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EDITORIAL

Annual General Meeting

A regrettable feature of the Federation has been, what in my opinion is an unhealthy, fascination with governance. In AGM after AGM there have been resolution after resolution aimed at obtaining the holy grail of a perfect constitution describing how the organisation should be run.

The last AGM was no different, with an attempt to have unexpected fee increases approved by ballot of the societies rather than by the AGM; this was defeated (but see letters pages). Personally I felt that the motion was superfluous as societies feeling strongly on the subject but not being able to attend the AGM could gain the same effect as a ballot by mandating the way their proxy vote should be cast. In a long speech, which is reported more fully than usual, Mr Williamson expressed deep dissatisfaction at the current committee set up.

However, when I have had discussions with societies, such matters have never been raised. Most members of the societies seem to have little interest in the way that the Federation is run,

instead there is an almost universal worry about the difficulty of recruiting new members and the seeming impossibility of attracting younger members. Perhaps it always was so, an article in the Gramophone of June 1936, by W. W. Johnson remarked that many thought that the movement was going downhill rapidly, whereas other societies were prospering.

At the latest AGM it was reported that a staggering 11 societies had gone, but it was also stated that more than half of the societies had increased membership. As the total membership has gone down there must still be societies with problems. Few would deny that many societies do have problems and the current Committee considers that it must do all it can to help societies in trouble and also give suggestions which may prevent problems arising in the future.

The article on page 17 is a summary of many of the points which have been raised in discussions within Committee and also in discussions with regional groups and with societies. We do believe this is important and we should welcome your comments.

Arthur Baker



FRMS MUSICAL WEEKEND 2005

Friday April 22nd to Sunday April 24th 2004

Daventry Hotel, Daventry, Northants. Formerly The Hanover International Hotel - A four-star hotel set in 2 acres of landscaped gardens with central courtyard and excellent facilities, easily accessible by road

Contributors will include:

Allan Schiller

Distinguished concert pianist and recording artist for ASV & Naxos

Caroline Brown

Founder and Artistic Director of the Hanover Band,

Dame Joan Sutherland

Internationally acclaimed Australian-born soprano

Richard Bonyng

Australian Conductor and a respected authority on late 18th- and early 19th century operas.

Edward Greenfield

Federation President, broadcaster, writer and joint author of "The Penguin Guide to Classical CDs & DVDs".

John Amis

Presenter of music programmes on radio and television.

Live music:

"Serenata Winds", appearing in association with Birmingham Conservatoire

and rail.

Residential charges for the weekend including all meals are:

Shared occupancy (double/twin) £155 per person; Single occupancy £ 170

The Conference charge for residents is £30

Accommodation is limited so please apply early to FRMS Secretary Tony Baines. Tel 01782 399291

Annual General Meeting

The FRMS Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday 30th October 2004 at the White Hart Hotel, Salisbury.

Grace Lace of Salisbury Recorded Music Society welcomed delegates to the beautiful city of Salisbury. The society was 2½ years old.



Graham Kiteley, Grace Lace, John Davies

29 Affiliates were represented, and 24 proxies had been appointed. The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Kettering on 25th October 2003 were agreed.

One matter arising from the minutes was the Safety Inspection of Audio Equipment. The Treasurer advised that he had investigated the matter, and that inspection annually was advised, although failure to do so would not automatically invalidate insurance. As a minimum, inspection should be carried out by a responsible member of an affiliate and that this should be recorded in the society's minute book. The main concern related to power cables and sockets.

The Chairman introduced the officers and committee members. Brian Cartwright, the former Treasurer, had communicated his good wishes for the FRMS. The departure of Cathy Connolly was reported with regret. She would be missed on the committee, and she had been very successful in securing advertising for the Bulletin.

This year's Music Weekend had been very successful – it had been fully booked, with attendance more than double that in recent years. The committee had revived the practice of inviting regional officers to committee meetings, to the benefit of both.

Committee members had been visiting affiliates under a programme called Outreach. This is a very rewarding activity and societies were always very welcoming. Sometimes these visits

involve giving a programme, but not always. This is another revival of an old practice that had fallen into disuse.

The AGM quorum is now 22; the figure has been falling for a number of years. This is a direct consequence of the reduced number of affiliates. The committee would like to help societies which find themselves in difficulties, but usually only learns after the society has closed.

The Chairman set an objective of striving to regenerate the movement and suggested some ways in which this might be tackled. He pointed to Salisbury as an example of success.

Declaration of Ballot.

Since the officers had been returned unopposed, and the number of nominations to the committee equalled the number of vacancies, there had not been a ballot. New committee members were Tony Pook and John Maidment. Treasurer's report.

The written report showed a surplus of £3064 over the year and reserves of £24231 at the end of the year. The entire accounting papers for the year were available at the meeting for inspection. A new start date for the main insurance policy had been re-negotiated which means that the premium was known at the time that re-affiliation notices are sent out; the shorter term of cover for this year has resulted in a one-off rebate for affiliates.

The Music Weekend at Daventry had generated a surplus of over £700. Additionally £300 from a defunct Society had been provided specifically for Musical Weekends. These sums will be "ring fenced" in a special fund as a cushion for future events.

Director's Indemnity insurance was a major cost which was first taken out in 2000 to protect the personal assets of Directors/Committee members in the event of litigation.

During discussion it was confirmed that PLC status was not being considered; the treasurer would attempt to evolve a Reserves policy but this was difficult in the absence of complete records paid to 1999. The accounts were approved unanimously.

Secretary's Report.

During the past year 11 affiliates have been lost, namely Hastings RMS, Worthing Music Circle, Benslow Music Trust, East Sutherland RMS, Friern Barnet Library RMS, Lincoln RMG, Tewkesbury RMS, Wallasey RMS, Brixham RMS,

New Malden RMG, and Havering Library RMG (this last had not closed, but had disaffiliated because PRS and PPL cover was provided by the library).

Two affiliates had sought lottery funding for capital and revenue spending, but the outcomes were not known. Other societies had been successful in the past. The Salisbury delegate reported that they had received a grant of £200 via their local council, which had met half the cost of their CD player. Three affiliates had celebrated significant anniversaries this year – Dundee (50 years); Cardiff (60); and Gillingham (70).

Information had been sought by Jim Bruce of Dublin, regarding the possible affiliation of groups in Ireland. He had been advised of three known groups; affiliation was not possible due to different PPL/PRS rules, but associate membership was.

A number of Societies had requested a copy of the Constitution. Responding to the Secretary's Report the Chairman suggested that the Constitution be included on the website.

The Treasurer commented that the Chairman and Secretary had both referred to Society closures but the re-affiliation returns showed that more than half of the Societies had increased their membership. It is not all doom and gloom.

Motion 1.

The Committee proposes the amendment of Clause 4.1 of the Constitution by the replacement of the present provision with the wording below .

"4.1 The Affiliation fee may increase annually by not more than the mean of the Retail Price Index and the Average Earnings Index percentages as changed at April in each year and rounded to the nearest whole percentage. It shall be payable with effect from September 1st each year".

[The existing clause is : "4.1 The Affiliation fee shall increase annually by the mean of the Retail Price Index and the Average Earnings Index]

The Treasurer proposed the motion, referring to his report, which had covered the issues that had given rise to the motion. If his review of the reserves indicated that a smaller or nil increase in affiliation fees was justified, he and the Committee wished to have the discretion to allow this. The present clause imposed an annual increase

regardless of circumstances. The Secretary seconded the motion.

Tony Pook (York RMS) supported the motion, which got rid of inflexibility and substituted a commonsense approach.

Reg Williamson (Stafford RMS) opposed the motion. He said that FRMS is a Limited Company and must be seen to operate in a businesslike way. When he was elected Treasurer in 2000 his main task was to repair damage previously caused. This hastily conceived amendment sent the wrong signal to the affiliates.

Consequent upon legislation PPL discovered that they had been charging FRMS nothing; PRS had not increased their fee for a number of years. Both tried to recoup their shortfall in a single year, which would have sent the fees up by more than 50%. The PRS settled for an adjustment over three years, which is now complete. Mandatory increases protect against these kinds of shocks. FRMS should be setting an example to affiliates and he was shocked at this attempt to turn back the clock. FRMS should always demonstrate fiscal competence. The proposed amendment was unnecessary because clause 4.2 allows this discretion since it only refers to an increase, therefore decreases need only the approval of the Committee. He recommended rejection or remission of the motion.

Cathy Connolly (Putney Music) supported the motion, and dismissed the notion that it had been hastily conceived – it had been carefully considered over a period of several months.

Gordon Turnbull (Winchester RMS) argued that the review of the reserves and formulation of a policy will consider all the potential costs, and the risks mentioned by Reg Williamson will be avoided.

Replying to the debate, the Treasurer said that the discretion that Reg Williamson claimed to be provided by Clause 4.2 was specifically denied by clause 4.1. The revised clause 4.1 would not bind the FRMS to levy a smaller increase; it would simply allow this if circumstances favoured it.

Upon being put to the vote, the outcome was: 44 votes for the motion, 4 votes against the motion and 3 abstentions. The motion was approved .



Motion 2.

The Great Yarmouth Classical Music Circle submits the following motion:

“That Rule 4.2 of the Constitution be deleted in its entirety and the following substituted: Any increase above that provided by 4.1 to be subject to any proposed amendment to such rate or scale shall be held by referendum of all Affiliates and Associates. It shall only be approved by not less than 2/3 of the returned notices from Affiliates and Associates at the time of the Annual General Meeting”.

[The existing Clause 4.2 reads: “Any increase above that provided by 4.1 to be subject to any proposed amendment to such rate or scale as shall be fixed by the Federation at the General Meeting following the end of the previous financial year”.]

The motion was proposed by Reg Williamson (Stafford RMS) who declined to speak to the motion, reserving his comments until the conclusion of the debate, justifying this on the basis that the Committee had put its arguments against this proposition in a document circulated to all the affiliates. Marjorie Williamson (Stafford RMS) seconded the motion:

The Secretary quoted a letter from Godalming MLG suggesting the substitution of the word “determined” for “held” in the motion. Since this made better sense, the proposer accepted it.

Bob Drew (CMS Kidderminster) pointed out that affiliates elected the committee to act on their behalf. There was neither rhyme nor reason for having referendums.

Jonathan Cooper (Keynsham RMS) said that his experience of a number of organisations indicated that a postal vote would be an unnecessary expense, predicting that the response was unlikely to be representative. Why have an AGM if not to settle issues such as this.

Tony Pook (York RMS) argued that the membership relied on guidance from the FRMS Treasurer and Committee in national matters. A referendum would not contribute to the understanding of the problems underlying the need for an exceptional fee increase. If affiliates were dissatisfied the solution lay in the ballot box, not referendums. He urged delegates to vote against the motion.

Graham Kiteley (CMS Kidderminster and FRMS Treasurer) said the purpose of the motion was solely to restrict, discourage or amend the way in which he may want to increase the fees over and above the level agreed in clause 4.1. He argued that if the financial situation was that bad, and he needed that amount of money, waiting up to 12

months to call for a referendum would be no good to him; he would be obliged to call an extraordinary general meeting when the matter would be debated and resolved by a vote of delegates. He further argued that avoiding a debate on the issue would avoid the possibility, which he had observed in other organisations, that an informed debate could lead to the emergence of an alternative acceptable solution. A referendum would eliminate this possibility.

Reg Williamson replied to the debate on this motion with a wide-ranging speech. This opened with a description of his long service within the FRMS and the experience he had gained.

He then went on to say that this motion began its gestation some two years ago. He was here now to keep a promise he had been unable to keep last year. After leaving the office of Treasurer he began correspondence with one of the smaller societies, struggling as so many are to survive; initially this concerned monies paid to the Federation, but what emerged was something much more fundamental, a general feeling of helplessness that little could ever be done to influence those entrusted with the responsibility of managing the Federation's affairs. Time and again this was repeated in discussions in other societies: that the Federation was something quite remote from the affiliates; the affiliates brief opportunity to influence events was confined to a couple of hours once a year, at the AGM, but only if they could send a delegate, and, let's face it, very few would regard it as a priority, being a drain on their finances.

