countless friends and admirers, and she loved her work despite all its pressures. While death might have been welcome enough to Brahms, it was bitter indeed when it came to Ferrier.

I am sure we all think with gratitude of the many individuals whose outstanding contributions to music over the decades have been honoured by the award of the Royal Philharmonic Society Gold Medal. In this article I have considered just two of them, who were linked for me by one special recording. But all will have their stories to be told, and I hope other readers may be inspired to share their thoughts about their own favourites in this Bicentenary year.

Sue Parker (Barnsley and Huddersfield RMSs) •



Ferrier in 1951 Photo: Polygon Hollands Nieuws



Brahms around 1893

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). An entry on the FRMS website is also offered free. 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 Chilton 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. Fee + expenses 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; Music from the Low Countries; 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

Member of Huddersfield RMS and secretary of former Bradford RMS.

Wide variety of programmes including artist and

composer profiles. Most programmes feature audiophile recordings. No fee, minimal travel expenses only.

BBC MIDLAND RADIO ORCHESTRA

(Contact details as Dinmore Records - see below)

An evening of light music presented by former MRO member Paul Arden-Taylor, who has compiled a large archive of surviving MRO recordings.

No fee, expenses requested over 50 miles. CDs for sale.

IAN BOUGHTON BA (Hons) DipMus

25 Bearton Green, Hitchin, Herts SG5 1UN

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.

Offers several programmes, some serious, some light-hearted, but all, hopefully, informative and entertaining.

Recent titles include: Bredon Hill to Egdon Heath; Postcards from Seville; A Nine Days' Wonder. No fee; expenses minimal. Will travel.

MAGGIE COTTON

57 Elmfield Crescent, Birmingham B13 9TL

Tel; 0121 449 3196

email: maggie.cottonbeat@hotmail.co.uk

First professional female percussionist in a UK symphony orchestra. CBSO 40 years (18 with Simon Rattle). Author of: *Agogo Bells: friendly guide to schools percussion*; *Wrong Sex, Wrong Instrument – an autobiography*.

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email: paularden@virgin.net

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THE DVOŘÁK SOCIETY

Promotes the music of all Czech and Slovak composers.

Members give talks and lectures to societies at various locations. Enquiries to: David Roberts, Hon Sec, The

Dvořák Society, 13 Church Lane, Knutton, Newcastle-

under-Lyme, Staffs ST5 6DU; Tel: 01782 631274.

email: secretary@dvorak-society.org;

website: www.dvorak-society.org

No fee but expenses might be requested.

THE ELGAR SOCIETY

Contact Branch Secretaries in the following areas to arrange a speaker from the Society.

London: Ruth Hellen,

30 King James Avenue, Cuffley, Herts EN6 4LR.

West Midlands: Richard Smith

Sunny Ridge, Bourne Lane, Brimscombe, Stroud, Glos. GL5 2RP Tel: 01453 882091

North West: Mrs Pat Hurst

60 Homewood Rd., Northenden, Manchester M22 4DW. Tel: 0161 998 4404

East Anglian: Mary Turvill

5 South Ridge, Odiham, Hook, Hants RG29 1NG. Tel: 01256 702364

Southern: Chris Condley

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: Tony Pook

1 Lower Friargate, York, YO1 9SL Tel 01904 642407

Scotland: Sharron Bassett

9 George Street, Dunfermline, Fife KY11 4TQ. Tel: 01383 727491

Dr CHRISTOPHER FIFIELD**MusB GRSM ARMCM ARCO**

80 Wolfington Road, London SE27 0RQ
Tel: 0208 761 3600; mobile 07752 273558
email: cgfifield@btinternet.com

Freelance conductor. Talks include: Bruch's music beyond the first violin concerto; The life and work of conductor Hans Richter; The life and voice of Kathleen Ferrier; The supposed 19th century German symphonic black hole – a contrary view; A Voice from the Pit - a funny thing happened on the way to the Opera; Recording unknown repertoire for Sterling label; Ibbs and Tillett – the agency's artists.
Fee: Negotiable.

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

Principal Lecturer in Classical Music at Leeds College of Music. Member of the Incorporated Society of Musicians and the British Academy of Composers and Songwriters. Various and wide ranging entertaining topics.

Contact to discuss availability, fees and your Society's requirements.

FREDERICK DELIUS SOCIETY (New Entry)

Mike Green 5-6 Sandy Bank, Bewdley, DY12 2AY
Tel: 01299 400883;
email: vicechairman@thedeliusociety.org.uk
website: www.deliussociety.org.uk

Expenses only

JOHN GILKS

The Old School, High Street, Nawton,
York YO62 7TT
Tel: 01439 771273

Programmes include: There's Magic abroad in the air; Music of Saint-Saens; Music of Grieg; Dancing through the years; C is for Composer; Creating good habits – the story of Simon Rattle; Cylinders to CDs; Vive La France!
Expenses only.

