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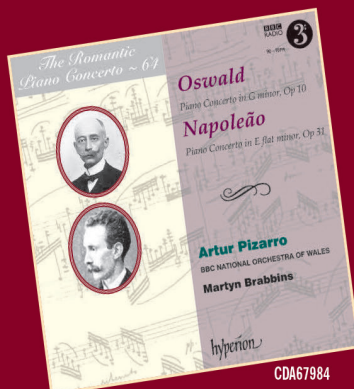
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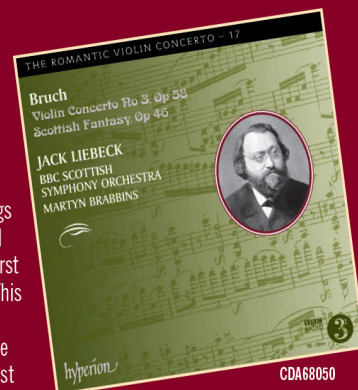
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Michael Kennedy photo: Paul Astell

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

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

Forthcoming Events

Yorkshire Group Autumn Meeting, October 18th (page 21)
Central Region Autumn Music Day, November 1st (page 23)
FRMS AGM, Southport, November 8th-9th (page 17)
Torbay Musical Weekend, November 14th-17th (page 18)
Yorkshire Music Weekend, March 27th-30th 2015 (page 21)
FRMS Daventry Music Weekend, April 24th-26th 2015

EDITORIAL Paul Astell

UNFORTUNATELY, THIS EDITORIAL begins in similar vein to that in the previous issue as I acknowledge the loss of our President, Lyndon Jenkins, and vice-chairman, Roger Apps. These are, of course, very sad times for their families and friends, but for the FRMS it's an additional blow coming so soon after the death of our chairman, Colin Dancer. There are many tributes in this edition so it suffices here for me to refer you to those pages.

There is, as usual, a full report on the successful Daventry Music Weekend along with a special and separate section on the talk given by Michael Kennedy. Many of you will have enjoyed Michael's various writings, perhaps including his biography of Richard Strauss. It was that composer, in his 150th anniversary year, that Michael had come to talk to us about, and a very interesting and entertaining session it was. During the Weekend's planning stage, and once Michael's visit had been confirmed, Lyndon had suggested it would be something of a coup if we could record and transcribe for this magazine the whole of the Strauss presentation. We were delighted when Michael agreed that we could indeed capture that session and reproduce it for this issue. I do hope you find it of interest.

Daventry is one of those occasions where you often get to meet those personalities that are usually just inaccessible figures heard in recordings or on the radio, seen on the concert platform or TV, or read about in the media. Tamsin Waley-Cohen and Jeffrey Skidmore, for example, are both engaging characters and were more than happy to spend time chatting. It was especially satisfying to share a meal table with Michael Kennedy and his equally interesting wife Joyce. When music is the common factor there can never be a shortage of conversation. I hope I didn't appear too much like an excited teenage autograph-hunter when I asked Michael to sign my rather dog-eared BBC Music Guide on Elgar. I rarely listen to Elgar's orchestral music without referring to Michael's wise words. ●



Daventry Music Weekend

At various times there were around 90 visitors attending another successful music weekend, held at the Daventry Court Hotel in May. Main report and photos by Paul Astell; thanks to those named below for additional reporting.

HAVING ENJOYED the traditional Friday evening pre-dinner drinks reception and the meal itself, delegates moved to the auditorium where acting chairman Allan Child opened proceedings. Allan voiced the sorrow felt by all those present at the recent deaths of chairman Colin Dancer and our President, Lyndon Jenkins. Their deaths were particularly sad given that they had played a major role in the organisation of the weekend. Further tributes were scheduled but now it was time for the weekend's first presenter.

Tamsin Waley-Cohen in conversation

This much sought-after young violinist was welcomed to Daventry by Thelma Shaw, who successfully took on the role (originally to be Lyndon's) of interviewer. Thelma declared that it was a joy for those of us mainly from older generations to be joined by such a young and talented musician. Tamsin works with conductors such as Andrew Litton, Tamás Vásáry and José Serebrier. Thelma asked Tamsin whether she could remember her first musical awakenings, given that she had achieved so much at such a young age. Tamsin couldn't recall the occasion but has been told that at a very early age she heard somebody playing violin and demanded that her parents buy her an instrument and that she should have lessons.



Tamsin's love of listening to old recordings as a teenager prompted her first music choice: Schubert's Violin Sonata in A Major performed by Rachmaninov and Kreisler. As a 12-year-old or so, hearing Rachmaninov play seemed like a legend brought to life. Her favourite violin concerto is Beethoven's, and her recording of choice is Menuhin's – 'tears of joy or disappointment on every note, and one of the most personal and heartfelt renderings by a great musician'.

The Hungarian school has been very important for Tamsin and a recording by Hungarian violinist Joseph Szigeti had to be included, and here she got to hear two other favourites as well: Benny Goodman and Béla Bartók on clarinet and piano respectively performing *Contrasts*, composed by Bartók. Beethoven's Sonata No. 3 for cello and piano was her next choice – for her a stunning performance by

Antonio Meneses and pianist Menahem Pressler. She wondered who could match Pressler for legato sound and expression. She also thought that Meneses uses a cello as if he is telling a story.

At one time Tamsin was obsessed with her next item, Oistrakh and Richter's recording of Prokofiev's Violin Sonata in F minor: so dark, powerful, uncompromising and haunting – one of the great works of the 20th century.

Tamsin often goes through phases of endlessly listening to Schubert song cycles. As a teenager, she would go to the Isle of Skye where her godfather, who was a singer – as was his son – ran a music festival in Dunvegan. This is a magical place where she listened to lieder sung night after night. Her favourite Schubert recording is Fischer-Dieskau and Brendel performing *Winterreise*, from which we heard 'Gute Nacht'.

Tamsin wondered who could beat Roby Lakatos, the Hungarian Romani violinist, for wild, easy virtuosity. We heard his version of Brahms's Hungarian Dance No. 5 where, according to Tamsin, in those difficult passages the violin is a toy in his hands. For her final recording, something that can't be classed as classical: Billie Holiday singing 'Strange Fruit'. Tamsin's mother is American and so she grew up hearing such songs. She thought that the expression in Holiday's voice is so profound that if she is able to produce a bit of that on her violin, she'll be very happy. To finish a very enjoyable session featuring a most personable young artist, there was something of a bonus. Tamsin unpacked her 1721 Stradivarius and played the slow movement of Bach's Violin Sonata in A minor.

Jeffrey Skidmore

Graham Ladley(Oswestry RMS) reports ...

As it says at the top of their Twitter page, 'Ex Cathedra is much more than a leading UK choir and Early Music ensemble, but that's a good place to start'.



It is now 45 years since Jeffrey Skidmore (left) founded Ex Cathedra in Birmingham. The progress it has made since then can be judged from the music critic Michael White's question 'Is Ex Cathedra the best choir in the world?' His answer: 'Probably'.

Jeffrey began his presentation with music from Duruflé's Requiem, produced in Birmingham recently with dancers from the Birmingham Royal Ballet. He then told us how he founded the choir while a teacher. Its success made such demands on his time that, after 20 years of teaching, he left to devote himself to the choir full time. The choir made its first CD in 1991 – Vivaldi's Vespers, of which we heard an extract – and has continued its programme of concerts and recording since. New singers come mainly from four school choirs, with which Jeffrey maintains close links.

Jeffrey said that since the start, his emphasis has been on the composer and finding as much as possible about what the composer wanted. This entails much research, which Jeffrey admitted he loves, particularly when performing early music.

Jeffrey then talked about some of the highlights of his work with the choir. He is particularly proud of their appearance at St Mark's, Venice, and we heard a recording of that occasion in which they were singing an extract from *In ecclesiis* by Giovanni Gabrieli. We then heard Alonso Lobo's 'Versa est in Luctum', a funeral motet for King Philip II, which Jeffrey played in memory of the late FRMS President.

Jeffrey's family had emigrated to the USA in 1967, which provided him with a base for extensive travels in the New World. This brought him into contact with the Baroque music of Spanish composers in South America and has led to several CDs, from one of which we heard Juan de Araujo's *Aquí, aquí Valentónes*.

For the next item, Jeffrey crossed back across the Atlantic to play us Michel Richard Delalande's 'Gloria', an example of French Baroque which the choir's CDs have been important in popularising. He then talked of rehearsal methods, in particular 153 hours spent on a piece by Stockhausen. We were impressed with the result.

Finally, a fascinating talk ended by bringing us back home. To celebrate the visit of the Pope to Birmingham, the choir had joined with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment to perform Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* to great critical acclaim, and we enjoyed hearing the 'Demons' chorus'.

The fascinating story of this choir, and the light manner in which Jeffrey delivered it, gave us a most interesting morning.

Abbey Road Studios: a classical perspective

Jim Bostwick reports ...

Thanks to his association with recorded music and, in particular, the history of the Abbey Road Studios in St John's Wood, London NW8, Malcolm Walker gave an outstanding historical survey of the recording work carried out there, with chronological musical examples from 1931 to 2001. Malcolm, a former editor of *Gramophone*, selected from a wide range of musicians and musical styles. Paul Robeson opened with Hoagy Carmichael's 'Rockin' Chair', followed by Eric Coates's overture *The Merry-makers* from 1931. Malcolm then played an astonishing stereophonic recording made by audio pioneer Alan Blumlein in 1933, where he walks around the studio giving a running commentary.

Works of Delius, Haydn Wood and Dvořák took us from the era of 78s to the LP. Malcolm paid due tribute to the often unsung, frequently uncredited, sound engineers – Robert Beckett, Christopher Parker, Robert Gooch, *et al*, all names which only became known to me in the late LP and CD ages when such details were printed on the sleeves and in the booklets. He also celebrated and elucidated the role of the famous producers with recordings supervised by Walter Legge, Lawrence Collingwood, David

Bicknell, Peter Andry and Suvi Raj Grubb. Perfectly timed, with some 15 musical illustrations, it was a formidable presentation well received and appreciated.

Lyndon Quartet: commemorative live recital

Shi Ling Chin and Jessica Heynes (violins); Elsabé Raath (viola); Felicity Smith (cello). Thelma Shaw reports ...

The talented and highly experienced students from the Birmingham Conservatoire who gave this year's music recital named their string quartet in honour of our late President, Lyndon Jenkins. Their tutor, Robin Ireland (viola) introduced the recital and joined them in two of the three works they performed, saying that there is a very successful staff/student relationship at the Conservatoire.

First, Robin and Shi Ling Chin performed JS Bach's Six Two-part Inventions, transcribed for violin and viola. Bach wrote the inventions in the same style for all instruments and transcribed them to suit particular combinations. This delightful work was new to some of us, and Robin and Shi Ling complemented each other perfectly as they played it with flair and obvious enjoyment.



The Lyndon Quartet with Robin Ireland

The second item was Haydn's String Quartet in G minor, nicknamed 'The Rider' because of the marked galloping rhythms in the first and last movements. This work was the last in a set of six quartets that Haydn wrote after the enthusiastic response to the first public performance of his earlier quartets, written for private performance with the Esterházy's. The students gave a well-balanced performance, each instrument being given prominence at various points in the work. Particularly enjoyable was the pizzicato section for cello in the first allegro movement, giving way to lovely passages of harmonious instrumentation in the largo. Beautiful passages in the slow second movement became so popular that Haydn's publisher released a piano transcription. Haydn's individuality is heard in the third movement in which he broke with scoring convention and made the trio more pronounced than the minuet. The final dancing tempo and lively return to the galloping rhythms rounded off a splendid work that obviously gave the players as much enjoyment as it did to their audience.

Robin Ireland joined the Lyndon Quartet for its final item, Mozart's Quintet in G minor. The addition of a second viola gave deeper and broader undertones to the lighter voices of the violins, producing an

altogether dramatic conversation between the instruments. This was especially marked at the moving end of the first movement, suggesting an operatic tragedy. The suggestion of dialogue occurs again in the adagio third movement in which the cello replies to a melodious violin solo. These 'conversation pieces' lead the rest of the ensemble to the livelier finale, giving a brilliantly joyous finish to a work full of emotional contrasts and innovative scoring.

This recital was recorded and proved to be a telling tribute to Lyndon Jenkins. A CD was sent to all who attended the weekend as a lasting memorial to our esteemed and well-loved President who gave so much of himself to the Federation and its activities.

Friends Remembered

With the recent loss of both Lyndon Jenkins and Colin Dancer, it was thought appropriate to devote two short sessions in remembrance of both those Federation stalwarts. Rowland Edwards and Geoff Trinick are from Colin's Cardiff Society and they presented the first tribute. Rowland informed us that three composers were particular favourites of Colin's:



Rowland Edwards (left) and Geoff Trinick

Haydn, Ravel and Berlioz. Rowland elected to play the end of Act IV from *The Trojans* by Berlioz. This was the 1965 recording by soprano Régine

Crespin and tenor Guy Chauvet with chorus and orchestra of the Paris Opera conducted by Georges Prêtre. Rowland wanted to include this particular version over any other so that we could enjoy the 'French sound'.

It was Colin's sense of humour that Geoff had in mind for his musical choice: the second of Haydn's Opus 33 quartets, 'The Joke'. The joke itself comes at the end when the listener is left in suspense, not knowing if the work has finished. We heard the scherzo and finale.

Graham Kiteley began the tribute to Lyndon by telling us that like Graham himself, Lyndon had a great love of Scandinavian music, particularly Sibelius and Nielsen, both of whom were born in 1865. Lyndon appeared regularly on Finnish and Danish radio. Graham felt that Lyndon has never received due recognition for his efforts in the UK, but one country that did show its appreciation was Denmark. He was so well regarded as a cultural ambassador that he was awarded a knighthood by the Queen of Denmark. We heard two excerpts from his Danish broadcasts: in the first, the presenter asks him how he first got to know Nielsen's music, and in the second they discussed the composer's two visits to Britain. Graham played the final movement of Symphony No. 3, 'Espansiva', recorded by the Danish State Radio SO conducted by Erik Tuxen in 1946.

Lyndon was a highly respected music journalist, author, lecturer and broadcaster. He was also a great

raconteur, as we in the FRMS are well aware. Delius was a particular interest of Lyndon's and we heard *The Walk to the Paradise Garden* performed by the RPO under Beecham and recorded at Abbey Road Studios in 1948.