What seemed on the face of it a simple and fundamental change to the Constitution was really an important test of the Federation's good faith; in other words, is what we heard lip service or did we really want to help affiliates? Was the committee really ready to relinquish part of its autonomy? He came to the conclusion long ago that the franchise of the affiliates was virtually non-existent. Rarely was there a genuine choice for office, since, as the Chairman has pointed out, the officers virtually re-elect themselves every year, and no changes to the committee appeared as a consequence of the natural vacuum caused by resignations – this year was an outstanding example. No real choice, and the near impossibility of removing an unsatisfactory committee member – this was not democracy as he understood it. He long ago regarded this as unhealthy, and a failure to recognise how circumstances have changed.

While he expected a natural reluctance on behalf of the committee to accept the Great

Yarmouth motion, Reg Williamson thought the least favourable option might have been an offer to remit, which might have been acceptable. He was totally unprepared for the robust unwillingness to even consider it, as evidenced by the prolix document circulated to all the affiliates in response to Great Yarmouth's modest note.

He then went on to debate some of the points made in the Committee's letter. First he discussed in detail the complex relationship between the fees for PRS and PPL and the Federation Accounts. In some years PRS and PPL are subsidised slightly from the general Federation fees and in some years a small surplus is obtained which in turn subsidises the Federation Accounts. He accepted that there seemed no likelihood of any general increases in the near future. However, as the Federation shrinks, eventually there will be insufficient funds to run the Committee. In his opinion the Committee is already too large.

He then detailed the history of what had happened when four years ago he was appointed Treasurer (but denied access to the previous financial records). On advice, he had sought a ten percent increase in fees, which was approved by AGM. Subsequently this proved to be unnecessary and Brian Cartwright when he became treasurer dropped this increase. The Committee document says that he was criticised for doing so – however no such criticism is recorded in the minutes of the subsequent AGM.

Mr Williamson concluded by saying that he could assure the meeting in spite of misgivings, there is no difficulty in applying a referendum and it will provide no problem in practice for a properly run FRMS committee. He urged all to support the measure which would go some small way to creating a closer involvement of all the affiliates in FRMS affairs and remove that perception held by many that it is run by a close coterie with insufficient regard for the interests of the entire movement.

The Chairman said that he would, with great respect, name the individual who had offered the criticism of Brian Cartwright (over the non-implementation of the 10% fee increase) – it was Colin Dorothy of Carshalton RMS, and he was perfectly entitled to make that criticism. The Chairman was absolutely certain of this because Brian Cartwright had mentioned the incident and

the name to him only five days previously. The criticism was made, Brian Cartwright is aware of it and talks about it. Reg Williamson was wrong to claim that no criticism had been made.



Reg Williamson

Reg Williamson complained that the Chairman's comments were completely beyond protocol.

The Chairman replied that in terms of protocol, he had allowed Reg Williamson to go on at great length in his speech, much of which was not relevant to the motion.

The Secretary re-read the motion before the vote was taken, the outcome of which was: for the motion – 5 votes; against the motion – overwhelming number. The meeting agreed that a count was not necessary and thus the motion was defeated.

Sam Biggart (Epsom RMS) suggested that if a motion to amend the Constitution is put before an AGM in the future, the society responsible should be represented in person by a member. There was general assent to this.

Appointment of Independent Examiners.

The Treasurer advised the meeting that Hugh Khan and Mike Lea had been independent examiners for 3 years. He wished to record his sincere thanks for their services, which had been provided with promptness and courtesy, and had written to them accordingly.

Biographies of Alvin Robinson, BA, FeA and Stuart Williams had been included with the papers circulated to all affiliates. The Treasurer proposed their appointment in accordance with Clause 11 of the Constitution; this was agreed unanimously.

Any Other Business.

Gordon Turnbull (Winchester RMS) raised the question of proxy votes which ties in with a *de facto* referendum. Since there appeared to be difficulty in finding members to act as proxies for those who cannot attend, he pointed to the example of every other company he had been involved with, which have the option of nominating the Chairman to act as proxy. That would allow any affiliate to vote on any motion, which would be a *de facto* referendum without the expense of mailing. He was not saying it was a good thing or a bad thing, but just inviting the Committee to think about it. The Chairman replied that the committee had recently discussed the question of proxies, but the Constitution laid down the current practice.

Bob Drew (Kidderminster RMS) commended Bob Astill on the excellent FRMS website. It is the modern way of spreading information, but he was disturbed that many affiliates web pages are not up to date. He was certain Bob Astill was aware of this, but he urged the committee to address the problem.

Bob Astill replied that 33 affiliates had out-of-date web pages, and that would shortly receive a letter advising that if they did not submit up-to-date programme information they were likely to lose their web presence.

The question of searching for the FRMS site on the web was also discussed.

Graham Kiteley (CMS Kidderminster and FRMS Treasurer) gave information on the 2005 Music Weekend. Affiliates would be mailed information and booking forms in the near future.

The Chairman advised the delegates that next year's AGM would be held at Nantwich. He thanked all for their attendance and their contributions. There was warm applause for the Chairman.

Dinner and Music

In the evening after the AGM, The Salisbury Society had arranged for an excellent dinner, followed by music from the Quartet Champagne.

The Quartet gave an excellent concert, starting with Borodin's *Second Quartet* and *Three Pieces*



by Frank Bridge. These were followed by a marvellous selection of light music including the *Romance* from *Gadfly* by Shostakovich and music from Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker*.

New Committee Members

John Maidment

I am a founder member of Carnoustie Recorded Music Society which last year celebrated its 10th anniversary. From the outset we set out to ensure everybody knew of our existence. I think it is very important that societies have a high profile within their community. Experience has shown that much can be achieved by way of networking and building good relationships with the local media and local council. I have now been elected to

the FRMS Committee with a remit to help with Regeneration. To this end I have helped prepare a



paper which should eventually become policy.
Tony Pook

Tony Pook spent the first 10 years of his working life as a wireless operator in the Royal



Navy. He then started a second career in management services, firstly as a junior buyer, then in Organisation and Methods and finally as the Compliance Officer for a major insurer.

Tony joined York Gramophone Record Society in 1975. He has been chairman of York RMS for over twenty years and of the Yorkshire Regional Group for sixteen years. Taking early retirement in 1995, he is now membership secretary of the Dvorák Society and sings with York Musical Society.

On taking up his new duties he said "I'm very pleased to be joining the present FRMS team because I know they've been working very hard to bring stability and harmony to the organization. John Hart and Cathy Connolly were very successful Marketing Managers and I shall try to be a worthy successor".

Hi-FI SHOW and AV Expo 2004

by Philip Ashton

The HI-FI and AV Expo sponsored by the magazine Hi-FI News prompted me to visit it on Trade Day as the official representative of the FRMS. This show is unashamedly Hi End.

I was interested in real world products, i.e. the lower end of this market. Most of our members live in this world.

For many people who want to upgrade their equipment, cost is a vital consideration. Costly equipment whether it be new amplifiers, tuners, cables or home theatre systems have to be carefully considered, it is no use paying the earth for products that are hyped as being "must have", but have no real benefit to the user.

One sales person actually told me that many high priced products are bought because the buyer must have the best regardless of the music/films to be played on their system. In other words these companies are fulfilling a need by people who may not have the faintest knowledge of what they might be listening to! I am sure that our members are not in that category.

Wondering around the various exhibitors stands/rooms was a revelation. From beautifully built valve amplifiers from various companies all costing thousands of pounds made me think of the amplifiers that I built in the fifties for much less than £100. Today they show up in stainless steel, copper, chrome and even wooden cases. Yes, they all sounded fantastic but they were also esoteric in price. Not for me I hasten to add.

At the forefront of technology was a company called TacT Audio who have produced a completely digital system which included new digital amplifiers, room correction system and digital, linear source loudspeakers. Though the amp cost £990, a complete system would set one back considerably more! But the sound can only be described as incredible. An old name but well known to many of us is: TANNOY. This company has not stood still and is producing anew speaker system called ARENA. This incorporates considerably engineered mounting platforms which hide unsightly cables from view with magnificent high gloss finish bronze, silver, white or black colour choices. This system combines the core element of sound quality with the equally essential ingredients of cutting edge technology and modern aesthetics. It sounds very good too!

There was so much to see and hear that it is impossible in this short article to mention everything that I saw and heard. One company had me listen to the difference that cables can make when listening to music. A classical overture on "normal" cables then the same piece of music listened to with their Cryogenic treated cable. I could only tell them that there was a subtle improvement insofar as those complex orchestral climaxes had less "muddle" and climaxes seemed more dynamic. But at £100 or so for a length of the modified cable? Hmm! Not for me I think.

Incidentally this treatment involved freezing cable to -270 degrees Celsius.

Another well-known name in High quality speaker manufacture is HARBETH. A British company who has been forced to have their cabinets made in Poland to keep the manufacturing costs down. They sounded very well to my ears and could possibly be shown and heard at a future FRMS music weekend.

Taiwan was represented by a company called USHER who makes some glorious pieces of furniture that just happen to be loudspeakers. They obtain their drive units from a source in Germany. As yet they do not have a British distributor. The final price will be very high.

But to my ears the loudspeaker firm that stole the show was PMC Ltd, known to many of us who attend our music weekends. Their transmission line technique has produced some of the best sounds that I have ever heard. Luckily, they are able to offer us a discount on their products.

A company's products that I have always recommended for sheer quality/price is Cambridge Audio (obtainable from Richer Sounds). Their Azur range includes integrated amplifiers, CD players, a DAB/FM tuner and their latest multi channel models such as their 6-channel AV receiver and their multi-award 540D progressive scan DVD audio player.

Exposure Electronics Ltd was another British company that was exhibiting their current range of audio separates, sounding really well to my ears. All their equipment is encased in sleek, timeless lines and is completely ungradable. Their models are frequently reviewed in the various HiFi magazines and all are very favourable.

New technology was to be seen in the form of

Hi-Spec computers. Converging IT and AV technologies have sired a number of these purporting to be multimedia servers. You can download content or “rip” all your DVD’s, CD’s, and MP3’s and play them back at will. Convenient? Yes.

The last word in exciting high quality home entertainment? Not really.

One such British company aims to take on Microsoft’s Media Center PC at its own game by adding features that would get even die-hard AV fans drooling at the disk drawer. Its Classic Strata 390 HCPC (Home Cinema PC) looks not only superb in the living room, but also offers High definition video, digital audio outputs and near endless expansion potential. In top spec trim one can have 1,400 GB of storage internally, 4GB of

RAM and connectivity through Ethernet, WiFi and Bluetooth. For those that seek the ultimate in quality as well as quantity the ATI Radeon 9800 XT graphics card is capable of scaling a basic PAL image up to 1,080 line progressive scan and just about any display format in between. With Windows Media Player 9.0 software one has one of the UK’s first genuine HD video players.

The Classic Strata is an excellent piece of kit for the living room and is almost certainly a glimpse of the future of home entertainment.

If anyone needs advice or is seeking an upgrade on their present equipment, then do contact me (details on last page of Bulletin). It could be to your advantage!

Philip Ashton - FRMS Technical Officer

RMS Hits The Headlines



The Salisbury RMS recently hit the headlines as shown above, thus gaining unprecedented free publicity. The story reads as follows:

‘MUSIC lovers have been forced to change their meeting time because they are afraid of encountering drunken louts when on their own at night.

‘Members of the Salisbury Recorded Music Society will now hold their fortnightly meetings on a Wednesday afternoon, as many have become too afraid to venture into the city centre at night during the winter.

‘Ian Lace, programme secretary, said: “Most of our members are elderly and a lot of them feel it’s not very easy or pleasant to go out on a cold and dark wintry evening, particularly when there is so much anti-social behaviour on our city’s streets. “They just don’t feel safe.” Fortunately, no one has been intimidated, but Mr Lace said - “it was not worth taking the risk and most members felt happier with the move to afternoons”.

“We haven’t had any problems but we see it happening all the time,” he said. “We got off the bus one night and there were police cars all over the place dealing with some drunken louts. Salisbury at night is not a pleasant experience these days and it just seems to be getting worse.”