JOHN HUMPHRIES

10 Drovers, Bolney Street, Haywards Heath,
West Sussex, RH17 5PT. Tel: 01444 881887

Subjects include: Charles Villiers Stanford - arguably Britain's greatest all-round musician; teacher of many early C20th British composers, and tireless promoter of British music. William Yeates Hurlstone - outstandingly gifted pupil of Stanford, who might have rivalled Purcell and Elgar had he lived longer. Unknown British - but still with a tune! Expenses: negotiable. Will travel anywhere.

ERIC JENNINGS

9 Hillside Road, Frodsham, Cheshire WA6 6AW
Tel: 01928 733209. email: fizneric@tiscali.co.uk
For 31 years principal trombone with the Royal Liverpool PO. Subjects include: Conductors I have known and worked for; The life and times of Beethoven; Life in the Orchestra; Rio de Janeiro
Fee: £50.00 + expenses for non-local presentations.

THE JOHN IRELAND TRUST (New Entry)

Bruce Phillips (Director); 20 Third Acre Rise
Oxford, OX2 9DA Tel: 01865 862524
email: brucephillips@googlemail.com
Expenses only; website: www.johnirelandtrust.org

MIKE LUNAN

15 Castle Gardens, Barrock Street, Thurso KW14 7GZ
01847 890911 email: mikelunan@btinternet.com
Offers presentations on three subjects: Tristan and what happened to the cork he let out of the bottle (an all-too-brief overview of modern music); Britten's music; James MacMillan's music.

No fee. Travel and accommodation expenses negotiable.

AMELIA MARRIETTE MA

Apartment 1, 8 Courtenay Road, Newton Abbot, Devon
TQ12 1QT Tel 01626 366506, mobile 07909 655658;
email: marriette@btinternet.com
website: www.talkingformy dinner.vpweb.co.uk
Curator of the Holst birthplace Museum for over 3 years and guest Curator for Royal Shakespeare Company. Talk on Holst, the Man and his Music using rare slides and music examples, plus a new talk, Shakespeare at the Movies. Experienced and passionate speaker with over 10 years experience. Fee £50-£100 plus expenses for non-local presentations.

ALASTAIR MITCHELL LGSM

47 King Edward's Gardens, London W3 9RF
Tel 0208 992 0600
email alastair_mitchell01@hotmail.com
Musicologist/Composer/Federation panellist for over 30 years. Presentations offered include: First Broadcast Performances & Promenade Concerts; The March, for military and orchestral use; Masters of the Queen's/King's Music. Fee: Negotiable; Travel: anywhere within 200 mile radius of London.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

16 Melbourne Road, Halesowen B63 3NB
Tel: 0121 550 4482. email: cfmorley47@aol.com
Chief music critic of Birmingham Post; Midlands correspondent for Classical Music and other music publications. Illustrated programmes include, among others: Confessions of a music critic; Changing critical attitudes to Elgar; The Symphonies of Gustav Mahler; Composers on record; The problem of bespoke music; Rachmaninov and plainchant; Beethoven the Bounds-Breaker; European Composers in America.
Fee negotiable.

CLIFFORD OCCOMORE

37 Attlee House, Lansbury Road, Broadfield,
Crawley, West Sussex RH11 9JA
Tel: 01293 405972; mobile: 07804 497979
email: cliff_occo@yahoo.co.uk

Themes of presentations arranged by discussion with programme secretaries. A wide range of interests to accommodate Societies' requirements.

No fee. Travel expenses reasonable and negotiable.

DR GEOFF OGRAM, Secretary Stafford RMS

6 Silverthorn Way, Wildwood, Stafford ST17 4PZ
Tel: 01785 663423 email: geoff.ogram@talktalk.net

A number of recital programmes, with a significant content of C20th British music. My specialist composer is Gordon Jacob, whose music I discovered in 1956. We became friends and I have just completed a book on his music. The recital on his work is entitled Seventh Son. No fee required, just minimal travel expenses.

SIVA OKE LRAM

13 Riversdale Rd, Thames Ditton, Surrey KT7 0QL
Tel: 020 8398 1586 Fax: 020 8339 0981
email: soke@somm-recordings.com

website: www.somm-recordings.com

Former professional musician, veteran of the record industry and owner of SOMM Recordings, a well-established label with a wide-ranging and interesting repertoire.

Somm enchanted evening: music from current catalogue.

No fee, but expenses requested over 50 miles.

LYNNE PLUMMER

52 Judkin Court, Century Wharf, Cardiff CF10 5AU.
Tel: 02920 489332; email: lynne@lynneplummer.co.uk
Professional career as a broadcaster with the BBC and other stations. Illustrated talks with interviews on various topics, including: Conductors - who needs 'em?; The Importance of the Double Bass; Not as Simple as it Looks - behind the scenes at the opera; Gardens in Music; Sound portraits of various soloists, conductors and other music makers.

Will travel. Fees negotiable + expenses.