The Ring Road to Bayreuth

From what delegates were saying after this session, it seems some may have come along expecting a rather serious presentation for a Sunday morning, on a subject not particularly close to their hearts. Nothing could be further from the truth. Dr



Jim Pritchard (pictured) is a former chairman of both the Wagner and the Mahler Societies, but his focus today was on Wagner in general and the *Ring* cycle in particular. Few were left in doubt as to Jim's thoughts about Wagner the man, the composer's shortcomings as a rather uncompassionate and egotistical human being conveyed in a very humorous style that had the audience laughing loud and often. The road to *The Ring* is a complex journey and only brief details of Jim's chosen musical extracts follow.

A discussion on *The Ring* came later, but first Jim gave a brief outline of Wagner's early life, telling us that by the end of his 19th year he had composed several overtures, a quantity of piano music and a symphony which he had written in six weeks. We heard the final movement of that Symphony in C, performed by the Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hiroshi Wakasugi.

In 1839, Wagner and his wife Minna boarded a schooner in East Prussia to begin a nightmarish crossing to England, which took 3½ weeks rather than the usual eight days. From this experience Wagner formulated ideas which would become his opera *Der fliegende Holländer* (The Flying Dutchman). We heard the close of Act I recorded in Bayreuth in 1955, featuring Josef Traxel and Ludwig Weber.

Wagner wrote that it was after a boat voyage to La Spezia in Italy that the E flat at the start of *Das Rheingold* first came to him. We heard the first few minutes of that opera and what is, therefore, the opening of *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, Wagner's cycle of four epic operas that occupied him for more than a quarter of a century. The recording was by the English National Opera conducted by Sir Reginald Goodall.

In 1856 the full score of *Die Walküre* (The Valkyrie) was completed and we heard the finale, as recorded in Bayreuth in 1980, conducted by Pierre Boulez, with the bass-baritone Donald McIntyre. Next we heard the end of Act I from *Siegfried*, which was completed in 1857. In this recording the Sadler's Wells Opera Orchestra was conducted by Sir Reginald Goodall and featured the tenor Alberto Remedios.

Wagner was determined that the first complete *Ring* should not be in Munich; this led him to Bayreuth, the town he moved to in 1872. Soon after, the foundation stones for the theatre were laid. Although rehearsals were possible by 1875, scenery

and machinery would not be ready until the following year. Legend has it that some props were sent to Beirut rather than Bayreuth!

Wagner had completed *Götterdämmerung*, the final opera in the cycle, in 1874 and the first complete performance of *The Ring* was heard at Bayreuth in 1876. We heard the only choral part of *Götterdämmerung*, performed by the Bayreuth orchestra and chorus, conducted by Pierre Boulez in the centenary performance of 1976.

The premiere of *Parsifal*, Wagner's final great masterpiece, in 1882 was a triumph – an ailing Wagner took over the baton in Act III. We heard the opera's finale performed by the New Zealand SO and Finnish conductor Pietari Inkinen, with tenor Simon O'Neill. Jim's final offering was the finale of *Götterdämmerung* in a recording by the Berlin Radio SO conducted by Marek Janowski, with Petra Lang as Brünnhilde.

Whatever his thoughts about Wagner as a person, Jim left us in no doubt during his excellent talk as to the composer's musical genius.

Daventry - An Eight Year Retrospective

The weekend's final session fell to Graham Kiteley (pictured) whose task was to provide us with memories from his years as an organiser of the Daventry event. An enormous variety of presenters have appeared: recording engineers, company executives, newspaper journalists, music historians, biographers, sleeve note



writers and music professors. Then there are composers, arrangers, music directors, conductors and performance artists. Over 60 personalities have contributed hugely to the first eight years of

Daventry and Graham had to be fairly choosy in order to include a representative selection of music.

We began with 2004 when Robert Tear, one of the great tenors of his generation, was in conversation with Edward Greenfield. He displayed a real extrovert manner and spoke warmly about his very rewarding and successful career. We heard Robert Tear singing Basilio's aria from Act III of Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Georg Solti.

In 2009, the renowned concert organist Dame Gillian Weir appeared. We heard her playing the Toccata for Organ, written in 1965 by the Russian composer Sergei Slonimsky, on the organ of Birmingham's Symphony Hall.

Another guest was South African-born composer John Joubert who has lived in Birmingham for many years. Mark Bebbington, another West Midlands musician, is an acknowledged champion of British music. He appeared in 2010 and presented music by Gurney, Bridge, Ireland, Finzi and Howard Ferguson. Graham played the 'Sonata' of John Joubert's Piano Trio, Op. 113, performed by David Chadwick (violin), Anna Joubert (cello) and Mark Bebbington (piano).

Sir David Willcocks came to visit, although he had already reached a 'ripe old age'. But he stood for 90 minutes telling the story of his life in music. The *Bulletin* report that year told of 'this charming and dapper 89-year-old who held the audience spellbound with much infectious humour, wit and youthful vitality'. A recording of Sir David and his Bach Choir, along with the LSO, in the first movement of Vaughan Williams's Christmas Cantata *Hodie* was the next musical item. Another knight, a very sprightly 86-year-old Sir Neville Marriner, also came to Daventry. The appearance of Sir Neville, who founded the Academy of St Martin in the Fields in 1958, comprised wit and good humour and has been described as a 'Gala' performance. We heard a 1972 recording of Purcell's Chacony in G minor, a performance that, for Graham, recalled the original Academy sound.

Julian Lloyd Webber was an undoubted highlight. He came with his (then) girlfriend Jiaxin Cheng. Julian was a right character with a wicked sense of humour. Graham recalled that once Lloyd Webber was on stage, 'I had to keep him flowing with pints of Stella Artois!' Graham played a recording of Julian and his wife Jiaxin on cellos, with pianist John Lenehan, performing 'The Little Beggar Boy' by Argentinian composer Astor Piazzolla.

John Lill started the 2008 weekend in conversation with Lyndon Jenkins. He said that his favourite composer was Beethoven, but Graham rather likes his Brahms recordings and we heard the second movement from the Piano Concerto No. 2 with the Hallé Orchestra conducted by James Loughran.

The first six years of Graham's tenure would not have been successful without the contribution of the then FRMS President, Edward (Ted) Greenfield. Ted retired as President in 2009 immediately after a delightful afternoon during which we listened to him conversing with Ian and Jennifer Partridge. Ted was succeeded by Lyndon Jenkins who has been equally giving of his time and similarly enthusiastic in enticing top quality artists to our weekend event. His supreme contribution to this year's event cannot be overstated. Graham recorded his heartfelt thanks to those two gentlemen without whose efforts Daventry would have been a much poorer experience.

Ted Greenfield was responsible for the visit of Joan Sutherland. Graham told us: 'To have Dame Joan at Daventry was a crowning moment not only for the event but for the rest of my life'.

Dame Joan's husband, Richard Bonyng, had not been able to accompany her but she spoke for over an hour with stories of how they had met and how their lives had become entwined. Sadly, Joan Sutherland died 18 months after appearing at Daventry. To conclude his presentation, Graham played a recording of Dame Joan singing 'The Bell Song' from *Lakmé* by Delibes.

The considerable efforts of the whole Daventry team, including event organisers, technicians and administrators as well as those named here and elsewhere, ensured another highly successful weekend.●

Michael Kennedy on Strauss

When it was confirmed that highly-respected journalist, biographer and critic Michael Kennedy CBE was to appear at our Music Weekend, Lyndon Jenkins suggested that we might explore the possibility of recording his presentation commemorating Richard Strauss's 150th anniversary. Michael kindly agreed that we could do so and we are pleased to present a transcription, slightly modified for readability. His musical excerpts are highlighted.

LYNDON WAS A GREAT GENTLEMAN and a very amusing man. I hadn't realised how ill he was but we had spent a lot of time in correspondence working out what we would do for tomorrow's presentation. We regarded ourselves as two dinosaurs and we were going to work out a programme called 'These you have loathed!' Lyndon, wherever you are, I hope you don't loathe this.

Richard Strauss was born 150 years ago in Munich where he immediately found himself in the right circumstances. His father Franz – who hated Wagner – was a horn player with the Munich Court Orchestra. Strauss junior had no formal musical education whatsoever. He didn't need any; he had it at home where Franz would get players in his orchestra to teach his gifted son. So when he went to Munich University he studied philosophy and art history. He'd already written two symphonies, one of which had been played in New York, and many of his works were heard in Munich. Germany in those days wasn't the Germany we know today. In 1864 it was a collection of small kingdoms – Bavaria (including Munich), Prussia, Saxony and others and they were all run by Counts or Dukes who all had grand ideas and would have an opera house, an opera company and an orchestra. Strauss spent a lot of his youth conducting; he had to do *Lohengrin* with 15 string players – can you imagine it? When Germany became one nation it all changed. He went to work at one of those ducal courts and took with him a work he had written. The great conductor Hans von Bülow had heard his *Serenade for Winds* and he liked it so much he commissioned a work from the young composer and got Strauss to conduct it; he was already quite a good conductor and pianist.

As to his place in music, he himself is alleged to have said: 'I am not a first-rate composer, I am a first-rate second-rate composer'. That's pretty near the truth and you've got to wonder who he counted as first rate; probably not very many. So I think he rated himself pretty high, and I think we can rate him pretty high as well. There wasn't much he couldn't turn his hand to and turn in a good job. Fifteen operas, two symphonies, a load of tone poems, chamber music, over 200 songs, concertos, and there's always a masterpiece amongst them.

His first big success came with his Opus 10, eight poems (written by a local poet) for voice and piano. That song cycle contains four hit numbers that are still hit numbers, all these years later. Of his 200 songs 'Zueignung' (Christine Brewer, BBC SO and Walter Weller) was one he put off orchestrating for a long time, and how lucky we are that he did. There you hear the great soaring phrases for soprano voice, which was his

hallmark, always. He also wrote for tenors and basses, but there's no doubt about it, he had the knack of writing for sopranos in a way they wanted to sing – the drama, romance and love, and everything, all in each song.

At quite a young age, Strauss started writing chamber music. One of the great works – I think recorded by all the great artists – is the **Violin Sonata (Kyung-Wha Chung and Krystian Zimerman (piano))**. It's very typical of him, quoting bits of Wagner, Beethoven and Mozart – people that he admired. He was rather prone to doing this, a bit like Shostakovich. He wove them into the texture of the music. In the Violin Sonata I think you hear Strauss on the way to *Don Juan*, the greatest of the early tone poems.

He went on from that to write another tone poem, *Macbeth*, which has never been much of a success, although we hear more of it now and there have been some good recordings. But with *Don Juan* he really hit the jackpot. He wrote home to his father with great delight that the horn players had gone blue in the face. Just what he wanted – he enjoyed the thrill of the music!

He'd written, at the same time, *Burleske* for piano and orchestra which is full of lovely jokes. He was always a wit with a great sense of humour and enjoyed jokes as much as anybody – more than most, probably.

Don Juan began the great series of tone poems which took Strauss's name into all the world's great orchestras' repertoire at the age of 24 or 25: *Death and Transfiguration*, *Don Quixote*, and *Ein Heldenleben*

which is the story of a great military hero, although with echoes of his own adventures as a Kapellmeister. He depicted the critics not all that nicely, although amusingly and I'm glad to say that the critics, who were most recognisable, thought it was great and were very pleased to be immortalised in music.

At this time Strauss married a soprano, Pauline de Ahna, who was nothing if not temperamental. She called a spade a spade and more often a bloody shovel! Pauline was a very good singer but very outspoken and she probably made him a lot of enemies. When meeting some Nazis, she said to them: 'You'll be welcome after the war when the other gangsters are in prison'. This was 1943 or 1944 – so she was also brave and probably foolhardy, but she got away with it. She adored Strauss, though, and ran his life and we owe a number of works to her. She used to say: 'Richard, go and compose!' Thank goodness she did. She appreciated his touching letters when he was working away conducting, and he thoroughly enjoyed writing love letters, even when they had been married for a long time.

They had a son who appears in the *Sinfonia Domestica*. This shows you how times have changed – he wrote this symphony about his home life. You hear the



Michael and Joyce Kennedy at Daventry Photo: Paul Astell

family getting up in the morning, going to bed at night, making love, bathing the baby, and having a happy day. When this work appeared the critics thought it morally disgusting. How could a man who writes serious music call this a symphony? Strauss said he couldn't see anything more serious than his family which he loved above everything except music. That was typical of the hostile attitude towards a lot of his work.

In 1898 Strauss became Director of Music and Court Kapellmeister to the Kaiser (Kaiser Bill) and got on very well with him. They were very outspoken towards each other but the Kaiser knew nothing about music – well not much anyway. And when *Salome* came along he said to Strauss: 'This will get you into a lot of trouble, you know'. Strauss wrote in his memoirs 'yes, the trouble it got me into built my house in Garmisch'. He was allowed to travel as much as he liked. The Kaiser had got Mahler running music from Vienna and Strauss doing so from Berlin. *Salome* caused a great fuss, but the work that followed, *Elektra*, was a setting of a version of a Greek play by Hofmannsthal, an Austrian poet, and that's what brought them together. Strauss wanted a few more lines in places to strengthen the action, so he wrote to Hofmannsthal and we can call it a sort of collaboration. Although this opera at the time was considered an agony of discord, there's not much discord and it's got quite lyrical passages. In the famous **Recognition Scene from *Elektra* (Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and Birgit Nilsson)** you can hear definite hints in the orchestration of his next opera, *Der Rosenkavalier*.

When they got married in 1894, Strauss gave Pauline a wedding present of four songs he'd written (Four Lieder, Op. 27) in the week leading up to the wedding, and each of them is an absolute masterpiece: 'Ruhe, meine Seele!', 'Cäcilie', 'Heimliche Aufforderung', and the great 'Morgen!'. 'Cäcilie' ranks as a wedding present alongside Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll*.

Elektra took Strauss's name into every opera house in the world. He and Hofmannsthal followed this up with what was, and still is, their greatest success: the comedy for music *Der Rosenkavalier*, which everybody loves. It's a Wagner-sized opera really – 3½ hours – full of waltzes, tunes, humour and love; in fact everything you could hope for in a hit number. You'll get plenty of that on Radio 3 during the next year. It too continues his genius for the female voice by writing not just one great part for women, but three. He'd already done that, of course, for three great soprano parts in *Elektra*. In *Rosenkavalier* you have Octavian (mezzo), the Marschallin and Sophie.