“The shift in weather to more wintry conditions was also a factor in moving the meetings to Wednesday afternoons, although there is the option to return to evenings come next June. Mr Lace said: “As you get older you don’t particularly want to venture out in the rain or snow. “It means people will be able to go home before it gets too dark.” By switching to afternoons, Mr Lace hopes not only to maintain current numbers but also to boost membership. “We hope the afternoon meeting will attract new members,” he said. “We know that daytime-working people will not be able to attend but most people who are interested in joining our society tend to be retired. We would like to welcome younger music lovers but so few have expressed an interest to join that we obviously have to go for the target audience.”

‘The next meeting of the Salisbury Recorded Music Society will be held at the Girlguiding Hall, 6-8 St Ann Street, Salisbury, at 2pm on January 12, when Michael Salmon will present a programme featuring the Music Of Three Troubled Men. For more information, contact Mr Lace on 01722 325363’.

Frederick Youens, Man Of Music

Frederick Youens was born just before the end of the 19th Century; he served in the World War, being wounded at the Battle of the Somme.

In 1936 he met with Johnny Johnson and two other gentlemen in a café in Charing Cross, where they decided to form a National Federation of Gramophone Societies to help the individual clubs with problems such as copyright and administration.

One of Fred's first tasks was to edit a magazine to be sent to all clubs joining the Federation. It was called Bulletin, and he produced the first twelve issues "Off my own bat" as he put it.

Although he encouraged societies to send in reports of their activities, if material was scarce, being such a prolific writer he would include articles of musical interest from his own pen.

In addition to using his own name he used pen names such as Peter Smith, Gordon Carstairs, and Peter Courtenay. He also founded a magazine called "The Mediant" for the High Wycombe Gramophone Society and also wrote articles called "The Men Of Music" for The Classics Club.

At High Wycombe he obtained the services of the composer Edmund Rubbra as president of the Gramophone Society. Fred also formed other musical clubs, and at some of them live music was performed. He became great friends with Sir Granville Bantock.

Until 1960 Fred worked as Secretary to a firm in High Wycombe, but then he was offered the job as recording manager at Saga Records, a small but go-ahead company producing LP's to sell at a reasonable price. He wrote most of the sleeve notes himself, under his own name or sometimes using one of his pen names. He always researched his subject thoroughly and was a stickler for accuracy. A number of the major record companies enlisted his services for sleeve notes as his reputation grew.

Ted Perry joined him at Saga in the early sixties, left, and then returned for a short while a few years later; subsequently Ted founded Hyperion Records. They remained firm friends for the rest of Fred's life.

Fred recalled with great pride how at Saga he had given a young singer her first recording

contract, and how he had recognised at once that she would become one of the greats.

At the recording session she sang songs by Schumann, Schubert and Brahms. When they had finished Fred asked her how she wished to be billed on the record sleeve. At first she said "You've noticed, haven't you". "That your voice is neither mezzo nor contralto" replied Fred.

The young lady then asked "Could the sleeve just say JANET BAKER."



Frederick Youens & George Lloyd

Whilst at Saga Fred was once approached by Sir Adrian Boult who wished to record a rather obscure work that had taken his fancy. It seems that he had not made any recordings for a while, and his usual recording company were not interested in this venture. Fred would have loved to accommodate Sir Adrian but the fee he wanted was beyond the means available to Saga. He often said that was one of his biggest disappointments,

as he would have loved to work with the great conductor.

During these later years he was President of the Uxbridge Recorded Music Society where I am Chairman, and he presented us with many fine programmes. Those of you who remember his visits on behalf of the Federation will appreciate me telling how his diction and professional expertise remained despite his advancing years. The warmth of his personality made every musical item he included seem very special indeed. We also noticed how much he loved Czech music, Schubert, Kathleen Ferrier and Margot Fonteyn.

In 1995 when I was fortunate enough to persuade the composer George Lloyd to come to Uxbridge and present a programme of his own music. Fred and George had a long conversation at the interval and our man said afterwards that it had enriched his life. Incidentally George Lloyd played a cassette he had made himself in Hong Kong of a work he called "*FLOATING CLOUD*", and although we were told a CD was to be issued, I am still unable to trace and purchase it. Does any reader know whether this was available on CD?

Frederick died in 1997, a few months short of his 100th birthday.

Murray Nash, Chairman, Uxbridge RMS

Elaine Bright — Obituary

Elaine Bright founded Tewkesbury Gramophone Society (as it was then) in around 1965. She was a District Nurse by profession. Elaine became Secretary of her new creation and her great friend and colleague Ruth Parnell was Programme Secretary, posts they held for the next twenty years at least. The Society flourished, moving meeting places several times over the years, but still with Elaine and Ruth at the helm.

Elaine was outgoing and very supportive of the Federation and its events and for many years provided wonderful floral displays for the stage which were always appreciated by visiting speakers, committee members and delegates. She served as a member of the Federation committee from 1986 to 1990, but the first time I met Elaine was long before that, when I offered assistance to the tall, elegant and smiling lady who seemed to have a very miniature bag of personal belongings, but a car full of the most gorgeous greenery and flowers, all apparently from her own garden and transported with the greatest of care from Gloucestershire to Hertfordshire.

In the late 80's I found myself living in the Tewkesbury area and it was natural to join Elaine's Society and eventually I served on the committee. By now numbers had dropped and in common with other Societies, problems occurred with finding suitable premises and keeping the equipment safe, one complete set of equipment was lost to burglary.

Eventually, Ruth and Elaine decided to relinquish the leadership and retire properly, Ruth was a choral singer and both she and Elaine supported many local music events, though actually their individual taste in music was quite different.

Some years ago Elaine suffered a major accident when her car was squashed by a lorry and it took many months of hospital treatment before she was able to resume life again. This marred the last years of her life, preventing her from working in her beloved garden; she could no longer sit for very long, making concert-going and car journeys an impossibility and Federation events completely out of the question.

Sadly, Tewkesbury Society, later becoming Tewkesbury Recorded Music Society, found itself at stagnation point. Only 18 members, with 13 or 14 regulars, everyone having served on the committee more than once. No-one able to take responsibility to house the equipment and bring it

to each fortnightly meeting when the Chairman decided he could no longer undertake this considerable task, and no one willing to take on the roles of programme secretary or treasurer – in short no committee. Thus in June 2004 after a sombre AGM it was decided to wind up the Society. Neither Elaine nor Ruth knew of this sad event; Ruth had died and Elaine was again in hospital very poorly.

The week following the Society's demise I heard Elaine had died. She left instructions with her nephew that the funeral was to be very low key so there was no opportunity for either the Society or the Federation to be represented. In order that her work in founding the Society which gave so much pleasure over such a long period should not be lost, I arranged for all the Society's papers to be placed in the archives of Gloucester Record Office, who seemed very pleased to have the opportunity to receive them.

Ted Pezarro

Founder — Ightham and District Gramophone Society (Kent); now of New Dean Music Club

YORKSHIRE REGIONAL GROUP SCARBOROUGH WEEKEND

Friday 8th - MONDAY 11th APRIL 2005

FRIDAY NIGHT (OPTIONAL)

Wild Geese That Fly Ron Downs

SATURDAY

300 Years of Russian Music John Davies
Musical Milestones Brian Jenkinson
Confessions Christopher Morley
Sixty Glorious Years Geoffrey Kinder
Harmonia Mundi Presents Celia Ballantyne
Life in the Orchestra Eric Jennings

SUNDAY

The Spirit of England Robert Seager

MONDAY MORNING

Dennis Clark, YRG Secretary 0113 267 1533
227 Tinshill Road, Leeds LS16 7BU
Conference Fee £10.00 to Secretary

Late bookings need to contact the hotel direct
The Crown Hotel, Esplanade, Scarborough
Telephone: 01723 357400

LETTERS

Hyperion Records – Copyright Case

The autumn issue (No.141) of the Bulletin referred to the situation arising from the court case about copyright which went against Hyperion. This puzzled me, although I am not a lawyer and have no knowledge of copyright law.

The tone of your article did not seem to me to be completely balanced. The background, as I understand it, was that a certain Dr Sawkins had carried out work on music composed by Lalande and Hyperion did not wish him to receive royalties as a result of this work. The article went on to imply a threat to future recording of music. Why should this be?

If Dr Sawkins had done so little, i.e. “.... not composed any music for two of the pieces and only five bars of another”, why were Hyperion not content to use the music as it stood before Dr Sawkins “tinkered” with it? Presumably they preferred to use the music after the “tinkering” and thought this was a preferable version to offer to the public. Why on earth do they not want Dr Sawkins to benefit from his endeavours?

Record companies are free agents in this matter. They can: (a) use existing versions/editions of music, (b) employ their own people to edit them or (c) they can commission others (pay royalties?) to outsiders to do the necessary work. Or am I missing something?

One assumes that Hyperion will be on their guard against this happening in future? Presumably the principle remains that “a labourer is worth his hire”?

Tony Brace (Orpington RMS)

AGM Motion

I am writing with reference to the A.G.M. on the 30th October 2004 and the outcome of the Motion for a referendum on clause 4.2 of the Constitution. It was presented on our behalf by Reg Williamson. Even though we thought it was a reasonable proposal, it was rejected at the A.G.M. It now appears that any Motion presented that has not got the backing of the Committee has no chance of being passed at the A.G.M. because with proxy votes, the Committee can outvote any proposal that they do not agree with. This is because of the poor attendance of the membership, and the attendance seems to be getting less and less; so it is making the whole situation very undemocratic.

LETTERS

For what ever the reason may be, whether it is the distance some have to travel, or the cost, or just apathy, but with the attendance going down the A.G.M.s are less effective This does not bode well for the Federation as it cannot be considered democratic if the Committee can control what is passed and what is not.

This year, there were no nominees for the committee so no need for a vote, which could also be a reason for concern. A very important factor to consider is that the Federation needs the support of its members as much as the members need the support of the Federation. The Committees attitude towards the Motion that Mr. Williamson presented for us effectively stopped members having an opportunity to have a say on one of the most important issues for a club, that of finance, without which a club cannot survive and with falling membership, it is harder still.

It would be interesting, to hear the views from other clubs on the points that I have raised in this letter.

John T. Taylor, (Secretary),

Great Yarmouth Classical Music Circle

Reply by FRMS Chairman

I do share Mr Taylor's concern regarding the lack of nominations for office and committee. There have been too few contested elections in the recent past. In 1998 the committee actually had two vacancies due to a lack of nominations.

The total voting strength at the Salisbury AGM was 51(29 societies in person, 22 proxies) Of these the committee controlled 14 votes. Committee motions have been defeated at the AGM, for example at the 2001 AGM at Cardiff.

Mr Williamson polled five votes for his Great Yarmouth clause 4.2 motion. He had two votes (one society plus one proxy, his seconder also had two votes and there was one other vote) The AGM takes place in a different region each year because we recognise the attendance difficulties Mr Taylor mentions. Mr Taylor is at liberty to make us an offer for a future AGM.

The proposed referendum would not be of help to societies at the present and in the near future. Had the motion on clause 4.2 been successful it would only have been implemented if the proposed annual affiliation fee increase was above the mean of the RPI/AE indices (currently 3 to 4%).

The committee clause 4.1 amendment which was passed by an overwhelming majority means

that the affiliation fee will NOT in future automatically rise annually by the mean of the RPI/AE as the Treasurer can now propose a lower figure - even a nil increase. This is surely good news for all societies.

John Davies

BULLETIN DISTRIBUTION

To Bulletin Subscribers and to Society Secretaries and Treasurers

We have made a couple of changes to the way the Bulletin is distributed, which we hope will streamline some of the administration involved. These affect (a) Societies which receive and pay for additional copies of the Bulletin and (b) individual subscribers when their subscriptions expire. Societies receiving only one copy and subscribers whose subscriptions have at least one more issue to run need do nothing now - but please note this message for future reference.