TONY POOK (York RMS)

1 Lower Friargate, York. YO1 9SL.

Tel: 01904 642407; email: tpook@talktalk.net

Presentations are from the lesser-known but tuneful repertoire of the 19th and 20th centuries. Particular interest in American, British and Czech music. Other programmes of Belgian, Finnish, Russian, Slovakian and Spanish music. Featured composers include Uuno Klami, Amy Beach, Mieczysław Karłowicz, Gottschalk, Borodin, Dyson, Dvořák, Fibich, Smetana and Suk. Travel expenses only.

DR. JIM PRITCHARD - THE GUSTAV MAHLER SOCIETY UK

15 David Avenue, Wickford, Essex SS11 7BG

email: jpritchard@mahlersociety.org

website: www.mahlersociety.org

Former chairperson of the the Wagner Society and the Gustav Mahler Society UK. Many successful presentations about the Mahlers (A Marriage of Convenience?) performed with his wife, Allesandra, but now concentrating again on his Wagner talk - The Ring Road to Bayreuth - to mark the bicentenary of the composer's birth in 2013. No fee; reasonable expenses, date and travel never any real problem.

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.

THE RACHMANINOFF SOCIETY

Promotes interest in and appreciation of the life and works of Sergei Rachmaninoff, Russian composer, pianist and conductor. A few of its members are available on occasion to give talks (illustrated with recordings) to societies at various locations.

Enquiries to John Lockyer, Chairman, The Rachmaninoff Society, 4 Springfield Cottages, New Road, Rotherfield, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 3JR. Tel: 01892 852265.

website www.rachmaninoff.org

email: fergusophie@btinternet.com

No fees but expenses may be requested.

PETER WALDEN

2 The Drive, Colletts Green, Powick, Worcester WR2 4SA.

Tel: 01905 830592 Mobile 07890 728556

email: peterwalden@hotmail.co.uk

36 years as oboe player and solo cor anglais with CBSO, and freelancing with major symphony orchestras.

Presentations cover all aspects of full time symphony orchestra oboe/cor anglais playing. Titles include: All in the Mind; Changing Gear; Metamorphoses; You can see the Notes, but not the Air; Still Hooked; Mother married an Oboe Player.

Will travel. Fees negotiable + expenses.

CLIVE WILKES

70 Filching Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN20 8SD.

Tel: 01323 724916.

Programmes include: George Gershwin - Crazy for you; Sergei Prokofiev - the Prodigal Son; The Golden Age of Film Music; Aspects of opera in the 20th Century; Dmitri Shostakovich - the great survivor; Rimsky-Korsakov and the Mighty Handful; The Golden Age of Russian Opera; PLUS for two 2013 bicentenaries: Viva Verdi; Wagner and Liszt - an uneasy friendship.

Further details on request. Expenses only.

CATHERINE WILMERS

The Brew House, Radwell, Baldock, Herts SG7 5ES.

Tel: 01462 730490. email: cwilmers@hotmail.co.uk

website: www.cwilmers.co.uk

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Travels countrywide. Fees negotiable + expenses.

DAVID WILSON

142 Greenway, Hayes, Middlesex UB4 9HX

Tel: 020 8841 9166; email: drwilson24@googlemail.com

Subjects covered include: Kathleen Ferrier; Solomon; Sir Henry Wood; Myra Hess; Lisa della Casa - the Ideal Arabella; No fee. South-east England preferred.

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN Colin Dancer

I WOULD LIKE TO SAY how pleased I was to meet so many friends at the AGM in Bath, and I hope to meet more people at the forthcoming Daventry Music Weekend. The team are already working hard to ensure this goes ahead on schedule.

The AGM was greatly enhanced by the contribution from the guest speaker, Raimund Herinx, who gave us much food for thought, and his suggestions caused a lively discussion under Any Other Business.

Anniversaries are always great occasions, especially when they are for a society with a great age, and I congratulate Epsom Recorded Music Society in this their Diamond Anniversary year. I will be helping them to celebrate those 60 years in the near future.

At Cardiff RMS we often have discussions about the quality of sound reproduction. The Society uses the best equipment we can afford, but with more and more people using mp3 players it has made me realise that it is the performance which really matters, providing you have adequate reproduction. Of course nothing really compares to a live performance, where you share the excitement and atmosphere with everyone in the audience. What I have really gained from my 27 years as a member of Cardiff RMS is a broader knowledge of music, which has greatly added to my enjoyment when I attend a live performance.

Recently, I had the pleasure of watching a live transmission from the Metropolitan Opera of their production of *The Trojans* by Berlioz. The venue



was the Riverfront, the small arts venue serving the city of Newport. The opera was a massive undertaking for Berlioz which he only accomplished because of the encouragement of Princess Carolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein, Liszt's companion. In this work, Berlioz calls for a huge orchestra and chorus, which together with the length of the opera means that only the very largest of companies can afford to put it on. This live transmission was one of the few opportunities for many people to

experience this particular masterpiece, especially in those towns and cities not blessed with a large opera house.

One of the advantages of these transmissions is that subtitles are displayed at the bottom of the screen, making them the ideal introduction to the wonderful world of opera. Although the transmission lasted five and a half hours, all those I spoke to afterwards remarked how quickly the time had gone by and how much they had enjoyed it. Unfortunately, I think the length of the performance may have put many people off since there was only an audience of thirty at the Newport screening.