What were they going to do next? They had the idea that they should give a present to the producer Max Reinhardt. He had stepped in, anonymously and as an unpaid favour, to take over the production of *Rosenkavalier*. The result, of course, was a great triumph. He suggested a half-hour chamber opera on the subject of *Ariadne auf Naxos*. Strauss didn't think much of the idea, but Hofmannsthal wanted to precede the opera by a version of the play by Molière, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* 'for which you could write some nice incidental music'. Strauss said he couldn't see the point of it, really, and Hofmannsthal was very put out, but they did continue with it. They ended up with Molière's play, which was very long and which they had to get a theatre company to perform, followed by the opera, in which the so-called richest man in Vienna orders for his guests a performance of *Ariadne auf Naxos* which 'a local young

composer had written'. This play-plus-opera version of *Ariadne auf Naxos* on its first night – including a lavish interval buffet – went on for seven or eight hours. Not even Strauss could see how impracticable it would be to mount future performances, to expect that there could be an opera company and a theatre company good enough to perform both parts. He thought that if he made a few changes, everything would be alright, but Hofmannsthal said 'no, we'll scrap the Molière and substitute a scene at the beginning called the prologue in which we'll see preparations for the opera'. Strauss saw the libretto and wasn't at all interested; he wanted Hofmannsthal to get on with another idea, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*.

Eventually he did look at the prologue libretto for *Ariadne* and thought it not so bad. So he wrote what I'm sometimes tempted to think was the greatest single thing he ever created. It's marvellously effective on stage where the young composer, who's written the opera *Ariadne*, hears that their host wants the opera performed at the same time as a variety show by comedians which he's ordered as well. Everything is to stop at nine o'clock for the fireworks.

The prologue lasts for about 40 minutes – very brilliant stuff – and then you have *Ariadne* itself which is 1½ hours, by which time the prologue has stolen the show. All the things Strauss knew about are in there, a real compendium of theatre, jokes and superstitions. The main role of the young composer is a wonderful one, but only lasts some 20-30 minutes. It's wonderful music and the fact is, every singer in the world with a suitable voice wants to sing it, even though it is short and doesn't appear in the main opera at all. It's a minor role in some respects but they all want to do it because it's so beautifully written. In an historic performance of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, **with Karl Böhm conducting, the young composer is sung by Irmgard Seefried** in her debut in the role on June 11th 1944 in the Vienna Opera House. Strauss was there for his 80th birthday. He had never heard of the singer before but he was bowled over, he'd never heard it sung so beautifully. It made her career. Never mind the recording quality; here you're hearing history being made.

What Strauss really wanted to get on with was *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, a mythical fairy tale about super-humans – nobody really knows what it's about – but when you hear the music and see what's happening on stage, you're hooked. In some respects it's probably his greatest score, and it's come back in recent years. It contains some of his most exalted and progressive music. He supervised the first performance in 1917/18 having spent 20 years with the Kaiser who had just lost the war.

Strauss went down to Vienna to become joint chief of the opera with another conductor, which didn't work out at all. The first thing they did was to stage *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. Soon after, complaints started that there was too much Strauss being performed and not enough by others, which is what you'll get if you get one of the world's greatest composers to run your opera house. They're only human after all.

Next came the work that *Ariadne* had sparked off. Strauss had been very taken with how to depict conversation in music and he thought the old-fashioned Mozart style of recitative didn't work in a lot of modern plots, and he wanted something different from *Ariadne*. That was why he was impatient to get on with it. He had an idea – which horrified Hofmannsthal at first – to write an opera about an event that had really happened to him

not many years previously. He had been conducting in England and Pauline had forwarded his mail. She was intrigued by one particular letter and read it. It was from another woman asking him for tickets for the opera. Pauline rather flew off the handle at this, wanted divorce and stopped the bank account. He thought she'd gone mad. 'What are you doing this for?' It turns out it was a mistake; Strauss's name had been mistaken for somebody with a similar name. Strauss thought these events would make a wonderful plot and he set it as the opera *Intermezzo*. Hofmannsthal wouldn't touch it, so Strauss wrote the libretto himself. It did show that he'd been deeply hurt that she'd thought he had been unfaithful.

The opera opened in Dresden in 1924. The actors were made up to look like Strauss and his wife. **The beginning of *Intermezzo*, sung by Elisabeth Söderström and Marco Bakker at Glyndebourne, conducted by John Pritchard**, is sung in English, as it should always be sung in the language of the country in which it's being performed, otherwise you'd miss half the jokes!

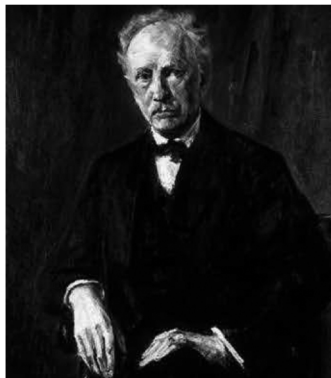
Strauss got back with Hofmannsthal and they wrote *The Egyptian Helen*, known by some wits as 'Strauss gone to Troy'. It wasn't a success. Hofmannsthal always wanted deep subjects, but Strauss had in mind something like *Rosenkavalier*. They fixed on two plays they had merged and called it *Arabella*, so named after the heroine. A much lighter opera than *Rosenkavalier*, it's got waltzes and it's wonderful music. It was the most popular of his operas at a time when his work was out of favour. Strauss showed he'd not lost anything of his gift for melody with **the wonderful love duet in *Arabella* sung by Lisa Della Casa and Hermann Uhde under Rudolf Kempe**.

Strauss and Hofmannsthal were revising Act I of *Arabella* in 1929 when the librettist died of a heart attack. Strauss was devastated because they'd had so much respect for each other. The revision was put to one side and he went back to it in 1933, a fateful year for Germany when the Nazis took over. Strauss was not perturbed – he said he wasn't bothered by the Kaiser and he wouldn't be bothered by this lot! *Arabella* rehearsals in Dresden were disrupted. They lost its conductor, Fritz Busch, who wasn't Jewish but was very much against the regime and left, as did others on the production. Strauss had to find new people, who included the conductor Clemens Krauss.

Who was to take over from Hofmannsthal as librettist? Strauss fixed upon Stefan Zweig, an Austrian Jew, and they got on well. They produced an opera, *Die schweigsame Frau* (The Silent Woman), a comedy based on Ben Jonson's play. It was feared the Nazis wouldn't allow it but Goebbels did permit it to go on. At that time they didn't want to offend too many 'big' Germans and Strauss was considered such. Goebbels had set up various committees to look after the arts, and Strauss was invited to be president of the Reichsmusikkammer. He accepted saying he thought they would be able to do a lot of things he wanted to do. He also had received a promise that Germany would sign the Geneva copyright agreement. He was horrified at being asked to rewrite the music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, because Mendelssohn's music was no longer allowed.

At rehearsals for Zweig's opera, Strauss found that the librettist's name was not included in the printed

programme. When the composer threatened to cancel the production, the authorities capitulated. Later, Strauss had written to Zweig, but the letter was intercepted and sent to Hitler. The opera had had several performances but was now immediately banned. Strauss was sacked from the Reichsmusikkammer and that was the beginning of Strauss's cat and mouse games with the authorities.



Why did he have dealings with the Nazis? His Jewish daughter-in-law – whom he adored – had two sons who also counted as Jewish and Strauss would do anything to protect this woman and her family. If he had to kowtow to the German authorities, so be it, even if his reputation was to suffer. But he didn't care, so long as they were alright. They did have a rough time having been brought into Garmisch Gestapo HQ on several occasions. There was, though, never any formal action taken against them. Some said that Strauss was

an opportunist, but he was keeping in with the top boys so that his operas would be performed and he was, like others, saving human beings. He was in a very special position. He'd had 12 years of hell until 1945, when he wrote a wonderful work, *Metamorphosen*.

There was one more opera: ***Daphne* (Renée Fleming, Semyon Bychkov). *Daphne*, a Greek goddess or nymph, turns into a tree** and the music has a sort of supernatural feeling; Strauss was marvellous at creating atmosphere. It's magic!

When the Americans occupied Garmisch, Strauss approached an American officer and said: 'I am Richard Strauss, the composer of *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Salome*.' They'd come to commandeer the house to fill it full of Americans, but Strauss became friends with some, one of whom asked if he had written an oboe concerto. This was John de Lancie who in civilian life was principal oboe with the Pittsburgh Orchestra. Strauss said he hadn't, but within a year he had written the **Concerto for Oboe and small orchestra (Nicholas Daniel and Richard Hickox)**.

Metamorphosen is an elegy for 23 strings, a memorial for the war destruction in Germany. Strauss was widely criticised for only concentrating on buildings such as opera houses, rather than the thousands of human lives lost. His answer was that he had not asked that anyone be killed. ***Metamorphosen* (New Stockholm CO/ Esa-Pekka Salonen)** recalls a Germany that had gone. Buried in the bass is the theme from Beethoven's *Eroica*. It's a very great work.

Strauss went back to Garmisch which was in such a mess the family persuaded him to go to Switzerland, moving from hotel to hotel (because Pauline complained about every one of them). His son Franz visited him and found him in a very depressed state. He'd been through the denazification process which had made him very miserable. Franz said to him: 'Papa, just sit down and write a few nice songs.' Some time later his daughter-in-law came and he handed her a large parcel: 'Here are the songs your husband ordered.' This was the ***Four Last Songs* ('September', Felicity Lott/Neeme Järvi)**. These are some of the most successful works written in the 20th century and they never lose their beauty.

Thank you for listening. I love Strauss far too much to talk about him coherently, but I hope you enjoyed this music.

Transcription: Paul Astell and Sue Parker •



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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT Allan Child

WHEN I TOOK THE CHAIR at the FRMS AGM last November, I little thought that I would remain as acting chairman for what could be described as an *annus horribilis* in the history of the Federation. The loss of our chairman, our President, and then our vice-chairman, all in little over eight months, constitutes a misfortune from which it will not be easy to recover; even now it is difficult to believe that Colin, Lyndon and Roger are no longer with us.

But the activities of the Federation continue – safeguarding the interests of its affiliated societies through licensing and insurance arrangements, as well as encouraging contact between societies and organising events such as the annual Music Weekend. I see one part of the chairman's role, even in an acting capacity, as encouraging that contact between societies, either directly or through the FRMS, both regionally and nationally. A frequent benefit of such contacts is when a society has a visiting presenter from another, and in this context I have been honoured to be invited to present programmes at several locations recently. The arrangements in some cases may have been made before I took on the acting chairman's role, but my visits have nevertheless been opportunities to strengthen ties between individual societies, and between societies and the Federation. I look forward to further visits – my diary is already filling up for next year.

Despite the pall cast over the Federation by its losses, there have been some good things too. We had a successful Music Weekend at Daventry; much of the programme had been arranged through the good offices of Lyndon Jenkins, and that the Weekend went well was a very appropriate tribute and memorial to him. Another good thing is yet to come: the AGM this year is to be held in Southport, an elegant coastal resort north of Liverpool. John Hardie and his team from the Southport Gramophone Society have organised a full weekend of associated activities, and special rates at the hotel where the AGM itself takes place. What better excuse could there be to treat yourself to an autumn break?



FRMS PRESENTERS' PANEL *amendments*

NEW ENTRIES

DR JOHN MALPASS

4 Carlton Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leics LE8 0LZ

email: jrm@le.ac.uk

Tel: 0116 279 2557

Former trustee and membership secretary of the Rachmaninoff Society.

Currently one presentation offered: Sergei Rachmaninoff – his life and music. A Powerpoint presentation with historical photographs covering Rachmaninoff's personal and musical development, including significant recordings of his songs, choral music and chamber music as well as his piano compositions (some with the composer at the piano) and selected orchestral excerpts.

No fee; reasonable expenses.

PROFESSOR ANTHONY OGUS CBE, FBA

Woodland House, Midgeley Lane, Goldsborough, N Yorks HG5 8NN

Tel: 01423 864099

email: Info@anthonyogus.co.uk

Website: <http://anthonyogus.co.uk/index.php>

Opera fanatic and author of book *Travels With My Opera Glasses*.

Talks on and around opera and opera-going: composers, performers, productions, opera-houses, audiences, 'calamities'.

No fee. Travelling expenses negotiable.

AMENDMENTS

Roger Apps: delete entry

Tony Pook: email address is now tonypook@talktalk.net

Roger Apps (1946 – 2014)

WITH THE DEATH OF ROGER APPS in June, the recorded music movement lost one of its most active and enthusiastic members. Roger began collecting records in 1962 while still at school and the following year saw him attend his first Prom concert. Roger hailed from Lewisham, south-east London, but a move to Kent made London concerts less easy to attend, and so it was that, in 1968, he joined the Maidstone RMS (later to become Maidstone Music Appreciation Society). At various times he was chairman, secretary and treasurer; he remained a member until 2001 and was made a life member in 2010. Roger was also a founder member of Tenterden Gramophone Society in 1969.



Back in London in the 1980s, Roger was able to enjoy the concert scene and to expand his love and appreciation of music. Roger's musical interests stretched far and wide, as testified by his articles for this magazine in the three previous issues, and the final one in this edition. He had the inclination and ability to seek out recordings by composers and artists many will not have even heard of, and seemed equally enthusiastic about all of them. His interests took in music from the Scandinavian countries, as well as France, Hungary and the Czech lands (he was a founder member of the Dvořák Society of Great Britain in 1974). As can be seen in his posthumously-published article on page 29 of this issue, he also had a great love of rare British works.

In recent years, Roger lived in the West Country, becoming a member of Bradford-on-Avon RMS in 2002 and Bath RMS in 2008. As if that wasn't enough, he also joined Warminster Recorded Music Society in 2010. Sadly, the Bath Society closed recently, but not before Roger had played a major part in arranging for it to host the FRMS AGM in 2012.

Roger's wide musical tastes made him an ideal presenter and he was a regular visitor to Societies other than his own. These have included Canterbury, West Wickham, Orpington, Gillingham (Kent), Lewisham, Devizes, City of Bristol, Keynsham, Street & Glastonbury, Salisbury and Winscombe.

Roger was one of the driving forces in the formation of the FRMS West Region and became its co-chairman. That Regional Group's future is uncertain but at least one more event is planned for July of next year – as a tribute to Roger. Roger's widow June will be involved in a programme they had discussed together entitled Shake (Dance of the Seven Veils), Rattle (Simon) and Roll (Rhapsody in Blue).

Roger joined the FRMS committee in 2008 and became vice-chairman in 2011, standing in ably for the late Colin Dancer on a number of occasions. He was very keen to promote the Federation and succeeded in establishing links with a number of other organisations, such as societies dedicated to one composer.

Roger gained qualifications in marketing and spent his working life in market research administration. This included a period spent with the Chamber of Commerce for the Medway towns.