Societies receiving additional copies: Previously the invoice/delivery note attached to the package has shown only the number of copies to be paid for, i.e. one less than the number in the package. With effect from this issue this will now show the total number of copies as well. The

invoice/delivery note has been folded so that only the total number of copies shows on the outside; the number to be paid for and their cost will be found on unfolding the document. Unless you have requested a change in the number of extra copies, the number of copies in the package and the amount you pay will be the same as previously.

Individual subscribers: Starting with this issue, when your subscription expires you will find a "Documents Enclosed" packet attached to the envelope instead of an address label. This packet contains your renewal notice. We hope you will want to renew your subscription (still £6.80 for 4 issues) and would ask you to renew promptly - even though the next issue is not for another six months - so that we do not have to send out reminders.

Finally, despite our own and the printers' best efforts there are occasional hiccups in the distribution of the Bulletin. If there are any problems we will do our best to solve them promptly. Please contact the Distribution Manager, Allan Child, by post, phone or e-mail if you have any queries.

AC

Advert - Study Breaks

Stalin and Shostakovich

by Anthony Barker

It is not uncommon to hear it asserted that Shostakovich wrote his finest music under the stimulus of Stalin's rule. After all he certainly composed brilliant works in that period. But was it because of Stalin or despite him? If Shostakovich was the good Communist that the Party suggested, then Stalin could possibly claim some credit. But was he? Could it be that he learned to say the right thing and that he allowed his name to appear on letters and articles written by Party hacks? If you and your family were going to starve and if friends and relatives were being sent to Siberia, would you shout from the roof tops that you were a dissenter and if someone wrote that you deeply regretted an indiscretion, would you let it pass, rather than set the record straight, with disastrous results the next day? So we cannot take too much that Shostakovich said and wrote at face value and we are not helped by his love of telling a good story, even though it was not accurate. We have to examine with care his life and his music even to guess what truly transpired and to accept that Shostakovich's personality was distorted by the pressures he endured. But, while searching for the truth, we must not allow ourselves to be distracted from enjoyment of the music itself by a concern to fathom precisely what message Shostakovich meant to convey.

Origins

Dimitry Shostakovich was born in St Petersburg on 25 September 1906; Tsar Nicholas II still reigned and Stalin was already 26. His middle class forebears were returned exiles from Siberia and narodniki (radical democrats dedicated to improving the lot of the peasants). So his family was in sympathy with the revolution that removed the Tsar in 1917, though not the final supremacy of the Bolsheviks. He only began piano lessons with his mother at nine and was blessed with perfect pitch, rapidly grasping musical notation and possessed of a prodigious memory. He began composing almost immediately and entered

Petrograd Conservatory at thirteen (St Petersburg became Petrograd in 1914 and Leningrad in 1924). Despite lack of heating, malnutrition and tuberculosis, he was an exceptionally diligent student, studying piano under Nikolayev and composition under Steinberg. The Director, Glazunov, recognised his talent as composer and pianist, while not pretending to understand his music. At the age of fifteen his father died and his mother and two sisters made deep personal sacrifices and he became a movie house pianist at seventeen, just to let his studies continue. For his graduation piece in 1925, he composed his *Symphony No 1*, which was acclaimed and played nationally and internationally.

Early Stalin

Lenin died in 1924 and Stalin only gained supremacy in 1927. Although the Party sought to control the arts and

to harness them as a means of motivating the people, Stalin did not turn his attention specifically to Shostakovich's music until 1936. His *Piano Sonata No 1*, with its violent virtuosity and modern idiom was dedicated to October 1917, as was his *Symphony No 2*, clear references to the spirit of the revolution. In 1927 it was hinted that he was in line for the post of Soviet music laureate and he was selected as one of five Russian pianists to take part in the Chopin Competition in Warsaw. Before going he had to pass the Conservatory's exam in Marxist methodology. He was establishing his loyalty to the regime and demonstrating his avant-garde credentials, particularly the latter with his opera *The Nose*, with its desire to debunk officialdom and to amuse and confuse the audience. His *Symphony No 3* again had revolutionary dedication.

Chaos Instead of Music

Then came *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*, his brilliant opera to the Leskov story and to protect himself from criticism he emphasized its



Shostakovich, 1930

pre-revolutionary context: "...I wanted to unmask reality and arouse a feeling of hatred for the tyrannical and humiliating atmosphere in a Russian merchant's household". Soon after the revolution a series of musical organisations were formed, which sought through self regulation, exhortation and denunciation to eliminate light and bourgeois music and to generate uplifting music praising the Party. The Composer's Union was formed by the Party to take over these bodies and Shostakovich had to attend their meetings, to repent publicly that he had strayed from the path of Socialist Realism and to promise to reform. He had to affirm that much of his film and ballet music was unacceptable; privately he was troubled by its quality and the energy it consumed, although it provided vital income. He also wrote occasional pieces, some of which aggrandised Soviet institutions, including the dreaded NKVD. Now followed his *Piano Concerto No 1*, which rapidly established itself in repertoire. In 1935 the Party was purged of any possible anti Stalinist elements and the Terror began, in which over 7 million people were murdered or transported to Siberia.

The two years to 1936 had brought international premieres and over 180 performances of *Lady Macbeth* in Leningrad and Moscow alone. Then, on 26 January 1936, Shostakovich was bidden to attend the Bolshoi performance, attended by Stalin, Mikoyan and Zhdanov; they left before the final act. Two days later a Pravda article, probably written by Stalin, titled "Chaos Instead of Music" attacked the opera and a few days later his ballet music for the *Limpid Stream* was savaged. Not for the only time, his official income was terminated, only money from film scores remaining; he was mentioned in the press only as an enemy of the people. Thereafter, he never completed another opera and never wrote another original ballet.

Stalin's Knout

During 1936 and 1937 those among his relatives and friends who were arrested or disappeared included his brother-in-law, mother-in law, poet Komilov, librettist Piotrovsky and Marxist writer Serebryakova. To spare his

family, for many nights Shostakovich dozed in the stairwell leading to his apartment awaiting arrest by the NKVD; in Stalinist Hungary this was called doorbell fever. His friend, music lover Marshal Tukhachevsky wrote to Stalin, interceding for Shostakovich, only to be arrested himself and shot in Stalin's purge of 80,000 military leaders. Shostakovich was questioned regarding their relationship and a purported plot against Stalin.

On Saturday he was sent home and told to return on Monday to confess. When he went to NKVD headquarters that Monday, he learned that his interrogator had been imprisoned. Had Stalin decided that Shostakovich should be coerced rather than arrested and had the interrogator overstepped that line to his peril?

In the repressive time of the Tsars, a holy fool (Yurodivy) was permitted to speak the truth without incurring the full fury of the ruler's wrath. Stalin appears to have decided to thrash and demean Shostakovich rather than murder him. He seems to have had an almost mystic fear of poets and musicians.

Playing with Fire

Symphony No 4 was conceived in 1934 and following its completion, in 1936 he lacked the drive to start another work, feeling near suicidal at his denunciation and betrayal by friends. Then part way through the rehearsals for its premiere, he withdrew it, sure he was in deadly peril. The premiere was only permitted in 1961, 25 years later. Three months later he began work on *Symphony No 5*, which was only marginally less antagonistic to the rules of Socialist Realism forbidding tragedy and abstraction. At its premiere in Leningrad many wept at the depiction of the repression they had suffered. That public reaction precluded any possibility of his arrest and the Party put a brave face on it, proclaiming that it represented Shostakovich's admission of past errors.

Now and for many years thereafter, he affirmed that he was working on a major choral symphony dedicated to Lenin. He now moved into a new form, rapidly completing *String Quartet No 1* to acclaim for its simplicity. Interestingly, his quartet writing attracted far less official criticism



Shostakovich, 1942

than his symphonies. 1941 and the war with Germany now generated fierce patriotism and the siege of Leningrad provided the stimulus for his great *Symphony No 7*, which echoed across Russia and the West. He was to say, "...it is about the Leningrad Stalin destroyed and Hitler merely finished off...". Following German defeats in the field, his *Symphony No 8* was expected to be an uplifting cry of optimism, but its overall mood was of tragedy, as though writing of the suffering endured. Praised until the war ended, the authorities were happy for it to disappear from the repertoire.

Knouts and Carrots

With the war drawing to its close, he began work on *Symphony No 9*; he was expected to produce an apotheosis exalting the genius of Stalin. Instead it reflected his fear that the wartime easing of repression would give way to further purges to satisfy Stalin's mounting paranoia. The Party's knout again descended on his back; *Symphony No 9* disappeared, remaining unrecorded in Russia until 1956. For eight years he produced no symphonies. The quartets continued and his *Violin Concerto No 1* emerged; to avoid official disapprobation, its dedicatee, David Oistrakh, postponed its première for 7 years. Throughout this period there were carrots and knouts. From 1946 Zhdanov, as Minister of Culture, repeatedly confronted Shostakovich publicly and from 1948 his successor Lysenko and the newly appointed head of the Composer's Union, Khrennikov, maintained this policy.

Appointments to State bodies were forced on him to make him appear complicit in Party policy and they provided a dacha here and a better apartment there. Also, the Terror returned with executions and mass deportations to the Gulag. Then, in March 1949, Stalin telephoned Shostakovich asking that he go to the Congress of Peace and Culture in the USA. He responded by saying it would be difficult at a time when his works were proscribed in Russia. Stalin professed ignorance of this and two days later declared that the blacklist was an illegal document. Stalin had manipulated him into another situation where he had to laud the Party. Thereafter he continued to

withdraw into himself and a part of him died; he recognised that he had been suborned and was trapped. Consequently, throughout this period, while producing 'acceptable' pieces, he was composing for his drawer. More openly, inspired by Bach's *Well-Tempered Klavier*, he set about composing the *24 Preludes and Fugues* in 1950/51, only to be met by an onslaught of official criticism. Consequently they were not played as a complete cycle for almost two years, whereupon their brilliance was recognised internationally.

False Thaws

While Shostakovich was composing *Symphony No 10* in 1953, Stalin died, a further purge having been planned. The music seemed to sum up the tragic epoch, its raging scherzo redolent of evil and possibly a portrait of Stalin himself. Malenkov, Beria (briefly) and Molotov now came to power and there was a hint that artistic controls would be relaxed. But Shostakovich was still to be paraded as a loyal conformist. During the four years before Khrushchev achieved full power, he produced his melodic *Piano Concerto No 2* and two string quartets; his wife had died, leaving him to bring up his teenage daughter and son, and he now feared that he was written out.

Finally, he started on *Symphony No 11*, to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the suppression of the 1905 revolution. But it was written in the aftermath of the bloodily suppressed Hungarian uprising. Which bloody suppression did it represent? Following its success, in an apparent thaw, the Party issued a decree rehabilitating all the leading composers. However, this did not diminish the constant pressure to have him declare his allegiance and finally, soon after his *Cello Concerto No 1* was completed, in 1960 he was coerced into becoming a party member. Only after his *Symphony No 12 (The Year 1917)* was first performed was the premiere of *Symphony No 4* permitted. It was a revelation and he insisted that had it not been suppressed his following works would have been stronger and sharper, displaying more brilliance, using more sarcasm. So much for Stalin having inspired him between 1936 and 1953 and we must remember that among the works written in his prime during Stalin's preoccupation



Shostakovich, 1963

with him there were just three significant symphonies (5, 7 and 9), five string quartets a piano and a violin concerto, with no operas or original ballets

Conclusion

His health had never been strong and was already breaking down in his forties and fifties, polio going undiagnosed for ten years and he lost the use of his right hand for periods. Nevertheless between 1962 and 1975 he produced three symphonies, seven quartets and two concertos, some of which may not match his most brilliant, but which bring great pleasure. Finally, near blind,

he died of cancer on 9 August 1975. He was 68, having outlived Stalin by 22 years and the Stalinist Brezhnev was in power. In the dictator's 25 year rule 50 million Soviet citizens had been killed, and his body no longer lay in the mausoleum in Red Square.

Shostakovich had made mistakes, entered blind alleys, had been coerced, terrified and vilified, but he was a man of great compassion, whose prime fault, was to wish to protect his family and friends from a terrible fiend and his minions. It is a strange irony that that monster should sometimes be credited as his inspiration.