I'm looking forward to the Cardiff Singer of the World competition in June, which is always a great feast of singing. This event is usually well supported and tickets for the final are difficult to come by, unless you have booked the other sessions. Often, people travelling from afar will book for all the sessions even though they are only able to attend some of the rounds, just to ensure getting a ticket for the final. ●

Changing Habits *The following may not reflect the listening habits of the majority of readers, but it is an interesting look at how technological advances have revolutionised the music world.*



In the 1980s, the average 16 to 24-year-old owned a record collection comprising some 150 songs. By 2009 that figure had risen to 8,000 songs.

The vinyl LP – introduced in 1948 – played for around 45 minutes with perhaps 12 songs.



The Compact Cassette tape came along in 1962, the C90 version playing for 45 minutes per side, around 22 tracks.

The Compact Disc arrived in 1982 with a maximum duration of 80 minutes supporting about 20 songs.



The mp3 player was introduced in 1998. A 160 GB model has sufficient capacity for around 40,000 songs – an incredible total of 160,000 minutes, or 16 weeks if played continuously!

An mp3 player or iPod weighs 140 grams. An equivalent vinyl LP collection would weigh about 640kg – as does a large horse!



Of course, none of this takes into account the all-important subject of sound quality – a topic for another time, no doubt.

Information source: *Dara O Briain's Science Club*, BBC television

Amelia Marriette, former curator of the Holst Birthplace Museum, was a guest speaker at the Torbay Musical Weekend event in 2011, speaking on her specialist subject, Gustav Holst. After this, Amelia was asked to repeat the talk at the FRMS Daventry Music Weekend in April 2012. Both talks were very well received (please see the review in the Autumn 2012 *Bulletin*). Since then Amelia has given her talk for the Bournemouth



Amelia Marriette presenting *Amelia's Culture Show* on www.riviera.fm Photo by Peter Surcombe.

Gramophone Society. In November she kindly gave over an hour of her radio show on Riviera FM to promote the Torbay Musical Weekend, once again held at the Palace Hotel in Torquay. John J Davis was the special guest and this helped spread the word about the vitality of the recorded-music appreciation movement in the area. Amelia is always keen to encourage close listening to the musical greats and she is even keener to get the work of Gustav Holst known and better-loved.

Neil Heayes remembered

The death has been announced of Neil Heayes of Carshalton & Wallington RMS who served on the FRMS committee from October 1988 to October 1993, a period when our Vice-President, Roderick Shaw, was chairman. Roderick tells the *Bulletin*:

'Neil was a respected and conscientious committee member. At very short notice he volunteered to undertake the editorship of the Spring 1989 issue of the *Bulletin* following the sudden death of the then editor, Maurice Kelly. The back cover of that edition [see right] reflects Neil's sense of humour in his advertisement for the forthcoming Music Weekend at Fitzwilliam College.

'Neil lived with his mother and cared for her during her increasingly frail health and this made it difficult for him to continue as editor. He resigned after the Spring 1991 issue but continued as a stalwart committee member until October 1993.'

Sadly Neil's own health subsequently deteriorated but he continued to support his own local society as both Programme Secretary and committee member, and he set up a very successful series of daytime concerts in Wallington Library. These have now been renamed the 'Neil Heayes Coffee Concerts' in his memory.



Your *Bulletin* needs you!

Do you have something to say? Has your society an anniversary or special occasion to celebrate? Do you have any burning issues you want to share with our readers? Indeed, do you have any comments or suggestions relating to the recruitment and retention of society members, an ongoing problem mentioned elsewhere in this *Bulletin*?

You may wish to submit an article relating to a special interest in a particular composer or musical genre. Publication depends on space being available and cannot be guaranteed, but we are keen to hear from you. Contact details can be found on page 30. •

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SIBELIUS - PATRIOT AND MYSTIC

THE LAHTI SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA'S 13TH INTERNATIONAL SIBELIUS FESTIVAL

Federation Technical Officer Philip Ashton reports on his recent visit.

A LONG WITH 14 other Sibelius Society members, I journeyed to Lahti on September 5th. My journey entailed arriving at Gatwick Airport for a 9 o'clock flight to Stockholm, before a four-hour stopover in transit and a thirty-minute flight to Helsinki. Once there, I looked out for an exit sign; such a pity that all signs were in Finnish and Swedish. It took me a while to find the exit, but once outside, an express coach was waiting. With only ten minutes to go before it departed, I was cutting it a bit fine. The driver greeted me with: 'Silver hairs 15 euros, non-silver hairs 25 euros'. Did I really look that ancient? As good as his word he dropped me off within 100 metres of my hotel, the *Musta Kissa* (Black Cat). This was a commercial-traveller type hotel, perfectly adequate for a three-day stay.