Outside music, Roger had a great interest in railways, an interest shared with one of our Vice-Presidents and our acting chairman. A period of secondment spent in Darlington was surely no hardship for this ardent train spotter! Travel was another of his great loves and he was never happier than when sent on trade missions to any number of interesting locations.

Last summer, Roger and June embarked upon their 'dream holiday', a 14-day Baltic cruise which ended prematurely in rather shocking fashion. In the weeks that followed, Roger composed a newsletter for circulation amongst his wide circle of friends, this in typically humorous style, detailing the events that transpired when at sea *en route* from Helsinki to St Petersburg. Having felt unwell, and following tests at the ship's medical centre, Roger was informed he was having a heart attack. Roger, in his highly entertaining, if rather disturbing letter, proclaimed that, having been transferred from the ship to an ambulance: 'there is nothing more exhilarating than being driven over rough roads, klaxon blazing, past trams, weaving past trolley-buses and even large lorries!' On arrival at a clinic 'somewhere in St Petersburg', the unfolding saga had 'shades of the Cold War'.

Roger discovered that the doctor in attendance was an ardent classical music lover '... so I reeled off a list of favourite Russian composers, and from then on Ekaterina and I were friends for life – which in my case may have only been for a few more hours!' Even in adversity, Roger's love of music shone through. He had his musical doctor phone through an order to the local CD shop 'where at bargain price was had the complete works of Kalinnikov, which pleased me enormously'. To collect those CDs, June went by bus, carrying the exact fare of 29 roubles.

Roger's death is a significant loss to the FRMS and he will be greatly missed. •



Maidstone Gramophone Society first Annual Dinner, 1982.
L-R Mary Stevens (secretary), Roger Apps (chairman), Elsie Harris (treasurer).

MEMORIES OF SIR COLIN DAVIS by Brian Godfrey (Radlett RMS)

MY FIRST ENCOUNTER with Colin Davis (no Sir then) was on May 16th 1954. The Chelsea Opera Group (COG) descended every term on Oxford and Cambridge to give a concert performance of the chosen opera, and the choruses for these performances were recruited locally. I was in the Oxford chorus and we had been prepared by Murray Young. The work on this occasion was Weber's *Der Freischütz*, only the second time that the Group had departed from Mozart repertoire. The orchestra, soloists and conductor arrived for a morning rehearsal in Oxford Town Hall, and the performance was in the afternoon. He wasn't very pleased with the chorus at the rehearsal but was charm personified at the performance.

After leaving Oxford I joined the New Opera Company (NOC), which gave staged performances during the summer at Sadler's Wells Theatre. It was probably a connection between the NOC and the Sadler's Wells company itself through Peter Hemmings that got us the job of doing extra chorus in *Fidelio*, conducted by Colin Davis, in the spring of 1960. Sadly, we were not needed for the 'Prisoners' Chorus', just the final scene in which David Ward was cast as Don Fernando. When he came on at the back it was sometimes apparent that he had spent the earlier part of the evening in the pub across the road!

Based in the London area, I joined COG on a regular basis in late 1963 – too late for part 1 of *The Trojans* but in time for *Béatrice et Bénédict* and *Roméo et Juliette* in the Royal Festival Hall (RFH) with professional London orchestras. In 1964 came *The Trojans at Carthage*, a truly magical experience. Colin had never conducted this score before but he seemed to master it instinctively and totally. My Berlioz repertoire with Colin was growing nicely! Next came the Requiem in St Paul's Cathedral, as part of the 1964 City of London Festival. Somewhere, Colin has said that he first conducted it in 1966, but that is not true! There was no London Symphony Chorus (LSC) in 1964, so it was a mixture of three choruses, one of which was COG's.

Finally, in 1965, COG put on *Benvenuto Cellini* conducted by Colin. The 'Roman Carnival' music is so fast and very hard for the chorus, and that was in English. Much later we had to sing the same music in French, which was even worse! From then on there was some Berlioz in each year up to 1969. That year also saw the new Covent Garden production of *Les Troyens* and the Philips recording of it in Walthamstow. Near the end of 1969 I persuaded Arthur Oldham, who had replaced John Alldis as chorus director of the LSC, to let me sing in the Philips recording of the Requiem in Westminster Cathedral, whose acoustic is almost as resonant as that of St Paul's.

Thereafter I stayed on as a member and took part in several more of the Davis Berlioz cycle for Philips. I found singing in the COG Chorus as well as the LSC rather difficult, but returned to COG when Colin conducted *Fidelio* in St John's Smith Square for COG's silver jubilee in 1975. We have a recording of that performance, together with about half an hour's rehearsal prior to it. It demonstrates how good Colin was at

handling amateur choruses and getting the best out of them, a gift which he kept to the end.

When Colin came back to head up the LSO in the Barbican he started to programme concert performances of operas, just like he had with COG 45 years earlier. There was *Carmen* and *Otello*, for example. This culminated in the Berlioz Odyssey of 1999-2000, in which the LSC provided the chorus for all three operas and other works. He showed great faith in this amateur chorus for it to take part in these high-profile events, most of which were recorded for the LSO Live label.

Shortly before I left the LSC I was fortunate to go with them, and the LSO, to perform in Avery Fisher Hall in New York, where Colin conducted us in Dvořák and Janáček.

I had the impression that Colin Davis, as well as being happy to use a good amateur chorus (some conductors aren't), was keen to encourage up-and-coming soloists and give them an opportunity to develop. They will be particularly sorry at his passing.

More than once I heard Colin say at a chorus rehearsal 'I am allergic to newspapers'. Woe betide him or her who didn't put it away! And on another occasion (rehearsing *La Damnation de Faust*): 'We're looking for a special pianissimo – you can get an ordinary one in C&A'. On a 1999 EUYO tour with the *Missa Solemnis*, the chorus arrived by coach in Reims, to be greeted and helped to alight by Colin and his smiling wife Shamsi. What other conductor would do that? Once I found myself strap-hanging with him on the District Line after a rehearsal, and he lamented that he couldn't spend more time in his second home in Suffolk where he was so happy with his family.

To sum up, it was a great privilege to have taken even a tiny part in Colin's music-making. I did 83 concerts plus 36 studio recording sessions with him (15 of them Berlioz) – always a joy, even when it was hard work – and of course the Berlioz CDs for LSO Live. I shall miss him greatly. A distinguished professional singer recently told me that he had 'a deep and abiding love for Colin ... he is a natural leader whom I am happy to follow', with which I heartily agree. Over the years, I have sung for nearly 200 different conductors, including quite a lot of 'big names', many of whom I have admired and respected, but Davis was always my conductor of choice.

Postscript: I have recently been working on Colin Davis's discography, which presumably reflects to a large extent his musical tastes. There is a huge amount of Berlioz, as we would expect, but also a lot of Beethoven, Mozart and Sibelius. In recent years he appeared to become interested in Brahms and Schubert, both of whose symphonies he recorded in complete editions; even more recently he espoused Carl Nielsen. He also seemed more involved with Elgar than Vaughan Williams, and his initial enthusiasm for Stravinsky waned somewhat as time went by, to judge by the recording legacy. Interestingly, there is almost no Richard Strauss. How fitting that his very last recording was of the Berlioz Requiem.

Brian Godfrey has sung in about 760 concerts with various choral groups, including the LSC at various times between 1966 and 2002, and also occasionally the Philharmonia Chorus as an 'extra'.



SOCIETY NEWS

106th birthday celebrations at Bournemouth

Members of Bournemouth Gramophone Society gathered at Parkstone Yacht Club for a luncheon to celebrate the 106th birthday of member Mrs Joan Hocquard.



Joan Hocquard celebrates her 106th birthday

Joan was born in London on 29th March 1908. As a child, Joan lived with her parents at Kisumu on Lake Victoria, Kenya, for about eight years. There, Joan adored playing football with the black boys, which was strictly forbidden by her father. He came home one morning – something he never did – the boys scattered and Joan got a dose of the slipper. With her adventurous nature, the young Joan was happier tinkering with engines and driving than joining in the usual drawing room activities of her peers. She travelled the continent from an early age and as a young lady worked abroad, first in a hotel and then as the chauffeuse there, driving visitors around the continent and over the Alps.

Returning to London, she married her late husband, Gilbert Hocquard, a keen yachtsman. Joan soon joined him in this activity. In 1936, they had a 40-foot, all teak, ocean-going yacht, *Peregrine*, built by William Fife of Fairlie, Scotland. For many happy years they sailed her around Britain and the Channel Islands, and after WWII, the Mediterranean. *Peregrine* was laid up in St Just, Cornwall, during the war, after which Joan and Gilbert sailed her back to the Solent. Joan's husband was a keen photographer and belonged to the Camera Club.

During the war Joan served as an ambulance driver in London before moving to Sussex, where she worked in the NAAFI at Friston aerodrome. They then moved to Lymington and eventually settled in Poole.

Music is a great love of Joan's, and her other hobbies include philately. Joan, by now a widow, joined Bournemouth Gramophone Society in 1971 when it met at Winton Methodist Church. A wonderful cook and hostess, Joan held many At Home events for the members and accommodated several guest speakers. At the Society she met her constant

companion, Ken Bedford. Together, not only do they regularly attend the Society's meetings but also many concerts in Poole and Bournemouth. This indomitable lady still takes great interest in everything around her and leads a very active life. She was looking forward to a coach holiday in May and hoping for more to follow.

Sylvia Giddins, treasurer

Rochdale President's 90th birthday

Rochdale Gramophone Society has saluted their Honorary President, Jack Tattersall, on his 90th birthday. Jack has been a member of the Society continuously for 62 years during which he has held various posts before being elected as Honorary President over 10 years ago. He is a great Wagner fan and was presented with a collection of 36 CDs covering all of Wagner's operas. Even at his advanced age, Jack sets out the chairs and checks the equipment before every meeting and sees all is well before locking up afterwards. His service to the Society is inestimable and he is a very popular member.



Jack Tattersall (left) and Rochdale GS chairman, John Mills

There was a presentation during the afternoon by Robert Seager of Barnsley RMS: Richard Wagner – the World's Greatest Composer? This was followed by afternoon tea.

George Steele

A Request to Society Secretaries

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

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

LYNDON JENKINS (1938 – 2014)

It was a very sad day for the Federation, and many throughout the music world, when we heard of the death of our President at St Mary's Hospice, Birmingham on April 24th, aged 75. The following tribute draws on recollections from Lyndon's brother and Symphony Hall's Chief Executive Andrew Jowett OBE, as well as friends and colleagues. *Photos courtesy Birmingham THSH.*

THE FUNERAL OF LYNDON JENKINS was a private family ceremony but with representatives from Symphony Hall and the FRMS. Lyndon's brother Clive gave the eulogy in which he outlined their early life. He and Lyndon were born in Swansea just before the start of World War II. Silver spoons were in short supply but their very different paths were fixed when Clive was given a rugby ball and Lyndon a violin. Lessons followed, and then a baton, and so the stage was set for a life in music. This followed a family pattern, since their father was chairman of the local rugby club and their mother an accomplished pianist. Lyndon played in various orchestras and eventually set up and conducted an amateur orchestra. National Service in the Royal Artillery Band was further preparation for his subsequent achievements in music.

Lyndon moved to Birmingham from his native Swansea in the early 1960s to take up a position as personal assistant to Sir Robert Booth, then Director of Birmingham Chamber of Commerce. Working alongside Sir Robert, Lyndon was at the centre of discussions regarding the proposed National Exhibition Centre development, ultimately taking on the role of Press Officer after it opened in 1976.

Lyndon joined Symphony Hall as Special Projects Manager in 1993 and, following his retirement in 2004, remained part of the team as Music Adviser to Birmingham's Town Hall and Symphony Hall (THSH). He played a key role in programming the Birmingham International Concert Season and was responsible for originating a number of themed festivals. He interviewed many visiting artists and presented the ECHO (European Concert Hall Organisation) Rising Stars series since its inception in the early 1990s. For many of Birmingham's classical music audiences, Lyndon was without doubt the public face of Symphony Hall and the Town Hall, as well as being known by the artists who have appeared there. He helped devise many concerts and projects which contributed significantly to those venues' reputation as among the great concert halls of the world.

Lyndon was a highly respected journalist, author, lecturer and broadcaster on music. He wrote for the *Birmingham Post* from 1972-1987, was classical presenter at Mercia Sound (1980-89), BRMB (1986-89) and BBC Radio WM (1989-92) and later presented a weekly programme of light music on Saga Radio. He was a well-known voice on BBC Radio 3 from 1983-99, a regular contributor to specialist music journals and writer of CD booklets for many leading record labels, including EMI, Testament and Dutton. A specialist in British music,

British artists and British musical history, the subjects of his many documentary programmes included Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir Malcolm Sargent, Dame Maggie Teyte, Eric Fenby and EJ Moeran. His publications included *Sir Adrian Boult's Birmingham Years*, *The Birmingham 78s*, *The Recorded Works of William Walton*, *The Music of Arthur Bliss on Record*, *While Spring and Summer Sang: Thomas Beecham and the Music of Frederick Delius* and *Town Hall Birmingham: A History in Pictures*.

Among his many interests was a particular love of Scandinavian music and he broadcast programmes about Sibelius and Nielsen regularly on Finnish and Danish radio. His promotion of Danish music led to his being awarded a knighthood from HM The Queen of Denmark for services to Anglo-Danish cultural relations. He gave the first Adrian Boult lecture in Birmingham in 1986, was chairman of the Delius Society from 1994-2000, and of course was President of the FRMS from 2009 until his death.

Lyndon took his association with the FRMS very seriously and as President was unique. Rather than playing a conventional role as a passive bystander, he

became actively interested in Federation affairs from the moment he was appointed. The committee was delighted that, in order to become fully *au fait* with its function, he asked if he might attend the quarterly committee meetings as an observer. His unbiased opinions and objective suggestions were greatly valued and did much to maintain the vitality of an ageing organisation.