© Anthony Barker

FRMS Quo Vadis

Part 2 — Regeneration

In Part 1, printed in the Autumn 2004 Bulletin, we pointed out that there has been a slow but apparently inexorable decline in number of Societies and in overall membership. There is an almost universal feeling that we are failing to recruit younger members and some wonder whether the recorded music movement is doomed to a long lingering death.

We feel that this is not inevitable; on the contrary there are grounds for optimism and for a new regeneration of Societies in which FRMS can play a helpful role. The FRMS Committee rejects the pessimistic view that decline is inevitable; it feels that regeneration is the major challenge for the movement and the Committee is determined to do all it can to help societies with this important task.

Why is decline not inevitable?

It is common ground that it is difficult to recruit younger people as members of our societies. However this has happened at a time when the proportion of the population over the age of retirement has expanded dramatically and is expected to expand even further as medical science progresses. Thus we now have a large number of people who have time on their hands, often are reasonably provided for financially, and often feel the need for more friends and for intellectual stimulation - this surely must provide a large core of potential recruits. This is exemplified by the success of the U3A organisation, which is relatively new in many areas, and now has more people in their music appreciation groups than the FRMS has

members in its affiliated societies. We should not regard U3A as a competitor but as a source for dual membership.

How do we keep the society going?

Societies seldom fail for lack of funds - in fact failed societies often leave reasonable residual funds. The most common cause of society failure is where membership drops to an unsustainable level. For any society the first priority is to retain existing members. Of course we cannot stop members dying, but we can perhaps do more to ensure that existing members do not leave because they are not happy in the society. It is of course easier to satisfy existing members than to recruit new ones. Here are some of the key factors that can lead to member dissatisfaction:

- When are the meetings held? Many older members are reluctant to go out at night for reasons of safety or difficulties in driving etc.. It is noteworthy that U3A hold mainly daytime meetings. Consider holding a secret ballot to see whether the majority prefer daytime meetings (see article on page 9).
- Is the meeting room up to standard? Is it warm and comfortable? Is it situated in a safe area? Is it convenient for parking and for public transport? If the answer to any of these in the negative then a change of meeting room may be essential.
- The Hi Fi equipment should be this. It is easy to think that because it was state of art in 1970 it is still up to modern standards. The aim must

be to ensure that the equipment is up to the same standard as all members enjoy at home.

- Can people hear the presenter? If not consider the purchase of a PA system - it need not cost the earth.
- Use the AGM to get feedback from members as how to improve meetings. Then ensure that the Committee takes the appropriate actions.

How do we get new members?

- Posters (and sometimes a pile of leaflets) can be shown at Libraries, Church Halls, Shops (especially record shops), Community Halls, Information Centres etc. Don't forget the hall where you meet.
- Leaflets can be delivered when new housing estates are opened, or even to existing estates. Piles can be left at MPs surgeries, Building Societies etc
- Articles in local Newspapers are a very potent way of getting new members. Paid adverts in press, church magazines etc can be helpful but often are not cost effective.
- We can advertise on local or national radio. If we make a request why not mention our society?
- Make your existence known to local U3A.
- Ensure that the society has a webpage in the FRMS website (it costs nothing). Quote the address of your webpage on all leaflets, posters etc and try to get it mentioned on local community web sites.

How do we keep new members?

- Make new (and existing members) welcome. Officers and Committee members should circulate at every meeting to ensure that all members are spoken to. The objective is to make everyone feel that he/she is a member of a society of friends. One cannot expect this just to happen and the Chairman should remind Committee members from time to time. Some societies allocate an officer to have special responsibility for this purpose.
- New members (and some old members) are often relatively lacking in knowledge of music and the society should aim to cover all tastes and difficulty of music. There is a tendency to assume that all members know all the great classics and therefore these are seldom played

(when did your society last play a Beethoven Symphony?).

- In some societies there is a feeling that either the presenters and/or the programmes are too predictable. The programme secretary should try to gain in advance at least a general idea of what music each programme will contain.
- Tea/Coffee breaks are the lubricant that keeps the members together, but a series of social events adds enormously to the attractiveness of the society.

Governance

- Societies may fail because there is no-one willing to take on the necessary offices such as secretary or treasurer.
- It is important to ensure that the composition of the Committee changes regularly and also that new(ish) members are appointed. This will ensure that there are plenty of members who have had experience of Committee work. Some Societies have finite periods defined in their constitution for which one person can hold an office.
- Complacency is a sin easily seen in others but not in oneself. Nevertheless it has led to the demise of many an organisation ("We always have done it this way...therefore it must be right").

This article is based upon discussions within the FRMS Committee and with societies and regional groups. It does not claim to hold all the answers as every society has its own traditions and history. Nonetheless we feel that most societies will find points worth further discussion. If any society feels that it is in danger of declining it should set out an action plan to reverse the trend. We also recommend that any society that sees itself having a potential problem, should contact the FRMS at an early stage.

If the worse happens and despite all efforts the society becomes non-viable, consideration should be given to the possibility of amalgamation with a nearby RMS rather than closure.

A last but important point – please write to give us your views.

John Davies, FRMS Chairman
Arthur Baker, Bulletin Editor

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Some Notable Anniversaries for 2006

Compiled by Brendan Sadler

There are even fewer composers' anniversaries to celebrate in 2006 than in 2005. However, the 250th anniversary of the birth of Mozart should gladden the hearts of many a programme planner and lovers of Finzi will welcome the opportunity to have a second bite of the cherry! Several popular artistes have important birthdays which should provide opportunities for celebration. These include: 80th for Dame Joan Sutherland, John Vickers and Galina Vishnevskaya; 75th for Alfred Brendel; 70th for Charles Dutoit, Dame Gwyneth Jones, Zubin Mehta, Cecile Ousset and the Israel Philharmonic; and 60th for José Carreras, Mark Elder, Ralph Kirschbaum and the last of the orchestras formed by Sir Thomas Beecham, the Royal Philharmonic.



The compiler would like to thank Roger Hughes, Chairman of Ickenham Gramophone Club, for suggesting a number of composers for inclusion in this list.

Composers - Born (b) Died (d)

Composers – Born (b), Died (d)

18 10 1706	Galuppi, Baldssare (It)b
27 01 1756	Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus (Aust)b
20 06 1756	Kraus, Joseph (Ger)b
30 12 1756	Wranitzky, Paul(Czeck)b
27 01 1806	Arriaga, Juan (Span)
23 03 1806	Pinto, George (Eng)
10 08 1806	Haydn, Michael (Aust)d
06 01 1856	Martucci, Giuseppe(It)b
? 04 1856	Liadov, Anatole (Rus)b
03 05 1856	Adam, Adolph (Fr)d
21 07 1856	Schumann, Robert (Ger)d
21 08 1856	Lindpainter, Peter (Ger)d
? 02 1906	Arensky, Anton (Rus)d
08 06 1906	Homeman, Emil (Den)d
06 07 1906	Lutyens, Elizabeth (Eng)b
25 09 1906	Shostakovich, Dmitri (Rus)b
18 02 1956	Charpentier, Gustave (Fr)d
27 09 1956	Finzi, Gerald (Eng)d

1906

Albeniz	Piano Cycle; Iberia.
Bantock	Omar Kayam.
Bax	Piano Trio.
Berg	Piano Sonata (1906-1908).
Bloch	Poemes d'Automne.
Bridge	Three Idylls for string orch.
	String Quartet in E min.
	Nine Miniatures - cello & piano
Coleridge-Taylor	Kubla Khan.
Delius	Piano Concerto.
Dukas	Villanelle for horn and piano.
Elgar	Wand of Youth Suites (1906-7).
	Oratorio; The Kingdom.
Fauré	Piano Quintet.
	Song cycle: La Chanson d'Eve.
Grieg	Moods.
Holst	Songs of the West for orchestra.
	Two songs Without Words.
d'Indy	Tone poem; Souvenirs.
Ireland	Piano No1 (Phantasy Trio).
Ives	The Pond for flute, harp, piano and string quartet.

Compositions

(fp = first perf. ; p = year published)

1706

Rameau	Harpichord works Book 1
Scarlatti,A	Oratorio; Il sedecia, re di Gerusalemme

1806

Beethoven	Symphony No 4 in B flat. Violin Concerto in D. Piano Sonata No.22(p). 32 Variations in C min.
Weber	Symphony No.1.

Kodaly	Summer Evening for orchestra.
Liadov	Eight Popular Russian Songs.
Malipiero	Sinfonia del Mare.
Nielsen	Opera; Masquerade (fp).
Pizzetti	String Quartet.
Quilter	Song cycle; To Julia.
Rachmaninov	Opera; Francesca da Rimini. Opera; The Miserly Knight. Fifteen Songs.
Ravel	Introduction and Allegro for harp, flute, clarinet and string quartet.
Reger	Serenade.
Rimsky-Korsakov	Opera; Le Coq d'Or.
Satie	Passacaille, for piano.

Schoenberg	Prélude en Tapisserie, - piano.		Sextet.
Schoeck	Chamber Symphonies No 1 & 2.	Kabalevsky	Piano Trio.
	Serenade for small orch		Symphony No 5.
	(1906-1907).		Symphonic suite; Romeo and
Sibelius	Symphonic poem: Pohjola's		Juliet.
	Daughter.	Khachaturian	Ode of Joy for voices and orch.
Smyth	Opera; The Wreckers.	Lutyens	Chorale for Orchestra (Homage
Strauss	Opera; Elektra (1906-1908).		à Stravinsky).
Vaughan Williams	Norfolk Rhapsodies.		Three Duos for various
Wolf -Ferrari	Opera; School for Fathers (fp)		combinations
	Opera: I Quatro Rusteghi		In the Temple of a Bird's Wing
			for baritone and piano.
1956		Martin	Overture in Homage to Mozart.
Alwyn	Symphony No 3.	Mennin	Cello concerto.
Arnell	Landscape and Figures for		Sonata Concertante for violin
	orchestra.		and piano.
Barber	Summer Music for wind	Menotti	Ballet; The Unicorn, the
	quintet.		Gorgon and the Manticore.
Arnold	Opera; The Dancing Master.	Messiaen	Oiseaux Exotique for piano
	Opera; The Open Window.		wind and percussion.
	Ballet suite; Solitaire.	Milhaud	Symphony No 7.
	A Grand Overture.	Moore	Opera; The Ballad of Baby Doe.
Bernstein	Operetta; Candide.	Orff	Nanie and Dithyrambe - choir.
Berio	Allelujah 1 & 2 for orchestra	Piston	Serenata for orchestra.
	String Quartet.		Quintet for Wind.
	Perspectives, electronic music.	Poulenc	Song cycle; Le Travail du
Berkeley	Opera; Ruth.		Peintre.
Bliss	Edinburgh Overture.		Deux Mélodies.
Britten	Ballet; The Prince of Pagodas.	Rawsthorne	Violin Concerto No2.
	Antiphon for choir and organ.	Rochberg	Sinfonia Fantasia.
Castelnuovo Tedesco	Opera; All's Well That Ends	Rubbra	Symphony No 7.
	Well.	Schuman	New England Triptych
Dallapiccola	Concerto per la Notte di Natale	Sessions	Piano Concerto.
	dell'Anno.	Shostakovich	Opera; Katerina Ismailova.
	Cinque Canti for baritone &		String Quartet No 6.
	eight instruments		Spanish Songs for soprano
Davies	Five Pieces for Piano.	Stockhausen	and piano.
Diamond	Sonata for solo cello.	Stravinsky	Klavierstucke XI.
Finzi	In Terra Pax for chorus & orch.	Tippett	Canticum Sacrum.
	Eclogue for piano and orch.	Vaughan Williams	Symphony No 2.
Fricker	Suite for Harpsichord.		Symphony No 9.
	Cello sonata.		Romanza & Toccata for organ.
Foss	Psalms with orchestra.		Cantata; Epithalamion (56-7).
Gerhard	Nonet for winds and accordion.		Ten Blake Songs for ten.& oboe.
Goehr	String Quartet No 1 (1956-7).		Motet; A Vision of Aeroplanes.
Gould	Santa Fe saga for band.	Walton	Cello Concerto.
	Dialogue for piano and strings.		
Hamilton	Scottish Dances.		
	Sonata for Chamber Orchestra.		
Hanson	Elegy in Memory of Serge		
	Koussevitsky for orchestra.		
Harris	Folk Fantasy for choir & piano.		
Henze	Ballet; Maratona.		
	Ballet; Ondine.		
	Concerto per il Marigny.		
	Five Neapolitan songs.		
Hoddinott	Septet for wind, strings and		
	piano (fp).		
Jacob	Piano No 2.		