On Thursday I was greeted by John J Davis and other Society members; they knew the way to the concert hall which was about 1½ kilometres away. The weather was kind: sunny and not too cold. On seeing the Sibelius Hall for the first time, one is greeted by a tall structure of steel and glass, but this was just the outer shell which hid a beautiful interior of wood - in fact, wood as far as one's eye could see. I later learnt that this helped produce the marvellous acoustic properties that this hall is famed for. It is the envy of orchestras all over the world.

The first concert programme included *Pan and Echo* Op. 53a; a ballad for orchestra *The Wood Nymph* Op. 15; *Swanwhite* Op. 54; and the well-known *Tapiola* Op. 112. I was completely absorbed by the orchestral sound due to the marvellous acoustic properties of the hall. One could



Okko Kamu

hear every instrument, even with the orchestra playing at its loudest. The triangle, for example, was clearly heard.

Day two was equally interesting when we were treated to the *Press Celebrations Music*, JS 137. Finland in the 1890s was under Russian domination. The restrictive measures that they introduced were

resisted with popular social occasions. Sibelius played an active part by writing music with a nationalistic content. The *Päivälehti* newspaper was banned, a state of affairs which persisted for several months. Consequently, the *Press Celebrations Music* was used ostensibly to raise money for the Press Pension Fund, but in reality that was a thin disguise for its true purpose: to rally support for the freedom of the press. There are six tableaux, ending with 'Finland Awakes'.

After that, we heard *The Rapids-Rider's Brides*, Op. 33; *Sandels*, Op. 28; *Song of the Athenians*, Op. 31, No. 3; *The Captive Queen*, Op. 48; and finally *March of the Finnish Jäger Battalion*, Op. 91a. Because space here is limited, readers are invited to investigate the interesting stories that lie behind each of these pieces.

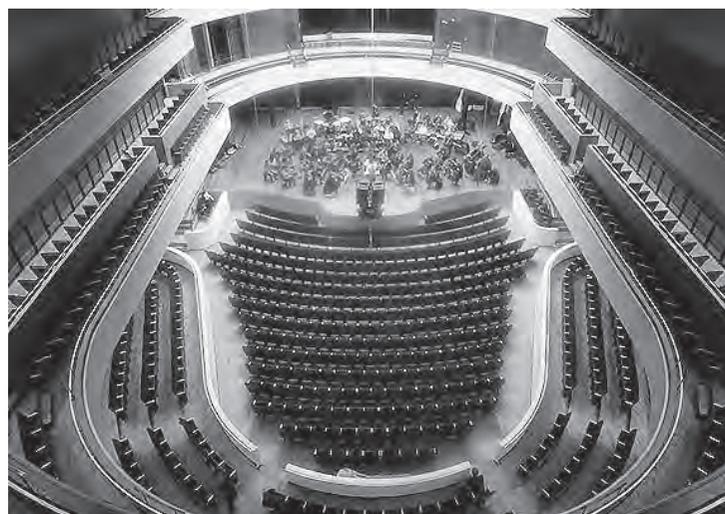
We were pleased to see and hear the YL Male Voice Choir from Helsinki

accompanying the Lahti SO, with Okko Kamu conducting. The singing and articulation were just perfect; a truly magnificent body of male singers.

Saturday September 8th promised another feast of music by the great Finnish master. We all met up at the Kalevi Aho Hall for a piano recital given by a very talented pianist, one Henri Sigfridsson. He played - without sheet music - *Pelléas and Mélisande*, Op. 46; *King Christian II Suite*, Op. 27; and rounded off with *Belshazzar's Feast*, Op. 51. And for an encore? You've guessed it - *Finlandia*, after which I think the piano would have needed retuning, given that he'd played with such nationalistic feeling! Our final concert consisted of the *Karelia Suite*, Op. 11, followed by the two *Scènes Historiques*, Op. 25 and Op. 66, with the symphonic poem *En Saga*, Op. 9, bringing to an end what was, for me, a truly awe-inspiring experience.

For the next festival, in 2013, Okko Kamu asked us what he should include in the programme. John asked for Sibelius's theatre music which is little known outside Finland. During the flight home, I could not help thinking that I will be in Lahti next year. Incidentally, we met with the planners for the 2015 Wanaja Festival in Hämeenlinna, the town where the great master was born. I think we will be invited.

My thanks to the UK Sibelius Society for arranging yet another very successful experience. ●



Sibelius Hall, Lahti

Notable Anniversaries for 2014

Compiled by Brendan Sadler with
contributions from *Roger Hughes.

In 2014 we can celebrate several important innovators: Jean-Philippe Rameau, who took French 'Opera Ballet' to new heights; CPE Bach, who laid the foundations of the classical era; Gluck, who reformed stale operatic practices; and Meyerbeer, who developed the concept of 'Grand Opera'. Fans of Richard Strauss will have a good excuse to wallow in his opulent orchestration. Celebrating important birthdays this year are: conductor Franz Brüggen, mezzo Marilyn Horne, bass Tom Krause, pianist Fou Ts'ong, and the BBC Philharmonic, all celebrating their 80th. Reaching 70 years are Agnes Baltsa (mezzo), John Lill (pianist), Kiri Te Kanawa (soprano), and conductors David Atherton, William Christie, Ton Koopman and Michael Tilson Thomas.