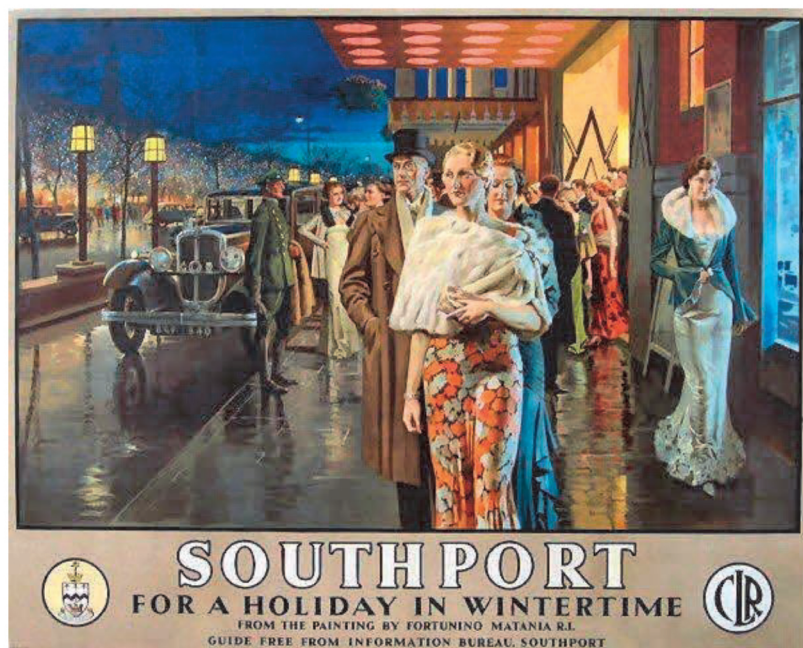
As a raconteur he was renowned. His extremely knowledgeable music presentations were punctuated with pithy comment and caustic wit, and he often had to wait for the laughter to fade before he could continue. Here is his response, a few years ago, to some FRMS committee email exchanges on the subject of name badges at the AGM: 'Ah, one knows one is in England when a group of people of considerable collective eminence is prepared to spend a morning examining, in minute detail and not without flashes of humour, the small questions alongside the large. It gives one a lovely reassuring feeling that, despite all the daily "buffets and rewards", all is really alright with the world.'

But beneath the larger-than-life and jovial music academic was a self-effacing, very kindly man who cared sincerely for his fellow creatures. It was typical that only a few days before he died, he sent a long letter in shaky handwriting expressing not only his personal thoughts but regrets that he would 'probably miss the music weekend and hoped it wouldn't cause too much bother having to rearrange.' Lyndon will be sorely missed for so many reasons by everyone who knew him. ●



Meeting HRH The Duke of Edinburgh in 2002, with Sakari Oramo (left) and Peter Thomas, CBSO leader at the time

FRMS Annual General Meeting 2014



Hosted by **SOUTHPORT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY**

A Society for the appreciation of quality
music, founded in 1938 by
Mr A Engel and affiliated to the
Federation of Recorded Music Societies



November 8th - 9th 2014

The Royal Clifton Hotel

1 The Promenade

Southport, PR8 1RB

01704 533771

email: sales@royalclifton.co.uk

Free parking

The FRMS aims to make this year's AGM a memorable weekend in this splendid Lancashire resort.

This event is open to any number of members from any affiliated society.

Saturday

1pm: Registration for AGM

2pm: Business meeting

4pm: A recorded music recital presented by Southport GS

5pm: Joe Winstanley's illustrated presentation of recorded music
history using his EM Ginn 78 rpm gramophone

6pm: Evening meal

8pm: Live classical music recital (details available soon)

Sunday

10am: A recorded music recital presented by Southport GS

Visitors may wish to consider other options (not organised by the FRMS):

Remembrance Day at possibly the finest war memorial in the North West

The Atkinson Art Gallery (adjacent to hotel)

At 2pm in the hotel: Swingshift Big Band (details from Southport Melodic Jazz)

Hotel charges

Saturday evening dinner/recital only - £25

1 night - Double £135, Single £80 includes Saturday dinner (3 courses) and breakfast.

2 nights - Double £190, Single £115 includes Saturday dinner and breakfast each day.

Each additional night (bed and breakfast) - Double £50, Single £30.

Important: when booking, quote the FRMS weekend.

TORBAY MUSICAL Weekend

Friday 14 to Monday 17 November 2014
at The Palace Hotel, Torquay
www.palacetorquay.com

Enjoy Four Star Hotel accommodation and a weekend of music and talks on a range of topics at the historic Palace Hotel Torquay. The Hotel is set in beautiful grounds within walking distance of Anstey's Cove and Babbacombe Bay and a short bus ride from the attractive town of Torquay on the English Riviera.

PRICES

Friends of Torbay Subscription Fee £50

Residents' Hotel Tariffs – per person, inclusive of VAT

Option A @ £280 from Friday Dinner to Monday Breakfast inclusive

Option B @ £212 from Friday Dinner to Sunday Tea inclusive

Session Tickets available from Kevin Ryland on 01803 406754 (evening or weekends only) or email kevinryland45@yahoo.co.uk

Day Visitors Very Welcome

For more information please contact John Isaac (Chairman) on 01580 879359 or email gillianbabbs@waitrose.com or visit www.fot-uk.org



ANTONY SMITH

The Way Forward?
 Antony Smith of Nimbus looks at potential opportunities and pitfalls for the record industry



ARTHUR BOYD

Cole Porter - Naughtiest of Lyricists/Composers? The composer from Peru who wrote more songs than Schubert – a trip down memory lane



SANDY BURNETT

A raging serpent, a hellish dragon and God's army of angels: Sandy Burnett explores the sacred cantatas of J. S. Bach



ROGER VIGNOLES

Internationally renowned pianist Roger Vignoles looks back on an eventful career partnering many of the world's leading singers



PAT STEVENS

Former professional French Horn player, Pat Stevens, gives us his view of London music and recordings in the 1950s



JEREMY DIBBLE

'English Composers and WWI'
 Professor Jeremy Dibble looks at the music of Butterworth, Parry, Bliss and Vaughan Williams amongst others



SUSANNA RIDDELL

Professional cellist
 Susanna Riddell discusses her work with youth orchestras



TED PEZARRO

"That Jewish Strain"
 in Music will be explored by Torbay regular Ted Pezarro



JULIAN WILLIAMSON

Hans von Bulow –
 Julian Williamson discusses the life and times of a remarkable musician



ROBERT MAX & SOPHIE LOCKETT

Cellist Robert Max and Violinist Sophie Lockett of the celebrated Barbian Trio will give a recital of music of the masters



PETER LYMBERRY

In the 150th anniversary year of the birth of Richard Strauss, Peter Lymberry reflects on the man and his music

PLUS

'Bedtime Baroque' with Lesley Orson and Maureen Greenhouse

Details correct at time of going to print

REGIONAL NEWS

Chairman Tony Pook reports on Yorkshire Regional Group's annual event



CRAIGLANDS HOTEL
28th – 31st MARCH 2014

OWING TO CIRCUMSTANCES totally beyond our control (an increase of 24% in the charges made by our former Scarborough Hotel) the YRG Committee decided to move the Weekend to Craiglands Hotel, Ilkley, an attractive Victorian spa town in West Yorkshire. This proved to be a successful move in terms of our food, accommodation and a most attractive music room and we will be using this again as our venue in 2015.

GEORGE STEELE manages the FRMS website and is a long-serving member of Rochdale Gramophone Society. His subject was **The Waltz**, and we learned that this developed from the Ländler, a popular dance which featured in the many balls held to celebrate the Congress of Vienna in 1815. The composers of the time, Josef Lanner and Johann Strauss senior, wrote waltzes considered indecent by some sections of Viennese society because, for the first time, a man could hold his partner closely in public. The waltz soon moved into the concert hall and, following pieces by Lanner and Strauss, we heard Berlioz's arrangement of Carl Maria von Weber's *Invitation to the Dance* and then 'Un Bal', the second movement of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*.



The waltz moved into a heavier league: Jean-Yves Thibaudet played Liszt's piano transcription of the second act waltz from Gounod's *Faust*. From Tchaikovsky we heard the waltz from Act II of *Swan Lake* and the second movement of his Fifth Symphony. We returned to lighter fare with Joshua Rifkin playing Scott Joplin's concert waltz 'Bethena'. Celebration of the waltz continued in song with Lehár's *Merry Widow* and Stolz's *Vienna is loveliest by night*, and stage with Khachaturian's *Masquerade* and Shostakovich's Second Dance Suite. England was represented by Coates's *Wood Nymphs* and Farnon's *The Westminster Waltz* and we finished, inevitably, with Strauss and *The Blue Danube*.

MARTIN BINKS has conducted both the Leeds Symphony Orchestra and West Riding Opera for many years and he spoke about one of his favourite characters, Hector Berlioz. The composer was taught by his father, a doctor, and had wide-ranging interests, including a love of Shakespeare and Virgil. He knew twelve of Shakespeare's plays by heart and always quoted from them in English.



YRG Music Weekend

Our first music example was the concert overture *Le Carnaval Romain* composed in 1840 from themes in the opera *Benvenuto Cellini*. It was played by the CBSO, conducted by Louis Frémaux with whom Martin studied. This was followed by an excerpt from *Lélio*, which Berlioz regarded as a sequel to his *Symphonie Fantastique*, featuring harp, strings and wind to demonstrate his interest in instrumental use.

From the *Grande Messe des Morts*, conducted by Bernstein, we had spectacular extremes: the 'Dies irae' and 'Tuba mirum', using large orchestral forces, singers and four brass bands, contrasted with the unaccompanied choir singing very quietly. In 1975 Martin visited Napoleon's tomb in Les Invalides, Paris, and heard Bernstein play this work with four brass bands, a choir of 300 and 180 musicians from the combined National and Radio orchestras.

Our feast of Berlioz continued with 'Absence' from *Les nuits d'été*, sung by Régine Crespin, 'The March to the Scaffold' from *Symphonie Fantastique* and the love scene from Part II of *Roméo et Juliette*. In this brief programme we had an overall picture of this most entertaining musician, a writer of contrasts exhibiting drama, power and delicacy.

NIGEL SIMEONE, author, lecturer and teacher chose Richard Strauss as his topic and opened with a piano roll, made in 1905, of the composer playing *Ein Heldenleben*, this being one of the earliest recordings. His opera *Der Rosenkavalier* was a sensational success in 1911, so different in style from his earlier operas, *Salome* and *Elektra*, which were both quite bloodthirsty. We heard part of a recording made in October 1911 by the Dresden Court Orchestra and featuring two of the original cast: Minnie Nast as Sophie and Margarethe Siems as the Marschallin.



Early recordings from *Ariadne auf Naxos* were followed by examples of Strauss conducting the finale of Mozart's Symphony No. 39 in 1926, the overture to Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* in 1928 and his own setting of the *Olympic Hymn*, recorded in 1936. Later, in November 1936, Strauss conducted the Dresden State Opera Orchestra playing *Don Quixote* and *Till Eulenspiegel* in the Queen's Hall, London.

We also heard excerpts from *Daphne*, *Capriccio*, *The Egyptian Helen* and the early *Feuersnot*, which was banned in Berlin by the Emperor (who did not see it) because the Empress thought it too erotic. Various other examples featured Strauss's songs and chamber works and thus completed this fascinating history lesson with many unusual recordings.

LINDA ORMISTON made a very welcome return to our Sunday evening slot and she reminded us of her very early performances in Motherwell, singing songs

in clubs, such as 'How much is that doggie in the window?' and 'Little Buttercup'. Her parents were both singers and belonged to the Gilbert and Sullivan groups in Hamilton and Glasgow so it is not surprising that first amongst her **Favourites from Stage and Screen** she played some of Sir Charles Mackerras's arrangement *Pineapple Poll*.



Linda has been a judge at many singing competitions and one of her fellow judges has been the tenor Kenneth McKellar, once a very popular singer of light ballads. He was a member of the Carl Rosa Touring Company but did not like being away from Scotland. To illustrate his singing voice Linda chose 'Every Valley' from Adrian Boult's 1961 LSO recording of Handel's *Messiah*.

Patrick Doyle is a Scottish actor and composer with an impressive list of film music credits: *Sense and Sensibility*, *Bridget Jones's Diary*, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* and *Calendar Girls*. We heard him sing in his own composition 'Non Nobis Domine' from the Kenneth Branagh film *Henry V*.

Three operatic favourites followed: Maria Callas as Constanza in Mozart's *Seraglio*, Charles Craig as the Count in Giordano's *Fedora* and Janet Baker as Dorabella in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*.

Linda sang in the choruses of Scottish Opera and Welsh National Opera and we heard excerpts from *The Merry Widow*, *Macbeth* and *Don Giovanni*. On a lighter note we heard 'The Opera Interval' by Joyce Grenfell, Stéphane Grappelli and Django Reinhardt in 'It had to be you', Fred Astaire singing 'Shall We Dance?' and some Scott Joplin played by Wyn Davies. Wyn, with Linda and Donald Maxwell, formed the entertaining Music Box which featured in Linda's final item, 'So go to him' from Gilbert and Sullivan's *Patience*.

DAVID PATMORE has a passion for all forms of recorded music, particularly for historical performances. **Opera in Milan, 1927-1932**, complete with a handout giving a comprehensive discography, was a detailed insight into a significant period of operatic recording development.



David explained that this was the period of massive expansion when more money was being spent on gramophones. It was a time of technical improvement, recordings were being made on location rather than in the studio, and recording companies such as HMV and Columbia were becoming more competitive. The competitiveness often meant that rival companies recorded the same things, often with the same cast and orchestra but with their own conductor. We heard examples of this from the 1930 recordings of *Il Trovatore* and

Rigoletto. Many recordings from this time disappeared after World War II but later re-emerged in the 1980s on CD. We heard examples from *Aida*, *La Bohème*, *Pagliacci*, *Fedora* and *Manon Lescaut*. In those days interpretation was based on the performing tradition, whereas now it is more concerned with the execution, for example, extended tenor high notes.

Come the Great Depression, the market fell away. Columbia merged with HMV in 1931 to become EMI, and the resultant monopoly tended to kill creativity.

IN 1986, **ANTONY SMITH** took a holiday job with Nimbus Records and now, some 28 years later, he is its Business Director. He briefly described his early career, telling how he drove a white van round the country visiting record shops, but eventually started the UK distribution system.

His first music was Finzi's *Love's Labour's Lost*, this being the first recording session he attended. Later this disc was to get into the top ten classical recordings in New York.



After meeting guitarist Paco Peña, who had left EMI, Antony proposed a recording of music in the flamenco style with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields. We heard 'Santo' from *Misa Flamenca*, which was in the pop charts for ten weeks. Also, recorded primarily for the Spanish market, we heard the Andorra National Chamber Orchestra play popular Spanish melodies by Eduardo Toldrá.

This is the fourth or fifth visit by Nimbus to our Weekend and we always hear something new and are given significant extracts. There are too many presenters who play a two-minute snippet and then move on to enthuse about the next item, yet it is the music that mainly interests our audience.