FORMING NEW SOCIETY?

If anyone is considering forming a new Recorded Music Society, please contact the FRMS Secretary Tony Baines (address on page 37), he will provide advice and also information about how the Federation can help a new society

CENTRAL REGIONAL GROUP

REPORT ON ONE DAY EVENT AT OLTON,

Mick Birchall, the Central Region Secretary has for some time wished to have a theme day linked to food. So the opportunity finally came in the very pleasant venue of St Margaret's Church Hall, Olton near Solihull. Our theme was an Italian Day, with a three course lunch, Italian food of course, prepared and cooked by Mick himself, supported by committee members and their wives.

The first presentation was given by David Gregory who spoke on Rossini and the Theatre.

David said he had been attracted to the *Barber of Seville* in his youth having moved on from Gilbert and Sullivan. In the next few years David said there will be some real opportunities to see first class performances of bel canto works throughout Europe.

Gioacchino Antonio Rossini was born in 1792 less than three months after the death of Mozart; Rossini was to make that now famous remark that "Mozart was the wonder of his youth and the consolation of his old age". Whilst Rossini's early education was a fairly modest one, at the age of eight he proved his exceptional musical gifts. By the age of 14 he had composed his first opera and the following year entered the music school at Bologna.

Rossini was to go on to compose 30 operas in the space of only 13 years, several of which remain five star hits to this day. To whet our appetites, David's first example was the overture to *The Italian Girl in Algiers* composed at the age of 21 years, in the space of 27 days. David's second illustration was from the *Barber of Seville* which is the oldest opera written by an Italian composer never to have disappeared from the active repertory. The extract was the comic aria *La calunnia e un venticello* -slander is like a gentle breeze with some fine singing from Robert Lloyd as Basilo.

We then moved on to *Semiramide*, at the premièr the title was sung by Isabelle Colbran who had married Rossini in 1822. The extract we heard was the duet between Semiramide and Arsace in the Hanging Gardens of Babylon; this was sung by Dame Joan Sutherland and Marilyn Horne,

conducted by Richard Bonyng. This focused our attention on the forthcoming musical weekend at Daventry where Dame Joan will be present with her husband. *The Journey to Rheims* is unknown to most of us. We heard part of the finale which was so attractive to make us want to explore what appears to be a wonderful work.

Our final illustration was Matilde's aria *Then our love is hopeless the future holds nothing* from *William Tell*, Rossini's last opera. David reminded us that it is a mammoth five hour work, little wonders it is not often performed.

So a wonderful presentation by a man who knows how to share his enthusiasm for a great composer.

The next presentation was given by Arthur Baker (Bulletin Editor) on Respighi, the most

successful Italian orchestral composer since Vivaldi. Many in the audience were only familiar with The Roman trilogy (*Fountains of Rome, the Pines of Rome and Roman Festivals*) and *The Birds*.

Respighi, who saw himself primarily as a writer of songs, achieved his first success with the song *Nebbie* which is about fog. Like many before and since Respighi did not profit from the fruits of his labour; he sold his song to his publisher for 20 lira who went on to sell 300,000 copies!

An early orchestral work was the *Burlesca for Orchestra* (composed 1906 and recorded in 2001). This work is based on a form used by Bach and foreshadowed the *Fountains of Rome*.

Respighi wrote only one symphony the *Sinfonia Dramatica*, composed in 1914. There were clear influences of Mahler and Debussy and in particular the *Sinfonia Domestica* of Richard Strauss. There was only time for a short extract but this gave a completely different impression of Respighi than the generally received one.

Many of us were surprised to learn that Respighi wrote nine operas. We heard the opening of his most successful one, *La Fiamma* (The Flame), which was composed in 1934, 2 years before his death.

Then followed a very interesting work *The Concerto for Five*, a work for oboe, trumpet, violin, double bass and strings. This work, which was composed in 1933, illustrated his complete



Mick Birchall

mastery of the use of modest forces and with ample scope for each soloist to show his skill and virtuosity.

Arthur completed his programme with an extended extract from Respighi's last ballet *Belkis, Queen of Sheba*. This ballet was a lavish spectacular production for around 1000 performers. It only ran for 11 performances and has never been produced again. Surely a time for a revival!

With his dedicated research and a presentation with illustrations of a wide variety of musical genre Arthur convinced us that Respighi is a much-underrated composer.

Having satisfied our physical needs, Mick Birchall then turned his attention to our souls! with a musical presentation devoted to "The legacy of Torquato Tasso". Tasso's name is familiar to those who know Liszt's Symphonic poems such as *Les Preludes* or *Mazeppa*. The music programme started with a performance of Liszt's *Tasso* which seemed to go on and on, never knowing quite when to stop. This was probably quite appropriate when we came to hear about Torquato Tasso's own creation the epic poem *Jerusalem Liberated*, written in 1580 and which, we learned, went on for 40,000 lines, or was that words?

Torquato's own life was a bit of an epic even though he only lived for 51 years. He was born in Sorrento in 1544 and was later sent to study law and philosophy at Padua, where he published his first work, a romantic poem *Rinaldo*, whose character appears again later on.. Whilst at the court of Duke Alphonso II d'Este at Ferraro, he began work on his masterpiece. Like many artistes, he suffered financial deprivation that led to mental instability, as a result of which he was confined in an asylum for seven years. Whilst there he wrote many verses and philosophical dialogues; but on his release, on the intercession of Prince Vincenzo, he followed his new patron to Mantua. Pope Clement VIII summoned him to Rome for recognition as Poet Laureate, but unfortunately he was taken ill on arrival and died very soon thereafter.

Not surprisingly, Tasso's epic poem, which has been translated into many languages, covers a wide range of issues but largely features the entanglement between the knight, *Rinaldo* and a witch *Armida*. Many composers have drawn

inspiration from the story and as a result we heard a programme of music in very varied styles, from madrigals and the baroque to 18th Century classical with Haydn and Jomelli, the romantics of Niels Gade, Brahms and Dvorak, through to the twentieth century with Hubert Parry and ballet from Malcolm Arnold. These composers added their own interpretations of the story choosing quite different emotional perspectives from deep rage, "I burn, I rave, I shudder; there are a hundred furies in my heart; may my torments shake you; avenge, avenge the betrayal of my love", to quite romantic moments "I gather thee, rosebud, so tender and rare; thy sweetness I wind in my shining hair; and there in thy beauty thou gleamest". By now Mick's discoveries had become those of the audience and provided fine entertainment and plenty of food for thought!

At the end of a wonderful day, Mick Birchall was presented with a certificate recording the fact that he was chef of the day, also a bottle of white wine from New Zealand rejoicing in the name of "Cat's pee on a gooseberry bush"!

This report was prepared by Gordon Wainwright, John Davies and Graham Kiteley

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SUSSEX REGIONAL GROUP

2004 was another enjoyable year visiting affiliated societies and renewing friendships and making new ones. There are so many people I should thank individually but it would take up a lot of space. I should like to use this Bulletin to express my thanks to all the Secretaries, Chairpersons, Technical Advisors, Committee Members and all members who helped to make my visits so enjoyable.

I started my 'musical' tour on home ground in January with a tribute to Women composers:- 'Here's to the Ladies!', including such talented ladies as Doreen Carwithan (Mrs Mary Alwyn), Clara Schumann, Ruth Gipps, Fanny Mendelssohn and the redoubtable Dame Ethel Smyth.

A slight hiccup occurred in February as I underwent a triple Heart Bypass, fortunately this was successful and I was soon on the road to full recovery. Then I was on the road to Battle for our Pyke House Residential Music Weekend at the end of March. I neglected to submit a full report on what was a most enjoyable weekend exploring the music and life of Carl Maria von Weber. My first visit in West Wickham, this was in fact my first visit. A very appreciative audience were regaled with a look at 'Sussex Composers' such as Sir Arnold Bax, John Ireland, Frank Bridge, Ruth Gipps and Sir Hubert Parry.

Fast forward to October for a visit to Portslade who also got 'Sussex Composers' amended to include local composer Havergal Brian. Also in October I stepped in at short notice to Haywards Heath and greatly enjoyed their welcome. I hope they in turn enjoyed my talk on Sir Adrian Boult. October was busy as on the 21st I journeyed down to Bognor Regis again to give the Adrian Boult talk.

PYKE HOUSE, BATTLE MEETING

No. 53 30th-31st OCTOBER, 2004.

For the purposes of the weekend Pyke House was re-christened 'Chez Pyke House' to complement the theme for the meeting:- 'Paris: The Music of a Great City'. As on most previous weekends, the weather was kind as members and friends travelled to Battle from all points of the compass to celebrate the music, the composers, musicians and teachers who lived, worked or visited the capital city which was founded in AD 987. Of course, the French cuisine could not be overlooked and the Pyke House staff served up an excellent French meal for the Saturday evening,

washed down with ample quantities of French wine!

The four presenters introduced a vast amount of music and it is impossible to do them all justice in this space. EILEEN TAYLOR took the first session tapping into the rich vein of French opera. With pertinent comments tier, Bizet and Saint-Saens. The hour and a half flew by as the arias, duets and ballet music entranced us all.

For Part Two of her survey, after that meal, EILEEN introduced music by Offenbach; *Orpheus in the Underworld* and his little known *Voyage to the Moon*. After a short break, Eileen introduced the prologue and first story, The Mechanical Doll from OFFENBACH'S *Tales of Hoffman*. Then it was off to Spain with the stunning Joseph Losey film of BIZET'S 'Carmen' with Placido Domingo.

JONATHAN PARRIS had the task of presenting music written pre- and post- revolution taking as his dates; 1770-1789 and 1789-1809. With his usual skill and well researched facts Jonathan in his two part programme gave us music by : Gossec, Saint-George, Leduc, Stamitz, Cambini, Mozart, Dalayrac, Krumpholtz, Haydn, Jadin, Mehul, Dusec and Cherubini.

ALAN THOMAS presented a study of the life and pupils of Nadia Boulanger, pianist, organist, conductor and composer. Boulanger had hundreds of students in Paris and America. From an amazing list of students Alan introduced works by Bernstein, Berkeley, Copeland, Virgil Thomson, Glass and Piston. Poulenc although not a student sought Boulanger's advise on organ techniques. Nadia herself was in duets with Dinu Linatti in BRAHMS Waltzes. To illustrate her own compositional style a piece for Cello and Piano was played.

ALAN GILBY took the final, after Sunday lunch slot and took us on a tour of Paris in a programme of entertaining and wide ranging musical examples and, as always with Alan a few surprises. Composers included; Ibert, Telemann, Leighton Lucas, Offenbach, Gershwin, Lutyens, Fauré and Haydn.

The traditional raffle produced more prizes than ever; Tea and those wonderful homemade biscuits rounded off a very full weekend with many comments such as "the best ever!" Very encouraging and rewarding for the organisers.

Alan Thomas

WEST MIDDLESEX GROUP

The WEST MIDDLESEX GROUP'S latest venture "Music of Old Vienna" was held during October and December 2004.

The first of a bi-annual series of Festival programmes began in 1988 with a "Festival of Scandinavian Music" the product of John Watson and Alan Ball of Ealing Recorded Music Society.

The nine festivals since 1988 have all been conceived to promote not only the involvement of seven societies in a joint venture, but to encourage reciprocal relationship by host members with visitations to fellow societies during the course of these series. The Chairman of the Group is Denis Jiggins of Ickenham and there are seven individual societies in the Group. A presentation was made at each of the participating societies, all the events were presented either by Denis Jiggins or by Denis Ball.