Composers (b = born; d = died)

??.05.1614	Rogers, Benjamin (Eng) b
08.03.1714	Bach, CPE (Ger) b
02.07.1714	Gluck, Christoph W (Aus) b
30.11.1714	Nivers, Guillaume-Gabriel (Fr) d
???.?. 1714	Pascha, Edmund (Slov) b*
30.03.1764	Locatelli, Pietro (It) d*
12.09.1764	Rameau, Jean-Philippe (Fr) d
22.10.1764	Leclair, Jean-Marie (Fr) d
12.05.1814	Henselt, Adolf von (Ger) b*
27.06.1814	Reichardt, Johann (Ger) d*
13.01.1864	Foster, Stephen (USA) d
02.05.1864	Meyerbeer, Giacomo (Ger) d
11.06.1864	Strauss, Richard (Ger) b
21.12.1864	Fry, William (USA) d*
26.04.1914	Mellers, Wilfrid (Eng) b
28.08.1914	Lyadov, Anatoly (Rus) d
03.12.1914	Fine, Irving (USA) b

Selected list of Compositions

(f = first performance; p = published)

1614

Monteverdi Madrigals, Book vi p

1664

Lully Ballet des amours déguisés p
Le Mariage Forcé, ballet f

1714

Corelli Concerti Grossi, Op. 6
Scarlatti, D Amor d'un ombra, opera f
Tartini Violin Sonata in G minor, 'Devil's trill'
Vivaldi Orlando Finto Pazzo, opera f

1764

Arne Judith, oratorio
Gluck La Rencontre Imprévue, opera
Haydn Symphonies No. 16 – No. 18 & No. 22
Mozart Symphonies No. 1, K. 16 & No. 4, K. 19
Seven Violin Sonatas K. 9 – K. 15

1814

Beethoven Namensfeier Overture
Piano Sonata No. 27
Cherubini String Quartet No. 1
Field Three Nocturnes
Schubert String Quartets No. 7 & No. 8
Gretchen am Spinnrade

1864

Balfé The Sleeping Queen, opera
Brahms String Sextet No. 2
Piano Quintet
Bruckner Symphony No. 0
Mass No. 1 in D minor
Gade Symphonies No. 2 & No. 7
Piano Trio in F major
Gounod Mireille, opera
Offenbach La Belle Hélène, operetta
Sullivan L'Ile Enchantée, ballet music
Kenilworth, cantata

1914

Bartók The Wooden Prince, ballet
Bridge Summer, tone poem
Debussy Berceuse héroïque, for piano

Delius	North Country Sketches
Elgar	Sospiri, for orchestra p
Holst	The Planets
Nielsen	Serenata in vano
Milhaud	String Quartet No. 2
	Printemps, for violin & piano
Prokofiev	Violin Concerto
Quilter	A Children's Overture
Ravel	Piano Trio
Reger	Eine vaterländische Ouvertüre
	Piano Quartet
Respighi	Suite for strings & organ
Satie	Hueres séculaires et instantanées *
	Les Pantins dansent*
Sibelius	Symphony No. 5
	Oceanides, symphonic poem
Suk	Meditation for string quartet,
Stanford	Irish Rhapsody No. 4
Stravinsky	Le Rossignol, opera
	Three pieces for string quartet
Turina	Margot, lyric comedy
Webern	Three little pieces for cello & piano
	Four Lieder
Villa-Lobos	Suite popular brasileira
1964	
Alwyn	Concerto Grosso No. 3
Arnold	Sinfonietta No. 3
Bennett	The Mines of Sulphur, opera
	Jazz Calendar, ballet
Berkeley	Diversions for eight instruments
Bliss	March of Homage in Honour of a Great Man
	The Golden Cantata
Boulez	Figures-Doubles-Prismes, for orch.
Britten	Cello Suite No. 1
	Curlew River, a parable
Birtwistle	Three movements with Fanfares
Chávez	Resonancias, for orchestra
Copland	Emblems for symphonic band
	Music for a great City
Diamond	Quartet No. 8
Harris	Autumn Concertino
Henze	Tancredi, ballet
Hoddinott	Jack Straw, overture f
Kabalevsky	Cello concerto No. 2
Lutosławski	String Quartet
Martin	Pilate, cantata
Maw	One Man Show, comic opera
Messiaen	Couleurs de la cité céleste
Milhaud	String Septet
Penderecki	Sonata for cello & piano
Rawsthorne	Symphony No. 3
Rubbra	String Quartet No. 3
Schuman	Symphony No. 9
Shostakovich	String Quartets No. 9 & No. 10
	The Execution of Stepan Razin
Stravinsky	Elegy for JFK
Tavener	The Cappemakers
Tippett	Prologue & Epilogue, for choir & orch.
Williamson	The Merry Wives of Windsor
	Piano Concerto No.3

ROGER'S NOTES, JOTTINGS AND RAMBLINGS - Part One

Roger Apps discovers many classic recordings of his favourite composers and artists as he delves into his extensive music collection

LAST YEAR MARKED my 50th in purchasing recorded music. My first LP was bought with pocket money whilst I was still at grammar school in south-east London. A well-filled record (on the Westminster label) with Tchaikovsky's *Capriccio Italien* and *1812 Overture* alongside Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espagnol* and *Russian Easter Festival Overture*, all conducted by Maurice Abravanel (of Utah SO fame), with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra - the Vienna Philharmonic in another guise.