Nimbus was the first and largest manufacturer of CDs in this country but by the 1990s it had a need for financial advice. This came in the shape of Robert Maxwell, owner of the Mirror Group who, despite his questionable activities, was a visionary investor, who foresaw great changes in data systems. Thus Nimbus invented the CD ROM.

Our musical contrasts continued with part of Etienne Méhul's Fourth Symphony, The Wise Maid (an Irish reel from the Fiddle Festival in Cork), Vaughan Williams's *Oxford Elegy* and 'Sunday Morning' from Britten's *Four Sea Interludes*, which was the first record that Antony produced.

Today, Nimbus is supporting living composers and we heard an extract from George Benjamin's opera, *Written on Skin* and Richard Blackford's music for the German TV series based on Rosamunde Pilcher's novels.

Our fascinating afternoon concluded with an extract from the Hallé recording of Elgar's *The Apostles*, which won awards from both the BBC Music Magazine and Gramophone in 2013.

JOHN GILKS is a member of York RMS and chose to talk about **Songs my Father Taught Me**. Although John said he was not from a musical family, it was clear that music featured largely in their family life and his passion for collecting records dates from these very early years. At the age of four his father introduced him to Charlie Kunz playing 'Two Lovely Black Eyes'.



We started with, predictably, Dvořák's *Songs My Mother Taught Me*, which was recorded by Paul Robeson on 20th November 1938, and then we heard the November 1932 recording of Wagner's *Rienzi* Overture. This was on a 3-part 12-inch 78 set – they only had the first two parts (6029/6030), so John never heard the ending.

More nostalgia included Webster Booth singing 'A Wandering Minstrel I' in 1941, and Rawicz and Landauer performing *Invitation to the Dance* in 1937, which cost 2/6d originally but increased to 4/2d during World War II.

John's family were concerned that he should speak properly, i.e. like the BBC, as exemplified by Raymond Newell's June 1930 'Song of the Tinker'. John then played his favourite recording from 1928/9, a medley of radio waltzes by Primo Scala and his Accordion Band, followed by Anny Ahlers singing 'I Give My Heart' from *The Dubarry*. We then heard the 1932 recording of Mengelberg conducting Johann Strauss's *Perpetuum Mobile*, and the 1927 recording of the 'Easter Hymn' from *Cavalleria Rusticana*.

John's mother would not permit the next record to be played in the house because of the neighbours: the 1930 record of *Rhapsody in Blue*, played on the organ of the Odeon, Marble Arch. We then had a second *Invitation to the Dance* by Miliza Korjus, *The Blue Danube*, recorded in 1933 by the BBC Wireless Orchestra, and 'The Umbrella Man' played by Jack Hylton, which was John's birthday present in 1939. We finished this trip down memory lane with the Kentucky Minstrels' 'Smiling Through', and Oscar Straus's *A Waltz Dream*.

Jim Bostwick is a busy man: secretary at YRG, the FRMS and the Barnsley Society. He also does a lot of work in transferring old recordings to CD. Like many of this year's presenters, Jim delved into the archives to find **A Variety of Serenades**.

Our first Serenade was Ferruccio Furlanetto as Don Giovanni singing to Elvira in Act II of the opera. Mozart's Serenade for Thirteen Wind Instruments, K361, was conducted by Stokowski with the winds of the American Symphony Orchestra, then Louis Lane and the Cleveland Orchestra played Jean Françaix's Serenade for Small Orchestra. Going back to 1942, we heard the Boyd Neel Orchestra, Peter Pears,



Dennis Brain and Britten in the Serenade for tenor, horn and strings.

Jean Françaix studied with Nadia Boulanger, as did our next composer, Lennox Berkeley. We heard him conduct the LPO in his 1939 Serenade for Strings. From 1937, in lighter mood, we heard Allan Jones sing 'The Donkey Serenade' from the film *The Firefly*. Back to 1939 and it was Glenn Miller and the Army Air Force Band's *Moonlight Serenade*.

The main work in Jim's programme was Dohnányi's Serenade for String Trio, written in 1902 and played in 1985 by Dénes Kovács (violin), László Bársony (viola) and Károly Botvay (cello). This was a very good demonstration of the benefit of hearing music chosen by other people. Dohnányi is not a front-line composer and many people will not have any music of his. Now they've heard this superb work perhaps they will be tempted to experiment with other pieces by him.

We finished with two very popular serenades: Ronald Binge's *Elizabethan Serenade* written in 1951 for the Mantovani Orchestra, and Ralph Vaughan Williams's Serenade to Music for sixteen soloists, written as a tribute to Sir Henry Wood on the 50th anniversary of his first concert. It is a setting of words from the last act of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* in the peace and tranquillity of Portia's garden.

The next Yorkshire Regional Group Music Weekend will be in the Craiglands Hotel, Ilkley from Friday 27th to Monday 30th March 2015. Booking opens in October and details will be available from the new organiser, Geoff Bateman, email: geoffbateman@blueyonder.co.uk or from any member of the Committee. ●

YORKSHIRE REGIONAL GROUP

2014 AUTUMN MEETING

New North Road Baptist Church, New North Parade, Huddersfield, HD1 5JU, on Saturday 18th Oct 2014, 10.00-5.00. Hosts: Rochdale Gramophone Society.

This is a good central venue with easy access to public transport and parking facilities.

COST, INCLUDING LUNCH, IS £14.50
BOOKING CLOSES 11th OCT 2014

PROGRAMME

SIMPLY SHOSTAKOVICH George Steele will play some of this composer's lighter music

THEY NEVER QUITE MADE IT TO THE PREMIER LEAGUE Gordon O'Brien plays pieces by some of music's 'near misses'

R.I.P. OLDHAM GRAM Martin Winn will present the last programme

Booking details at www.thefrms.co.uk or from George Steele, The Cottage, 51 Pegasus Court, Rochdale, OL11 4EA

REGIONAL NEWS

Central Region

*The venue on April 12th for the rescheduled annual Music Day was, once again, the Quinborne Centre on the outskirts of Birmingham. The day's theme was **Aspects of English Music and Music-Making**. There was a strong presence from Oswestry RMS and members of that Society offer these reports ...*

Delius and friends

DR LIONEL CARLEY, President of the Delius Society, took us by the hand to meet Delius and two of his composer friends: Edvard Grieg and Percy Grainger. This was a scholarly presentation, illustrated by some fine and unusual recordings, including Grieg playing his own Piano Concerto, some music of the Hardanger Fiddle to illustrate his collecting of Norway's folk music, and his song cycle *The Mountain Maid*, Op. 67.

English-born Australian Percy Grainger played a part in the collection and revival of English folk music, but was also an accomplished concert pianist and included the Grieg A minor Piano Concerto in his repertoire. Grieg became friends with Grainger in London and thought him a genius; we heard an excerpt of Grainger playing the concerto. Grainger also included the Delius Piano Concerto in his repertoire, and was a personal friend of the composer. Dr Carley's talk ranged widely – Florida, Australia, Norway, Ireland, Appalachia, and closer to home, Brigg. **David Ward**

Seventh Son Revisited

WHEN I HEARD we were going to have a presentation about Gordon Jacob, I was immediately interested. Was my childhood association of his name with ITMA justified, or was it a figment of my imagination? We were not too far into **Dr Geoff Ogram**'s talk before I was reassured. Gordon Jacob had indeed arranged well-known tunes for the BBC's popular wartime wireless show.

It is a great advantage to a speaker, and to his listeners, when he has known the subject personally. Dr Ogram knew Gordon Jacob for many years, having introduced himself to the composer and, over the years, to become a close friend.

Gordon Jacob was born in 1895 and his father died when Gordon was very young. He was educated at Dulwich College, where a sympathetic music teacher encouraged him and even let him conduct the college orchestra. He was trained at the Royal College of Music where his most sympathetic teacher was Herbert Howells. He served in World War I and when a prisoner of war, he developed the skill in making arrangements for which he became famous. He would arrange or write original works for the prison camp orchestra, made up of whoever could play anything.

Gordon Jacob's ability to write for any instrument, or combination of instruments, was amply demonstrated by the excerpts from works played in the presentation. These included concertos for trombone, recorder, piano, viola and clarinet, and an oboe quartet. In fact, his works include concertos for nearly every instrument of the orchestra! In addition, Gordon Jacob was responsible for many arrangements, including the National Anthem, with fanfare, for the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II.

Dr Ogram did not allow us to imagine that Gordon Jacob wrote only light music, or miniatures. We were treated to excerpts from both his First and Second Symphonies, and were left in no doubt as to their stature. In fact, I cannot understand why the Second Symphony in particular does not appear in every British orchestra's repertoire. Dr Ogram mentioned Jacob's great influence

as a teacher, having held a post at the Royal College of Music for over 40 years. During this time he taught many who gained importance in the next generation, including Malcolm Arnold and Imogen Holst. Because of the change in musical tastes, particularly at the BBC, Jacob's music became less played in the 1970s, but his tuneful neoclassical music has received more recognition in recent years.

Dr Ogram's presentation would have been interesting and informative even if he had just given us 'the facts' but his ability, through his personal friendship with Gordon Jacob, to add many intimate touches and give us a glimpse of that friendship, resulted in a delightful and informative contribution to the day.

Graham Ladley

Midland Music

PAUL ARDEN-TAYLOR's presentation highlighted his multi-tasking career as a professional musician, record producer and founder of Dinmore Records. Paul studied oboe at the Royal Academy of Music, becoming involved in early music with the Praetorius Consort, and was appointed principal oboe with the Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet Orchestra at the age of 20. He is also still performing as a founder member of the English Symphony Orchestra. Over the years, Paul increasingly became interested in the technical aspects of sound recording which led to a second career as an independent recording engineer and record producer.

Paul's first musical choice was a compilation of music by Praetorius, Holborne and Demantius. His talent as an oboist became evident in the next item, the first movement of Albinoni's Oboe Concerto.

The Aeolian self-playing pipe organ at Dinmore Manor provided renditions of Tchaikovsky's *Waltz of the Flowers* and Bizet's *Carmen Fantasie*. Next, David Ponsford was playing harpsichord in the *Passacaglia* from Handel's Suite No. 7.

Paul joined the Midland Radio Orchestra in 1979; they were based at Pebble Mill, not far from today's venue. We heard them perform Geoff Love's arrangement of 'Begin the Beguine'. Paul introduced recordings he had rescued and archived – 'from days when Radio 2 didn't just play dreary pop during the day!' – beginning with 'Little Miss Molly' by Robert Farnon followed by Betty Smith (formerly of the Ivy Benson Band) singing an unfamiliar version of 'I Feel Pretty'.

Paul had saved a live recording from the *Music While You Work* radio show, which had exploited the then novelty that was stereo radio. One piano playing the melody was allocated a channel that was swapped at intervals with the accompanying piano on the other. The music being performed was 'I'm Just Wild about Harry'.

Bernard Herrmann – often confused with the similarly-named American composer – came from Edgbaston and played flute with, and made arrangements for, the Northern Dance Orchestra, eventually becoming its conductor. We heard his version of Saint-Saëns's *Danse Macabre*. Neil Richardson's super arrangement of Gershwin's 'Summertime' brought an excellent day to a close. **Paul Astell •**

THE UNIVERSITY CHAPLAINCY CENTRE, home of Dundee Recorded Music Society, was the venue for the FRMS Scottish Group's Music Day on Saturday 10th May. Group chair Pat Leishman welcomed delegates from St Fillans, Carnoustie, Dundee, Newcastle and Surbiton.

The day began with **Music for Early Travellers**, an informal programme associated with various modes of travel which included:

- Borodin: *In the Steppes of Central Asia*
- Vaughan Williams: *The Vagabond*
- Villa-Lobos: *Little Train of the Caipira*
- Ravel: *Une barque sur l'océan*
- Ellis: *Coronation Scot*
- Schubert: *Der Lindenbaum*
- Lumbye: *Copenhagen Steam Railway Galop*
- Grainger: *Gum-Suckers March*
- Grieg: *Solitary Wanderer*
- Mahler: 'Ging heut' Morgen übers Feld' (*Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*)
- Charles Williams: *A Quiet Stroll*
- Respighi: 'Pines of the Appian Way' (*Pines of Rome*)
- Tchaikovsky 'Troika' (*The Seasons*)

For this programme there was no presenter; delegates were given programme notes as they arrived.

After a buffet lunch we welcomed Richard Chester MBE, former principal flautist with the Scottish National Orchestra (now RSNO), a founder member of Cantilena, and director of the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland. His subject was 'Milestones in Orchestral Music'. Richard pointed out that most newly composed music represented a milestone in the sense that it had never been heard before. All the examples played were groundbreaking and to demonstrate this point he began with the overture *Le Corsaire* by Berlioz. He followed this with an excerpt from a Concerto Grosso by Georg Muffat which was composed in 1701. Muffat was born in Germany and studied in Italy under Corelli. His compositions advanced the concerto grosso form and the art of writing for the organ.

There then followed a movement from the Symphony in E flat by Joseph Martin Kraus (1756 – 1792), dubbed the Swedish Mozart. We then heard music by Mozart himself, the first movement of the Piano Concerto in C minor, K491, long considered to be one of his greatest works. It is said that Beethoven took inspiration for his own music from this work. It is one of only two piano concertos he wrote in a minor key.

Richard then returned to Berlioz, this time for the opening movement of *Harold in Italy*, composed as a result of a request from Paganini who was seeking a new work in which to show off his newly acquired Stradivarius viola. Berlioz began by writing a solo for viola, but one which involved the orchestra in such a way as not to reduce the effectiveness of the orchestral contribution. When Paganini saw the sketch of the allegro movement, with all the rests in the viola part, he told Berlioz it would not do, and that he expected to be playing continuously. They parted company, with Paganini disappointed.

We then moved on to the 20th century with music by Eric Coates, a movement from his rarely heard *Four Centuries Suite*. The movement chosen was the one representing the 20th Century: 'Rhythm'. The talk closed with the third movement from Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique* Symphony.

There followed the Annual General Meeting at which the committee was re-elected *en masse*. Next year's Music Day will be held in Kirkcaldy on 18th April.