To many, "Music of Old Vienna" is synonymous with Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven and Schubert during the latter part of the 18th Century and the first 30 years of the following. Towards the end of the 19th Century, Viennese composers such as Brahms, Bruckner and the Strauss family began to evolve a more personalised and expressive style of so-called Romanticism - encompassing other art forms such as painting and literature.

These composers, together with those of the late Classical era, were given due regard and pride of place. However, we have not overlooked those composers of the early 20th Century, such as Mahler, and those of the second Viennese School, represented here by Schoenberg, worthy of inclusion but who adopted an uncompromising style, which determined transition from the earlier Classical and Romantic periods.

The PERIVALE RECORD CIRCLE held the first programme on October 7th 2004; this included a Beethoven overture, a Mahler song, a Haydn trio, Mozart's *Piano Sonata K280* and Schubert's *Symphony no. 3*. The programme by the UXBRIDGE RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY included music by Brahms and Schubert, a Symphony by Krommer, Mozart's *Piano Concerto No. 15 K450* and waltzes by Lanner and Johan Strauss.

The RUISLIP GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY'S programme included rare pieces by Moscheles, Pixis and Beethoven and a movement of Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* and extracts from Haydn's *The Seasons*.

The fourth programme was given by the ICKENHAM GRAMOPHONE CLUB included rare works by Josef Strauss, Albrechtsberger, and Zeller with movements from works by Mozart, Beethoven, Bruckner and Brahms. The programme by the EALING RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY started with an overture by Von Suppé, and included extracts from works by Bruchner and Lehar, with Beethoven's *Piano Sonata no. 24* and Haydn's *Symphony no. 48*.

The HAYES RECORDED MUSIC CLUB presented a programme with Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder*, Mahler's *Fourth Symphony* (mov.4) and Mozart's *Symphony no. 39*, together with works by Johann Strauss.

The last programme of the Festival was given on November 25th by the HESTON COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, RECORDED MUSIC SECTION. This included Haydn's *Symphony no. 60*, Mozart's *Piano Sonata K570* and favourite music by Mahler and Beethoven. It opened with a Strauss waltz and the Festival concluded with a bang with Von Suppé's *Light Cavalry Overture*.



Who is this Conductor? - see page 26

CROYDON RMS

DIAMOND JUBILEE

By the time you read this FRMS Bulletin, Croydon Recorded Music Society (formerly Croydon Gramophone Society) will be exactly sixty years old. In the early spring of 1945, a small group of Music lovers, led by their Chairman-designate, the indefatigable Leslie Roberts (1903-1963), got together to form a Gramophone Society, and the minutes of that decisive meeting are extant. However, more revealing is a diary entry of an elderly lady, who had taught at the Royal Normal College and Academy of Music for the Blind in nearby Upper Norwood. She had recently engaged a relative of Croydon Gramophone Society's founder (i.e. Les Roberts) to "Do" for her and noted:

"Leslie is 'Gramophone-mad' and last March, set-up a kind of record club, having persuaded the vicar to let them rent the church hall once-a-month. I must say that I admire young Leslie's enthusiasm, but I doubt if this 'Gramophone Society' (as he calls it) will last very long. To my mind, it'll turn out to be a 'Nine Day Wonder'!"

Thankfully, the diarist's prediction was wide-of-the-mark, and although CRMS is not as large as it once was, the group that Leslie Roberts and his fellow music lovers founded still exists to provide its present day members with regular evenings of musical enjoyment.

Leslie Roberts, was highly regarded in his native Croydon. Among other things, he did a great deal of work on behalf of "The Friends" of the large local hospital, where one of the Gramophone Society's members had become a "Long-stay" patient. As a result of visiting this disabled member in hospital, Les was persuaded by a prominent local councillor, (Alderman Albert Damerall- who later became our Vice-President,) to become a "Friend" of the Hospital. Les became such an enthusiastic supporter of "The Friends" that he and several other Gramophone Society members were invited to produce programmes for the Hospital Radio system. They also went on to organise special recorded music recitals, to raise funds for the Friends' Group.

Nowadays, it is not uncommon for suitably talented members of Recorded Music Societies to be involved with Hospital Radio, but for a protagonist of a recorded music interest group to participate in that way during the 1950s was remarkably innovative. In the chapel of our local, greatly expanded, "Mayday University Hospital,"

there is a brass plaque, commemorating the work that Leslie did through - and on behalf of - the Gramophone Society he founded. The fact that all the other memorials in the chapel commemorate Doctors, Nurses, Guardians and Benefactors gives unique distinction to this memorial to someone remembered solely for his involvement in recorded music.

What The Society Has Meant.

Sir Hugh Robertson once said of "his" Glasgow Orpheus Choir, "Finding the reason for its success would be like trying to strain the blue out of the sky" and much the same could be said of Croydon Recorded Music Society. What can be said, however, is that its success has been due entirely to the talent, enthusiasm and loyalty of its members, over several generations. After the War (and throughout the National Service era) our numbers were often swelled by de-mobbed Forces personnel, who had perhaps encountered classical music for the first time whilst in uniform, and wished to continue and develop that interest. Now, of course, even the last (and youngest) of the 'Conscript' generation are well into their sixties, and the average age of members reflects this historical fact. Yet whatever we lack in numbers these days is more than compensated for by the same commitment, collective knowledge and enthusiasm that has always distinguished our Society — and, doubtless all the societies affiliated to the Federation

Some Statistics And Connections.

Since the Croydon Recorded Music Society was founded in 1945, there have probably been well over 1,500 programmes for its members to enjoy, and part of that enjoyment has been due to the sheer variety of programmes in each successive season. The Society has always been a friendly and inclusive group; as affirmative and appreciative of the virtues of its 'Home-produced' talent as of the considerable qualities of illustrious guest presenters. Indeed, for the present writer, one of the most moving — and in its way, unexpectedly illuminating programmes was given nearly forty years ago, by a member who had a Learning Disability. The pleasure it gave him to be invited to present the programme was more than reciprocated by the enjoyment the finished programme gave to his fellow-members.

We were fortunate in having as our President - almost from the Society's inception - Sir Adrian Boulton. He paid two guest visits; the first during our tenth anniversary season, and a second very different — but equally engrossing — appearance, twelve

years later. The first evening had an unexpected twist, since we had been informed it was to promote his new recording of *The Planets Suite*, by Holst. But much to our — and presumably the record company's surprise, Sir Adrian announced he would be analysing the work using the earlier 78rpm discs he had made in 1945. Reproduced within this article is a picture of our Honorary Technician (and subsequently Vice-President) the late Harry Rushbrooke, with Sir Adrian, taken on that very evening 50 years ago. (By the way, Harry is holding, the first disc of the set, "Mars." He said, afterwards, his greatest worry was that the heavily modulated grooves might necessitate re-sharpening the thorn needle before it reached the end of a subsequent side!)

This sketch would be unbalanced without mentioning our "Extra Mural Activities," which included a visit to the Dolmetsch Work shops, at Haslemere, in Surrey. For those fortunate enough to participate in this excursion, almost 50 years ago, it was a unique opportunity to hear Carl Dolmetsch expound on his father Arnold's musical philosophy and life's work. Members were also privileged to hear an ensemble which included as a performer, the legendary Arnold Dolmetsch's widow, Mabel (an important figure in the founding of the Workshop and Studio in 1917.)

Marking Anniversaries.

In 1995, to mark our fiftieth anniversary, we commissioned a piece of music from students at King's College Department of Composition, which received its premiere after a celebratory meal. This year, to celebrate our Diamond anniversary, we shall be commemorating the work of a "Local" composer, William Hurlstone. This is especially appropriate, because a road very close to the place where we meet is named after him. No lesser figure than Vaughan Williams described his Royal College of Music contemporary as "The English Schubert." This programme will be given on 1st April and our Guest Presenter will be Mr John Humphries who is well-known for his advocacy of the composer. I daresay that he will be as delighted his audience to be able to present this tribute to "A Local Son" in the town where he wrote many of his

mature and durable works.

Current Celebrations.

To celebrate our Diamond Jubilee Season, the Committee invited four experienced long-standing members to explore various aspects of the Society's long history. For the first part of this "Tetralogy," Yvette McKinnell (our current Chairman) researched the archives of the society, and put together an intriguing and entertaining programme to mark this musical and social Phenomenon of 60 years ago.

Her presentation sought to document and explain this post-war "Thirst" for the medium that nowadays — thanks to so many formats and more affordable recordings — we take for granted. Yvette's programme evoked the spirit of the Recorded Music Society Movement splendidly, by introducing examples of diverse works and some rare recordings, as well as lots of absorbing information, and some amusing anecdotes relating to the Society's early years. It goes without saying that this programme gave a fascinating over-view of the Recorded Music Society Movement itself. Affiliates within a reasonable distance of Croydon might like to consider inviting Yvette to present a revised and more generalised version of this programme to their group.

Adrian Falks, Vice-Chairman, Croydon RMS

EASTBOURNE RMS

The Annual General Meeting on Thursday, 22nd April, 2004, brought our 57th Season to the close of what has been yet another very happy and successful one. Unfortunately, we have lost one or two of our elderly Members, but are still blessed with a membership in the mid-eighties.

Valerie Masterson returned to us to open our Season on 11th September, 2003, (this, incidentally, by popular request) — and was her usual effervescent self. She gave us a most inspiring programme - which was of immense

Mystery Picture (p.24)

The Picture (taken off an old East German video) is of David Oistrakh trying his hand at conducting. (Contributed by Reg Williamson)

appeal to everyone.

We also had a return visit from David Homewood, an Eastbourne man, who specialises in old gramophones and phonographs. He has several different programmes, so we are hoping he will return to us in the not-too-distant future, with a third Programme.

Several of our own Members did us proud once again - Clive Wilkes's subject being "Prokofiev – the Prodigal Son," whilst Robert Milnes, a professional pianist and teacher and a very valuable Member of our Society, spoke to us on "Elgar and the Gramophone."

One of our outstanding evenings was when another of our old friends, Adrian Falks, presented "The -Academy-in Arcadia"—(a unique Academy of Music in S.E. London for blind people.) We knew that this particular subject would be of immense interest to our local Eastbourne Blind Society so we invited a dozen or so of their Members to come to us in their minibus. Some were partially-sighted and others not so fortunate, but they thoroughly enjoyed themselves. It transpired that one completely blind elderly gentleman had a brother who had been a pupil at the Academy. This was a great delight to both our Presenter, Adrian Falks, and, of course, to our visitor, who was very pleased to have the opportunity to meet Adrian. From that brief encounter a new friendship developed between the two.

Our Christmas Party, with seasonal eats, wine, music, and competitions, was once more enjoyed by all of our Members. Toward the end of the Season, Christopher Fifield talked to us about Kathleen Ferrier, who left us so tragically just fifty years ago.

Eileen Howells (Mrs), Hon Secretary

KEYNSHAM RMS

In its 38th season the society has a membership of 32 and has been meeting in its local library now for 20 years. During that time it has happily never experienced any possibilities of having to close down. Sadly last year three members passed away, however we were delighted to welcome three new ones, two of whom were introduced by existing members.

We have retained long associations with our neighbouring societies, including those of Bristol and Bath, through the inviting and providing of programme presenters.

In addition to its programmes the Society will usually arrange a visit to a live concert

performance during the season and to encourage members to reunite in our summer break we share a day's coach outing with another society. Last year we visited Evesham and enjoyed a cruise on the River Avon. Another annual event in our calendar for many years now is a lunch that this season took place on the 26th January and was attended by 26 of our members. Amongst our guests was a former society member, the Federation's vice-Chairman Ronald Bleach, who kindly presented us with a programme of light music after the meal.

Having served my society as a secretary for more than twenty seasons my greatest satisfaction today is the friendly relationship that has developed amongst my fellow members with much respect and support constantly shown for one another. I hope that officials in other societies can obtain similar satisfaction whilst performing their duties.

Jonathan Cooper; Hon. Secretary.