A steady flow of LPs were purchased over the next 25 years until, in 1987, I acquired my first CD player. Since then, an even greater number of CDs have been added to my collection; some are exact replacements of cherished LPs. I still have, though, a large collection of LPs, some 78s (playable on a wind-up Columbia 78 machine), and many cassettes - remember them?

I joined my first Gramophone Society in Maidstone in snowy February 1968; I gave my initial presentation there in 1970. This comprised music from Scandinavia, and included works by Lange- Müller (incidental

music from *Once Upon a Time*), Stenhammar (excerpts from the *Serenade for Orchestra* - a masterpiece!), and Berwald (*Sinfonie Singulière*) featuring the LSO with Sixten Ehrling. All these were then virtually unknown composers. What would I have done without bargain LP labels like Turnabout and Heliodor? The Stenhammar LP was issued by DGG on their cheap label, Heliodor, with Rafael Kubelik conducting the Stockholm PO. What riches were released on Heliodor: Beethoven and Brahms with Igor Markevich, Schubert's *Symphony No. 9* with Jochum, and a particular favourite of mine, Annie Fischer with her great compatriot, Ferenc Fricsay, in Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No. 3*. To my mind, nobody, before or since, has recorded this as successfully. Fricsay shapes the dramatic orchestral opening to perfection: fiery yet within classical period boundaries. Others seem flabby or limp by comparison - and I do have the Brendel/Haitink version on CD.

One of my special interests is of various conductors' recorded legacies that are now available on CD. For the French repertoire - another of my favourite musical areas - who can match Pierre Monteux, Jean Martinon, and the great Charles Munch? These conductors also excel in works other than French. I think of Elgar's *Enigma Variations* and Dvořák's *Symphony No. 7* (the LSO with Monteux), Martinon's version of Nielsen's *Symphony No. 4*, and Munch in Walton's *Cello Concerto*. I also greatly appreciate the recordings of Louis Frémaux, Paul

Paray, Albert Wolff and Michel Plasson. Munch's last recording, captured in Boston in 1962, was of Chausson's sublime *Symphony in B flat*, which none of my musical friends appreciates or rates at all, but it strikes a deep chord with me.

Over the years I have come to enjoy lesser-known French composers: Vincent d'Indy, Joseph Guy Ropartz, Jean Roger-Ducasse, André Caplet, François Devienne, Maurice Emmanuel, Albéric Magnard, Gabriel Pierné, Henri Rabaud, and Florent Schmitt. I hold in high regard d'Indy's *Symphonie Cévenole* with Munch, Ropartz's *Third Symphony*, (Plasson), Pierné's *Piano Concerto* (Jean-Efflam Bavouzet), and Schmitt's knock-out *Psalm 47* (Martinon).

I also enjoy Sibelius, and my one Desert Island Disc would be the young Okku Kamu's recording of the *Third Symphony* - absolutely marvellous - and

this particular symphony, dedicated to Granville Bantock, is high on my list of greats

From 1970 onwards, and especially after I joined the Swedish Music Information Centre's mailing list in 1976, my collection of

Scandinavian works has increased every year. Swedish music has become one of my chosen spheres: Hugo Alfvén, Kurt Atterberg, Tor Aulin, John Fernström, Lars-Erik Larsson, Oskar Lindberg, Gösta Nystroem, Wilhelm Peterson-Berger, Ture Rangström, Wilhelm Stenhammar, Adolf Wiklund and Dag Wirén, to name but a few!

Perhaps it is ABBA, the dark and grisly Wallander TV crime series, and the even more thrilling, suspense-filled *The Bridge* on BBC4, that have affected me, or was it the once-only visit to IKEA or those famous Swedish meatballs that did it - not to mention the Nordic, blue-eyed, fair-haired, Swedish women! If it were not for the recordings of Stig Westerberg, Sixten Ehrling, Herbert Blomstedt, as well as the Järvi dynasty, where would we be? It seems to me that these conductors have certain Swedish compositions in their intimate psyche. Examples I am thinking of include: Stenhammar's *Serenade* and *Symphony No. 2* as well as his piano concertos; Alfvén's *Symphony No. 3*; Rangström's songs and his *Legends from the Lake Mälaren* for piano; Atterberg's *Symphony No. 3*, 'West Coast Pictures' (complete with storm movement which would go down well at the Proms, given a chance), the *Piano Concerto* and the *Suite for Violin, Viola and Strings*; Peterson-Berger's *Violin Concerto* (a worthy companion to the mighty Sibelius concerto), and the piano work *Flowers from Frösö Island*. There are many more examples I could list ... ●