John Maidment, secretary



Scottish Group Chair Pat Leishman with Richard Chester

FRMS CENTRAL REGION

AUTUMN 2014 MUSIC DAY

Extra-musical Relationships

Saturday November 1st 2014
10.00 - 17.00
at the Quinborne Community Centre
Birmingham B32 2TW
Cost £15.00 including lunch

Details from Regional Secretary,
Mick Birchall, 01455 823494

Dr John Tyrrell – author of the monumental
biography of Leoš Janáček –
Janáček and Kamila Stösslová

Dr Jim Pritchard – *Gustav and Alma Mahler*

Allan and Ruth Child – *Music and literature*

ON SATURDAY 12th APRIL, the FRMS West Surrey Region celebrated their Golden Jubilee reunion at St Catherine's Village Hall, Guildford. Around 40 members of the recorded music societies in Bookham, Godalming, Guildford and Haslemere came together to enjoy an afternoon of chamber music performed by the Waterden String Quartet.

Paul Graber, chairman of Guildford RMS, welcomed members to the special



Cutting the 50th Anniversary Cake are Sheila Morley (left) and Ruth Dixon

reunion and introduced the string quartet. Their programme included many popular classical pieces arranged for string quartet and played in chronological order. First we heard Handel's *Arrival of the Queen of Sheba* and the 'Hornpipe' from the *Water Music*, which were followed by Bach's Third Brandenburg Concerto, a rondeau by Purcell, and a Mozart divertimento. The quartet then played music by Mendelssohn, Offenbach, Delibes, Elgar and Vaughan Williams. There were also well-known pieces by Scott Joplin, Gershwin, and even 'O Sole Mio'. A musical menu for all tastes!

After the concert members were treated to a sumptuous anniversary buffet; the special 50th anniversary cake was cut by committee members Ruth Dixon of Godalming Music Listening Group and Sheila Morley from Bookham Recorded Music Club. The Jubilee raffle was drawn and Regional secretary, Roger Saunders from Haslemere RMS, brought the afternoon to a close. He thanked those who had organised the occasion, the

Waterden String Quartet for their excellent performance, and members for gathering to enjoy this special, celebratory occasion. He looked forward to the 51st Annual Reunion in April 2015. **Roger Saunders, Regional secretary**



The closing speech from Roger Saunders

A VIEW FROM YORKSHIRE Jim Bostwick, FRMS Secretary

FOR ME, THIS YEAR'S DAVENTRY MUSIC WEEKEND was the most memorable of any that I have attended in recent years. Of course, it was Lyndon Jenkins's very final contribution, this in addition to the outstanding support he had given as President of your Federation. There is no doubt that he will be a hard act to follow. The recital given by the Lyndon Quartet, named in his honour and joined by Robin Ireland, was for me a particular highlight. Robin, since retiring as violist of the Lindsay Quartet, has the job of Head of Chamber Music at the Birmingham Conservatoire, heading a team teaching the fine young musicians who have graced our live music slots in the last few years. Through the medium of recorded sound – the core business of FRMS – it has been a particular privilege to record their work.

This year as a special tribute to Lyndon, all Daventry attenders have received a CD of the quartet's recital, as have the Quartet members themselves. Recording a unique event, I assure you, is quite nerve-racking. There is no opportunity for another 'take'. From the very kind and positive emails and letters I have received, as well as a personal phone call from Sue Jenkins, it went well. For the quartet members it becomes an active part of their CVs. So, technical team, we got that bit right.

Fast approaching is the Federation's Annual General Meeting of Saturday 8th November 2014 which is to be held in Southport, with Southport Gramophone Society hosting the event at the Royal Clifton Hotel on the Promenade. I am particularly indebted to John Hardie (secretary of SGS) and his helpers who want to make this a weekend attraction with musical events and other cultural possibilities to surround the essential business meeting.

This 'View from Yorkshire' couldn't possibly be complete without reference to 'Le Tour'. From previous 'Views' you will know that my bike and I are frequent companions. However, I had to decline numerous entreaties to join the British team – my son needed yet more shelves putting up in his Oxfordshire apartment that same weekend – so it was not possible for me to make a guest appearance. All of this, with the exception of the shelves, took place in the Walter Mitty world of my imagination. Anyway, mountain bikes aren't allowed. In between drilling wall brackets, we watched the race on TV and what a spectacle it was. Yorkshire farmers had specially sprayed their sheep the same shade as the 'Yellow Jersey' but wisely avoided trying to fit them into Lycra. Every town and village the race passed through came out in astonishing numbers to cheer. In a field near my home town, the helicopter, in what seemed a skein of wool, drew the word 'Baaarnsley'. The downside of not being there was the lamentable TV commentary (and the stream of adverts). I know there is no point shouting at TV sets, but really! Did these voice-smiths have no maps, or diagrams of the route? I will finish with just one correction (of many) which they could possibly have heard from Oxfordshire – the perilous descent from Holme Moss levels out not at Ladybower Reservoir but at Woodhead Reservoir. ●



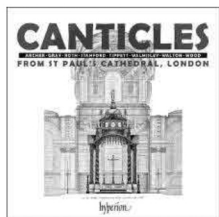
REVIEWS

CDs reviewed by Tony Haywood

CANTICLES FROM ST PAUL'S

Simon Johnson (organ), St Paul's Cathedral Choir,
Andrew Carwood (conductor)

Hyperion CDA 68058 (62:48)



This is really the sort of disc that Hyperion have always done well. They have shown a commitment to recording church music with a variety of top choirs that goes right back to their earliest days. The present disc is a collection of settings of the Magnificat and Nunc

Dimittis, some famous, some not, spiced up with other pieces from the Anglican service. Probably the most-loved settings here will be those by the venerable Walmisley in D Minor, with its lilting solo quartet, the typically grand 'Collegium Regale' in F by Wood, and Stanford's in B flat, one of many he produced.

The inclusion of Michael Tippett's controversial 'Collegium Sancti Johannis Cantabrigiense' of 1962 shows us just how modern it still sounds, way thornier than pieces by two living composers here, Alec Roth's 'Jubilate' and Malcolm Archer's 'Benedicite'. Whether this is a reflection of the composer's religious views has often been debated, but the choir throw themselves in with real zest and commitment, and Tippett's famous use of the Trompetta Real organ stop comes over thrillingly. A similar gusto is demonstrated in Walton's 'Coronation Te Deum', a work full of the composer's trademark rhythms and harmonies. Conductor Andrew Carwood is steeped in this tradition; I can't imagine better performances, and special mention must be given to Simon Johnson's excellent organ accompaniments. Despite the understandably lively acoustic and slightly distant balance, sound quality is very good and anyone interested in this repertoire can buy with confidence.

KABALEVSKY A Recital of Concert Pieces

Kirsten Johnson (piano)

Nimbus Alliance NI6283 (77:29)



Dmitri Kabalevsky has suffered the fate of many Soviet composers of his era, that of being sidelined by his two famous countrymen, Prokofiev and Shostakovich. In truth, his music is quite inventive, often workman-like, at best reasonably inspired and at worst

rather unmemorable. Of the pieces I know, the larger-scale symphonies and concertos work best, the bigger canvas and palette of colours seemingly bringing out the best in him. This present disc of short solo piano works is one of a pair recorded by Kirsten Johnson, an American pianist now resident in England. She obviously feels a strong affinity with the composer and proves quite an advocate for this music. Pianists of a certain calibre may know some works, as exam boards often feature this composer, though the well-known Sonatina in C is absent.

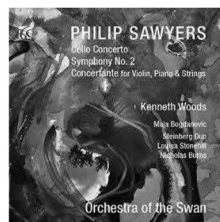
Rather than being played straight through, where weaknesses in the music become more obvious, the disc is best sampled in shorter spells. The strongest work here (to my ears) is the Six Preludes and Fugues, Op. 61, where the melodic contours and spicy harmonies hold the attention, despite the ghosts of Bach and Shostakovich

inevitably hovering in the background. *Spring Games and Dances*, Op. 81, has a fresh and amiable mood, and the earthy *Variations on an American Folk Song* are as catchy as the title suggests. Conversely, the early Preludes Op. 1 have nothing special to say and the *Lyric Tunes* Op. 93a sound a little like doodled improvisations. To be fair, this music wasn't meant to set the world on fire, but it is hard to dislike, and the skill and enthusiasm of the pianist, to say nothing of her excellent liner notes, are to be admired.

PHILIP SAWYERS Cello Concerto; Symphony No. 2; Duo Concertante

Maja Bogdanović (cello), Steinberg Duo, Orchestra of the Swan, Kenneth Woods (conductor)

Nimbus Alliance NI6281 (59:42)



The music of Philip Sawyers is rapidly gaining ground, not least due to the advocacy of Kenneth Woods, the conductor on this latest release. Sawyers was for twenty-four years a violinist with the Covent Garden orchestra, so it's perhaps no surprise that his

handling of orchestral sonority and timbre is first-rate. Indeed, one of the striking things when hearing new music such as this for the first time is how confident and colourful it sounds. His tonal language is fairly traditional, so that the major work here, the Cello Concerto, has a brooding melancholy and Romantic fervour that place it in a direct line to the great concertos of the past. The slow movement in particular has a nagging memorable lyricism. The Symphony is a bolder work, its one-movement structure combining tonal allusions with 12-note techniques that give the music a wide-ranging emotional landscape. It may not grab you quite as instantly as the powerful First Symphony, but the ideas here are in many ways more subtle and really repay repeated listening, taking the work beyond the realm of an orchestral showpiece and once again into that great tradition of one-movement symphonies. Sawyers's inspiration from the past is rounded off nicely with the Duo Concertante, a short and energetic piece for violin, piano and strings which is a modernist take on the idea of the 18th-century divertimento, rather in the manner of Stravinsky and Martinů. The playing of soloists and orchestra is first-rate and the recorded sound is clear and detailed.

COLOURS OF THE HEART Violin Sonatas by Ravel, Debussy and Delius

Midori Komachi (violin), Simon Callaghan (piano)

MusiKaleido Records MKCD001 (56:49)



Firstly, this is not the more famous violinist Midori; it's quite a common name in Japan and there are other musicians who share it. Secondly, despite the rather flowery title, this is a simple recital of French (or French-inspired) violin sonatas. That is not to denigrate

what Midori Komachi has set out to achieve. She goes to some length in the booklet note to explain her programming, which tries to demonstrate the links

between musicians and artists (especially Gauguin and Delius) that were prevalent in the early 20th century.

The playing itself is certainly assured, and she receives excellent support from Simon Callaghan. Her tone is sweet and unforced, and she has a nice feel for the legato line. This comes across most strongly in Delius's Third Sonata, the piece that I feel she has the most affinity with. The lovely slow first movement breathes with a natural rubato and you don't really need to make the Gauguin connection to enjoy the piece. The Debussy and Ravel Sonatas are of course much better known, and consequently the competition is much stiffer. She doesn't display the subtler shades to be found in the famous Grumiaux versions, nor does she have quite the outsize personality of, say, Christian Tetzlaff (among recent recordings), but her intonation is secure and her gentler poise and phrasing suit much of this music, especially the late, fragile Debussy Sonata. Grieg also became part of this circle later, so the inclusion of two short encores, arrangements of 'Solveig's Song' and 'Jeg elsker Dig,' rounds off a very nicely conceived and executed recital, recorded in the typically warm acoustic of Potton Hall.

Tony Haywood works part-time in the Music Department at Huddersfield University (where he did his undergraduate music degree many years ago). He also runs his own piano tuning and maintenance business. His first job was in a music shop and record collecting began at an early age, and has continued apace ever since. His CD collection has grown so big that downloading and streaming are now more a necessity than an experiment! Tony is a member of Huddersfield RMS.

BOOK REVIEW by Paul Astell

ALAN RUSBRIDGER *Play it Again*

Jonathan Cape, 416pp



As something of a failed pianist myself (twice over, at least), I felt compelled to discover how a once similarly lapsed musician survived the mammoth task he had undertaken. Chopin's sublime, but fiendishly difficult, Ballade No. 1 in G minor is a challenging proposition for even the greatest of professional pianists, but Alan Rusbridger, editor-in-chief of *The Guardian*,

took on the challenge of a lifetime in an attempt to learn this piece to a reasonably acceptable standard. For him, music was something of an obsession until his 20s, only for life to get in the way. Kick-starting his piano-playing in his 40s eventually led to visits to an annual piano camp. On one occasion, a fellow amateur dazzled all those present with his performance of the Chopin Ballade. Rusbridger's story, told in diary format (in rather self-deprecating fashion), charts his near 18-month journey attempting to master the G minor Ballade, having become somewhat obsessed with the idea following his experience at the camp.

Alan Rusbridger's ascent up this musical mountain, however, is only one aspect of this story. This period (August 2010 - December 2011) coincided exactly with a plethora of news stories, *The Guardian* playing the leading role in two of them: the phone hacking scandal and the WikiLeaks controversy. Also hitting the headlines were the Japanese tsunami and the Arab spring, as well as outbreaks of rioting in many English towns and cities. The author was forced to follow his Chopin obsession in parallel with incredibly long hours spent on the day job. To assist in the seemingly impossible task of mastering the Ballade, Rusbridger enlisted the help of an impressive array of top pianists. He seems to have had little difficulty in persuading the likes of Stephen Hough, Murray Perahia, Emanuel Ax, Ashkenazy, Barenboim and Brendel to help him reach his goal. The final section of the book has Rusbridger's copy of the complete Ballade score, which includes not only his own scribbles but insightful comments from his professional mentors. Several 'ordinary' teachers were charged with hosting rather irregular lessons. At one point, when describing yet another discussion with a tutor about how a passage should be fingered, there is a confession. 'We are possibly the only two people awake in the western world to whom this would be a remotely interesting conversation.'

I found this a fascinating insight into how a high-profile media operator, deeply involved on a daily basis in major news stories, all played out in public, managed to devote a compartment of his brain, not to mention a sizeable portion of his waking hours, attempting to crack Chopin's masterpiece. Did he reach his goal? You may have seen the TV film on this subject; if not, you can see it here: alanrusbridger.com/playitagain. Failing that, you can read this excellent book.

FRMS 2014 Annual General Meeting *Southport, Lancs. November 8th - 9th*

Please see our feature on page 17 for details of the Federation's annual business meeting and associated activities. In the near future it is likely there will be vacancies arising for FRMS committee positions. Whilst some individuals have been approached, the Federation is always keen to hear from anyone who might be willing to put themselves forward for election at the AGM. By the time you are reading this, the FRMS secretary will have sent the necessary nomination forms to each Society.

As an affiliated Society you are entitled to make nominations to the FRMS committee, as follows:

- You may nominate one of your own members as an ordinary committee member.
- You may nominate one of your own members, or a member of any other affiliated Society, to each of the officer positions on the committee. The officers are chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, and treasurer.