Swedish favourites: Alfvén, Atterberg and Stenhammar

Federation of Recorded Music Societies Ltd



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OFFICERS

Chairman Colin Dancer

24 Garth Close, Bassaleg, Newport, Gwent NP10 8NX
01633 892077 chairman@thefrms.co.uk

Vice-Chairman Roger Apps

2 Spring Meadows, Upper Studley, Trowbridge BA14 0HD
01225 68098 roger.apps@thefrms.co.uk

Secretary Jim Bostwick

6 Oakroyd Close, Brighouse, West Yorkshire HD6 4BP
01484 717865 secretary@thefrms.co.uk

Treasurer Graham Kiteley

11 Ragley Crescent, Bromsgrove B60 2BD
01527 870549 treasurer@thefrms.co.uk

Bulletin Editor Paul Astell

17 Boot Street, Whittington, Oswestry SY11 4DG
01691 662460 editor@thefrms.co.uk

Technical Officer Philip Ashton

27 Dunsby Road, Luton LU3 2UA
01582 651632 technical@thefrms.co.uk

COMMITTEE

Mick Birchall *Minutes secretary*

2 Burley Close, Desford, Leicester LE9 9HX
01455 823494

Allan Child *Daventry Weekend admin, Bulletin distribution & Presenters' List*

12 Highfield Road, Derby DE22 1GZ
01332 332649 allan.child@thefrms.co.uk

Malcolm Lewis *26 Kingshill, Cirencester, Glos, GL7 1DE*

01285 644110 malcolm.lewis@thefrms.co.uk

George Steele *Website manager*

The Cottage, 51 Pegasus Court, Rochdale OL11 4EA
01706 525630 webmaster@thefrms.co.uk

Ron & Denise Beech *Organisers: Daventry Music Weekend*

96, Kenilworth Road, Coventry CV4 7AH
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Yorkshire Jim Bostwick, 6 Oakroyd Close, Brighouse, West Yorkshire HD6 4BP

01484 717865 jamesbostwick@thefrms.co.uk

West Roger Apps, 2 Spring Meadows, Upper Studley, Trowbridge BA14 0HD

01225 768098 roger.apps@thefrms.co.uk

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Editor Paul Astell

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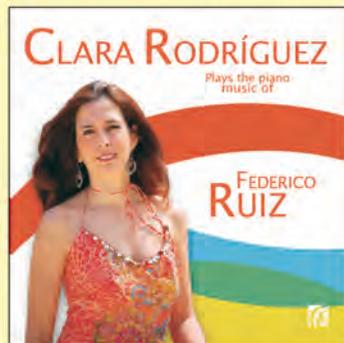
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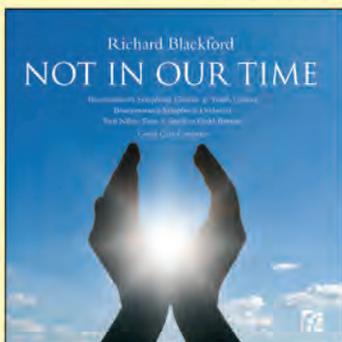
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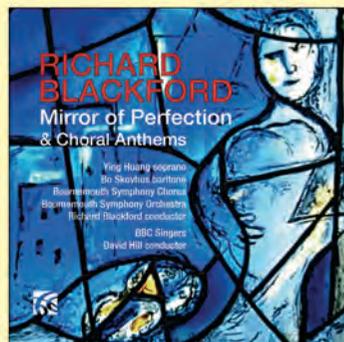
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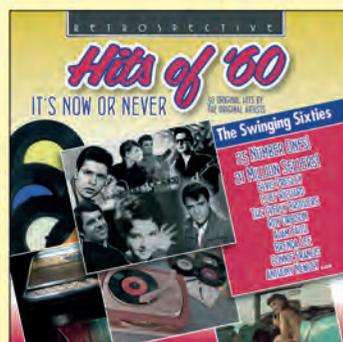
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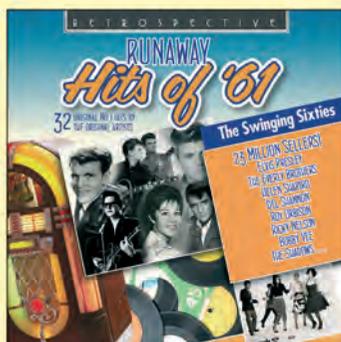
Michael White, The Telegraph



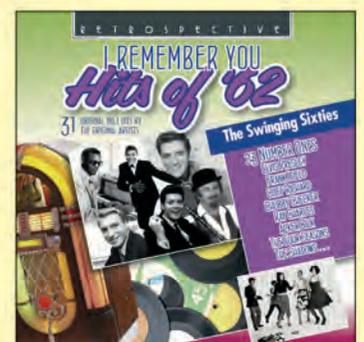
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