You may choose to nominate one of your own members both as an officer and as an ordinary member, in which case he or she will be eligible for the latter role if not elected as an officer.

Any responses must be received by the FRMS secretary by October 4th so that they can be included on the agenda. If you are interested, please contact your Society secretary in the first instance. •

Technical Review

by FRMS Technical Officer Philip Ashton, based on his Forum at the 2014 Daventry Music Weekend

TV and radio

I mentioned last year that the manufacture of plasma TVs was going to be scrapped, eventually. Pioneer, Panasonic and Sony have done so saying that Korean competition was the cause. I venture to say that many complaints of RF interference, which cannot be cured, were the real reason. The latest models come with a lot of bells and whistles, the main one being Smart TV. This allows a set to access the internet (assuming an internet router is in the vicinity) and includes many other applications, which are nearly all by subscription! It would seem, looking at the various specifications, that Samsung and LG now have the best models. Incidentally, it is reported that OLED TVs have not taken off just yet. An OLED (organic light-emitting diode) is a light-emitting diode (LED) in which the emissive electroluminescent layer is a film of organic compound which emits light in response to an electric current. This layer of organic semiconductor is situated between two electrodes. Generally, at least one of these electrodes is transparent. OLEDs are used to create digital displays in devices such as television screens, computer monitors, and portable systems like mobile phones, handheld games consoles and PDAs (personal digital assistants). A major area of research is the development of white OLED devices for use in solid-state lighting application.

Tablets

These latest must-have gadgets have all but replaced the laptop. Like everything else, you get what you pay for and the Google Nexus range (7 inch and 10 inch) are very competitive.

Streaming audio /video

There is now a profusion of devices that stream music and manufacturers are building high-quality units that 'improve' sound from the internet. The price of memory is coming down and, by using lossless files, it is possible to have quality music on one's own hi-fi system from just about anywhere in the world. Do you download music files from the internet and are you happy with the results? We collectors like to have our music on CDs, perhaps because we like the accompanying notes/booklets that come with it. For more info on this subject I suggest that *What Hi-Fi?* magazine could be to one's advantage.

Hi-Fi

Hi-Fi will always remain the yardstick of the industry, something some manufacturers occasionally forget about. The younger generation are still not really interested. My granddaughters when listening to my system say it is 'too sharp and too heavy', they being used to listening to their laptops/tablets and mobile phones on cheap headphones. There seems to be a resurgence in vinyl discs and turntables, although this is most notable at present in the popular music scene. The well-heeled younger generation, and geeks, are keeping this part of the industry in business.

Loudspeakers

New models continue to proliferate each year from KEF, Spendor, ATC, PMC, AudioQuest and many others. In fact, PMC have just brought out their new model twenty26 and apparently their order books are full. At the bottom end of the range there have been many technical innovations resulting in even higher quality sound. I am often asked for advice about equipment, especially replacement loudspeakers. There is no one answer to this as one has to consider various factors, including the amount available to spend, the size of the room, the partnering amplifier, and the required portability of the intended speaker. The better quality ones tend to be heavier and demand some good stands. Do go along to a dealer and ask to listen to your choices, take along a CD you know and then you can make a judgement. Take along other members so that you form a balance of opinions. Loudspeakers are very subjective. If money is no object, remember that PMC will give FRMS members 40% discount on their current retail price, but this is still expensive! Have a look on eBay, there are bargains to be had.

Radio and TV broadcasts

The closure of FM broadcasts has been put off until 2020 at the earliest. BBC and ITV have now made HD video available to equipped TV sets and boxes, but although the sets can reproduce video in 1020p and 1020i, broadcasts are only transmitted in 720i. For the uninitiated, 'i' is interlaced. This is where the picture is made up of 625 lines and each line is scanned across the screen so fast that the eye is deceived into thinking you are seeing a complete picture. On the other hand, 'p' is progressive. This is where the whole picture is continually being refreshed. This, we are told, is of a higher quality. I, for one, cannot tell the difference. These differences are very small and are more noticeable on very big screens such as 50 inches or greater. Most video recorders and some TVs use something called 'upscaling'. This is where an intelligent chip inside the unit fills in the missing bits of data of the incoming signal. This does work well in most cases.

What is Soundbase?

Imagine a sound bar that doesn't block your screen, doesn't need a separate subwoofer, does away with extra cables and sits neatly under your TV stand. That's a Soundbase. In the past, soundbars have become the most popular way of boosting the thin sound that comes out of most flat-screen TV speakers without having to splash out on a full 5.1 home cinema system. A new product, Soundbase, is a flat, rectangular box instead of a slim bar. It's a bigger, simpler one-box solution to improving TV sound and you can mount your TV above it. The best are from Cambridge Audio (£200), Canton (£400), Maxell (£220) and Bose at around £360. I bought an LG soundbar, though, and I am very satisfied with it; it's uncanny how sounds now appear to come from all areas of the room. •

A compliment for the Federation

As the years go by, Music Club members really enjoy listening to wonderful and often familiar music, and hearing music new to them, in very congenial company. Refreshment breaks are a crucial part of the afternoon. *Bulletin* bears out the theory that Recorded Music Societies still have a place in the community not catered for by other active retirement groups. Thank you, FRMS, for all you do from which we benefit.

Betty Crouch, Old Bridge Music Club

Editor's comment: Betty's kind remarks are much appreciated, although many Societies may not see themselves as 'retirement groups'. Indeed, many will see retention and recruitment of younger and working-age music lovers as essential.

Lyndon tribute

During my many years as Weekend Technician at Daventry, Lyndon was always welcoming and appreciative and a great source of entertainment. I have recordings of his presentations and interviews from those weekends, one notable one being at Corby in the 90s, I think, when there was a complete electricity failure as he started his presentation. We had a battery-powered PA system then and, undeterred, he proceeded to ad-lib for nearly an hour, with no music, hesitation, deviation or repetition!! A masterly performance which, just to complete the act, had the whole audience in stitches.

For our Society's millennium programme, we invited Lyndon as one of our speakers and my wife and I had the pleasure of his company because he stayed with us for a couple of nights and I introduced him to the remote delights of Caithness. Definitely an urbanite, he couldn't quite understand why he was up here, but he took it all in good part and gave us all two hours of memorable repartee. As has been said elsewhere, he will be sorely missed, not only for his oratory but for his sterling and enthusiastic work in Birmingham.

Antony West-Samuel, Thurso RMS

Up-to-date information please

In my position as Programme Secretary of Banstead Recorded Music Society I sometimes need to make contact with other Recorded Music Societies. Instinctively I look at the FRMS website which in turn links to other affiliated societies. Unfortunately many societies either have no up-to-date information about their current programmes or no up-to-date contact details.

One such example was when I tried to contact a society via a direct email address on the site. The address was obviously out of date because it bounced back. I also found the telephone numbers given out have no recording device which can result in many calls and frustration. Faced with a brick wall I can imagine prospective members could easily give up and not bother again which is sad because we need all the members we can muster.

There must be many people like me who can manage the simple tasks on the computer, but with the more difficult ones I ask for help. I am sure every society has a member who is a whiz kid on the computer who would help to get their information onto the site.

I am not certain, but I cannot believe that our webmaster would not be prepared to put a Society's new programme and up-to-date contacts onto the Federation website himself if he received the information by post.

I must end this correspondence on an optimistic note. Some societies do keep their information up-to-date and do have an answer machine on one of their contacts' numbers. I hope after reading this more will follow suit.

Sheila Wicks

FRMS webmaster George Steele replies: *When information about a change of programme or contacts is supplied to me it goes onto the website as soon as possible in exactly the form supplied to me. I do not check any of the information but always ask senders 'to check the accuracy of the webpage'. Beyond that I do not think it is the business of the FRMS to question information supplied as this would be discourteous to our affiliates.*

Memories of Roger Apps

I met Roger in 1975 when I joined the Maidstone Gramophone Society (now the Maidstone Music Appreciation Society) and he was on the committee. Roger was always interested in introducing others to new music and composers. In one of his programmes he played a symphony by Allan Pettersson, which I found fascinating, although I am not sure everyone else in the room felt the same way! He also gave me a record of a symphony by Joachim Raff, another composer who was completely unknown to me.

Roger and I became friends and when we both lived in Kent we went to concerts together in London as well as Brighton and Eastbourne. The habit continued during the next three to four decades even when Roger moved to Wiltshire. We also greatly enjoyed visiting CD shops in London and Bath, with Roger always managing to find some new CDs to purchase. June, his wife, said that he had enough CDs and records with which to open a shop!

Roger and June made a great contribution to the Maidstone Society on many occasions with Roger's very informative and wide-ranging programmes and June's most important contribution to social functions in making cakes for them! Roger returned to the Society to give programmes, even after his move to Wiltshire, including one, when he was sixty, of music written during his lifetime. His last programme for us, presented just two years ago, featured various conductors who were either born in 1929 or who died in 1973.

Roger's last contribution for my musical benefit was to make a number of CDs for me last year, which included several of orchestral and chamber music by his favourite composer, Dvořák, and one of another symphony by Raff. His immense knowledge of music always enlightened me and this will be greatly missed, as will his warm friendship and intelligent conversation on a wide range of subjects.

John Eldon, chairman

Has your Society an anniversary or special occasion to celebrate? Do you have any burning issues you want to share with our readers? Do you have something to say? You may wish to submit an article relating to a special interest in a particular composer or musical genre. We are keen to hear from you. Contact details can be found on page 30.

ROGER'S FINAL NOTES, JOTTINGS AND RAMBLINGS

The late Roger Apps had an amazingly wide range of musical interests, some of which he wrote about in the three previous issues. What appears below – his thoughts on female British composers – was appended to his most recent article, but alas, limited space didn't allow for its inclusion. We are very happy to include it here as a further tribute to a valued friend and colleague.

I HAVE LEFT TO LAST another area of particular interest – rare British music. I could list all the composers I enjoy – from Arnold to Walton – but instead will concentrate on the females, many hardly known. First, we have **Dame Ethel Smyth** (1858-1944), one of my favourites. Her String Quintet and Concerto for violin and horn, available on Chandos, are just superb.

Susan Spain-Dunk (1880-1962) is another orchestral and chamber music composer of merit. Her Phantasy for String Quartet is available on the Lorelt CD label.

Rebecca Clarke (1886-1979) wrote quality chamber works and her Viola Sonata is full of passion. Her other works reveal a major

talent. Rarer still are two other composers: **Rosalind Ellicott** (1857-1924) and **Alice Verne-Bredt** (1868-1958), both of whom wrote wonderful piano trios, recorded on Meridian CDE 84478. I found this in a second-hand bookshop in the New Forest!

My favourite Welsh composer is **Grace Williams** (1906-1977) who crafted orchestral scores with vigour and a sense of purpose. She even criticised Ben Britten on his compositions, and got away with it – a formidable character indeed!



Guirne Creith (right) and Tamsin Waley-Cohen



Roger's Brit pack – clockwise from top left: Madeleine Dring; Doreen Carwithen; Grace Williams; Ethel Smyth; Alice Verne-Bredt; Rebecca Clarke; Ruth Gipps; Rosalind Ellicott. Photo montages: Paul Astell

We also have **Gladys Mary Cohen** (1907-1996). She was known as **Guirne Creith** and young violinist Tamsin Waley-Cohen is a relative*. Gladys wrote a knock-out Violin Concerto in 1934 and more of her music is gradually being uncovered. I found some in a junk-shop in Lewisham – my birthplace! The Violin Concerto is recorded on Dutton Epoch. **Ruth Gipps** (1921-1999) wrote her concise Second Symphony, which consists of one movement, in 1945. Together with her Horn Concerto of 1969, it is well worth getting to know. They are issued on the Classico and Lyrita labels respectively. **Doreen Carwithen** (1922-2003) was William Alwyn's second wife and Chandos issued discs of her orchestral and chamber works. She was an accomplished composer in her own right.

Madeleine Dring (1923-1977) married Roger Lord, the renowned LSO principal oboist. Her little *Festival Scherzo* for piano and string orchestra is available on Hyperion.

There are many, many more yet to be discovered and why should concert programmes and recordings be only of male composers?

**Editor's note: Tamsin is Guirne's second cousin twice removed. Tamsin's grandfather, Sir Bernard Nathaniel Waley-Cohen, a former Lord Mayor of London, was Guirne's second cousin. (Research: Sue Parker.)*

Copyright Update from Allan Child

IN AN EARLIER ISSUE of *Bulletin* (No 153, Autumn 2010) I reported on proposed changes to the duration of copyright in recordings and the effect these might have on the reissue of historic recordings, particularly those from the early years of LP records. The proposal at that time was that the term should be increased from 50 to 95 years to bring it in line with that of the USA. In the event the European Commission settled on a sensible compromise and its directive, implemented in the UK last year, set the term at 70 years from the end of the year in which the recording was made or issued. The directive also provided that it would not apply retrospectively to recordings which were already in the public domain under the 50-year rule. This means that recordings issued up to and including 1962 are still in the public domain, but the copyright in recordings from 1963 will not now expire until 2034. Of course, copyright recordings can, and probably will, still be reissued either by the copyright owners or, with their agreement, by others. Further information about the new regulations can be found on the Intellectual Property Office website at www.ipo.gov.uk/pro-types/pro-copy/c-policy/c-policy-copyterm.htm •

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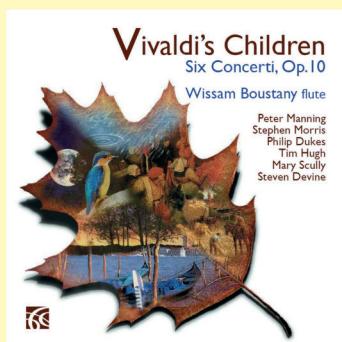
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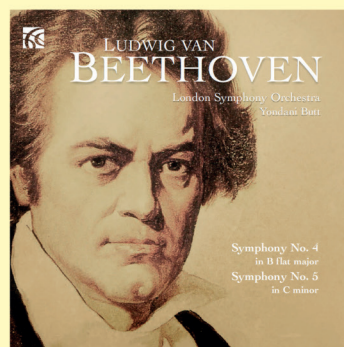
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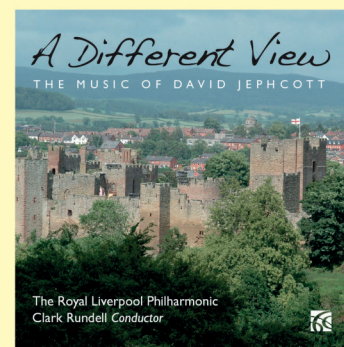
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