NORTH WALSHAM Opera Appreciation Club

The 2004 season concluded with a "Members' Choice" programme which was followed by a wine and canapé buffet much enjoyed by all attending.

The Club remains over-subscribed - however, at the Annual General Meeting a proposal to seek an alternative venue and expand membership numbers was not accepted. An overwhelming majority of members indicated that they were content and happy with the Club's existing profile, an aspect they feared might be put in jeopardy if the Club were to be re-sited, enlarged or re-formulated.

There were meetings throughout the year listening to a varied programme compiled mainly from French, German and Italian composers, which just about covered everyone's taste.

The renowned opera expert and musicologist, John Steane, made a welcome return visit featuring the Swedish tenor Jussi Bjorling in his "Outstanding Singers" programme. John is to spend some time in North Walsham again in 2005 and will present another "Outstanding Singers" programme in the Autumn Season.

In the summer, some members traveled to the Puccini Festival at Torre del Lago in Tuscany - some to the Arena in Verona and others joined together with the Norwich Opera Club's hugely successful excursion to Budapest.

Supportive friends from the Norwich Opera Club gave presentations to North Walsham and North Walsham presenters will be returning the

compliment in 2005. This exchange of presenters and special interests is a feature highly favoured by the Club Chairman, not only because it fosters a spirit of friendliness and co-operation but because it is highly cost effective.

The compact disc lending library ("The Allan Goodlet Collection") was re-constructed. A number of opera excerpts were deleted and the male and female content was uplifted. The library now contains almost 100 discs with 40% of its content devoted to the young singers of today.

The 2005 programme has been in circulation for some time and features another 24 meetings, most of which will be presentations of full length operas, the others being mostly "Outstanding Singers" and "Encounters with Composers" programmes.

Excursions to Royal Opera House Covent Garden and London's Royal Albert Hall are to take place in the first half of 2005 and the committee is considering whether or not visits to a European Opera House or the Metropolitan in New York City should be featured in the Autumn Season

2004 was a successful year with 72% of highly enthusiastic Subscription Members attending regularly. We look forward to much of the same in 2005!

Enid O'Reilly, Secretary

STONE RMS Celebrates its 60th. Anniversary

The S.R.M.S. held a Celebration Dinner at the Wedgwood College Barlaston, Staffordshire on Friday 12th. November 2004. It is interesting to delve into the society's archives to gain an insight into the early years.

On a raw November evening, a dozen music-lovers met informally in the Conservative Rooms in Stone and took the decision to form a Gramophone Society. It was a decision which quickly brought a wealth of interest and colour to the drab war-time way of life. The date was November 17th 1944. Only eleven days later the inaugural meeting of the Stone Gramophone Society took place, and officers and officials were elected, many of whom were to serve the Society for many years. Indeed our current President has been a member for 58 years! The ranks were quickly swelled by enthusiasts drawn from a wide area, and fortnightly recitals by members or visiting musicians (plus the all-important break for tea and biscuits) went ahead. Initially war-time rationing still operated and it was necessary to obtain coupons for the tea and sugar!

The first annual subscription rate was half a crown, and the first ever recital on December 8th

A NEW APPROACH TO GRAMOPHONE HISTORY

Wars, Dictators and the Gramophone 1898-1945

By Eric Charles Blake

#####

320 pages - illustrated, laminated hard cover - ISBN 1 85072 292 7

Price £10.00 plus: UK p & p £2.80; Overseas p & p £3.80

This book describes the international role of the gramophone from the Spanish-American War in Cuba and the Philippines to the end of the Second World War.

Military, political and social history are called upon in tracing the rise of the gramophone from its unsophisticated beginnings to its achievements as a serious cultural Medium and a significant channel of mass communication.

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1944, was received by an appreciative audience of forty-four people. Membership peaked at some 60 persons but, in recent years, has stabilised at around 40 members.



The original equipment consisted of a record player with the pick-up signal fed into the amplifier and speaker of a portable radio to produce tolerable quality and volume which was modest but adequate for a small room. For several months the owners of this early modest equipment carried it to the meetings to allow recitals to be given. Numerous fund-raising events were organised and we were able to purchase their own equipment which gave good service for many years.

The Decca Company introduced members to the modern LP in 1950, and entirely new equipment was bought and installed to cope with the developments in recording. It has been the Society's constant aim to reach a high standard of record reproduction, and no efforts have been spared to obtain the most modern equipment over the years including new stereo equipment in the 1964/65 Season. Today we have equipment probably as good as that of any society, thanks in part to the enthusiasm of one of our technical members.

In these modern times we have professional recitalists from afar to augment recitals from our own members and an interchange of speakers with other local societies. Our social events are a little more sophisticated than those of the past with visits to Opera and Symphony Concerts in Birmingham and Liverpool.

Many societies are obviously hit by an aging membership but we still manage to attract the odd new member and with a dedicated committee at the helm we have confidence in the future of the S.R.M.S.

Roy Windley Hon. Secretary.

Book Review:

Wars, Dictators and the Gramophone 1898-1945

by Eric Charles Blake, pub. Sessions, York
details see advertisement on p 28.

Despite the descriptive title, I did not really know what to expect when I started to read this book. In fact I found it to be one of the most fascinating books I had come across for many years. The gramophone record was born at about the same time, 1898, as the US went to war over Cuba and for the first time records were used for morale - boosting patriotic purposes to aid warfare.

This book however is much more than a description of such a use of recording. It provides a detailed and scholarly history of recording in the first half of the last century in the context of the wars which disfigured this time and of the dictators (and their musical tastes) and their effects on recorded music. It also outlines the technical development of recordings, and the commercial history of the record companies in all the major countries. This is an astonishingly wide brief and the amount of research which must have been carried out is mind boggling.

One fascinating characteristic of the book is the recital of strange facts. For example, The Daily Mail persuaded Rudyard Kipling and Sir Arthur Sullivan to collaborate in producing a piece called *The Absent-Minded Beggar* in aid of dependents of soldiers fighting in the Boer war — this when recorded was the first recording over two sides. At one time during World War II, the shortage of shellac was such that when a record was bought you had to trade in two discs for re-cycling! The strange history of the infamous Horst-Wessel song is provided, the music is actually derived from music from Méhul's opera *Josef*; an English version of the song was recorded by Decca for use by Mosley's British Union of Fascists.

Hitler's influence was illustrated by a description of an exhibition of 'degenerate art' which included recordings of music by Mendelssohn (Jewish) and atonal composers, not to mention jazz. By contrast, Mussolini's musical tastes were comparatively civilised. The description of the progress of wars are detailed but concise. The author's own experiences in post war Germany were very interesting.

The book is well written and has good illustrations; it is strongly recommended. AB

Uneasy Listening

(A caricature guide to 20th century composers) – by John Minnion

People used to rush out at Christmas to buy the latest annual of Giles cartoons. For me this book has many of the same attractions: appealing and amusing illustrations to complement pithy and insightful commentary, and a come-again quality which encourages me to remember where I have put it. Giles was commenting on the news or the latest fashion. John Minnion is tracing the uneasy path of music through the 20th Century, from the late flowering of Romanticism and Nationalism, through experimentation, to the days when so many of us lament the passing of the melody.

He considers the contributions of 105 composers, many of them household names and box-office attractions; many I must confess are new to me. Each has his (or her) caricature accompanied by a usually sympathetic and always perceptive commentary on their contribution. Composer Robert Saxton says in the foreword: “It is uncanny how someone whom I have never met, who draws only from photographs, can portray me in what is a public situation, and yet bring to the fore aspects of my character which I presumed remained hidden in public.

An interesting feature of the book is that for each year of the century John lists a small number of works composed in that year, starting with ‘Tosca,’ ‘The Dream of Gerontius’ and Mahler’s 4th Symphony in 1900, and ending with two works by Mark-Anthony Turnage, both written in 1999, ‘The Silver Tassie’ and ‘About Time.’

The book is fertile ground for new presentation ideas, and for those of us always on the look-out for cryptic titles it is a treasure-chest.

The book is divided into seven chronological ‘chapters,’ each with an introduction, and starting with ‘Decline and Fall of the Romantic Empire: Severe Classical Finn meets all-embracing Romantic Jew’. (Guess who in both cases!). We then look at the relative merits and success of the various ways forward proposed by Arnold Schoenberg on the one hand Igor Stravinsky on the other; we consider the emergence of popular culture and the flirtations of serious music with jazz, followed by the impositions of the repressive



John Minnion

political ideologies of the time. We consider the brief post-war flourishing of exiled European composers in America, while, back in Europe, Karlheinz Stockhausen was declaring that ‘by the mid 70s, no-one will listen to Bach and the classics any more’, Pierre Boulez was ‘constructing a system to do the composer’s job without involving his personality’, and John Cage was composing *4 minutes 33 seconds*. In the final chapter, Supermarket of Sound: Cacophony meets the lost chord,’ the author concludes, quite rightly, that 20th Century music requires a new way of listening; that, though less easily accessible than the literary qualities of 19th century music, trying to access the colours and textures and sensual qualities of the sound of 20th century music might be worth the effort.

Don’t be fooled by the whimsical titles. This is a serious commentary on the difficult progress of music through a century when composers have had to contend with political interference, the new phenomenon of music all around, competition from popular music and the fact that the general public can sit at home listening to fine performances of the greatest music of the 18th and 19th centuries. Perhaps the biggest stumbling block they have had to contend with is the fact that the public at large continues to expect that music will be good to listen to. And John Minnion presents all of this in an eminently accessible and enjoyable way.

‘Uneasy Listening’ can be purchased at £12-50 by post from:

John Minnion, 65 Dudlow Lane, Liverpool
L18 2EY Tel: 0151 722 8950

Or via John’s website at £11-50: (www.checkmatebooks.com). E-mail address: contact@checkmatebooks.com

Also available by the same author in a similar, style the self-explanatory:

The Sideways Guide to 100 Essential Composers £11 (£10 via the website)

And, just published in December 2004: *Hitler’s List* An illustrated guide to ‘degenerates, Jews, bolshevists and other undesirable geniuses’ — the story of the hijacking, for a few years, of one of the world’s most civilised cultures.

Don’t forget that via the same website, John Minnion will supply without charge excellent quality caricatures of the composer(s) of your choice. Don’t forget to say that you are a member of the FRMS.

Tony Baines

The BBC Proms Guide to Great Concertos

Edited by Nicholas Kenyon
faber and faber; pb; pp301; £8.99

This is one of series which includes BBC Proms Guide To Great Symphonies, Opera, Ballet etc.



Although much classical music can be enjoyed just by relaxing and listening to it, there comes a time when one wishes to find out just a little more about the composer, the performers and the items themselves, without going into too much technical detail involving the the use of too much musical terminology.

Nicholas Kenyon, the editor of the BBC has collected together some notes written by a large team of well-known and brilliant writers, including such names as Anthony Burton, Piers Burton-Page, Malcolm Heyes, Michael Kennedy and John Tyrell.

The contributions were originally commissioned by BBC Proms Publications to be incorporated into the Prom Printed Programmes.

Each section begins with some biographical notes about the composer and this is followed by easy to read commentaries on all of the that composer's concertos.

The 51 composers included range from John Adams, to William Walton. At the rear of the book, is a useful Chronology of Works, dating from 1717, (Bach's *Violin Concerto BWV 1042*) through to 1996, (Gubaidulina's *Viola Concerto*). It is interesting to see from these how the Concerto has changed and developed as time has passed.

Dates when works were revised are also given.

Many of the notes include details of when the works were first included in a Prom Programme and details of who the soloists were as well how the audience accepted the works.

The only criticism I can offer is that there are no musical illustrations of the thematic material or any photographs of the performers or composers but this is more than compensated for by the high quality of these carefully constructed notes.

Some people may feel that the notes provided with classical CDs may be adequate for their purpose but a view of this book may quickly persuade that the addition of this tome to their library may add relevant and interesting information not thus provided.

John Kemsey-Bourne

Respighi —La compagna sommersa

(The Sunken Bell) Orch Nat de Montpellier
Cond: Friedemann Layer. CD-Accord 476 1884

At last we have the premier world recording of what was probably the most successful of Ottorino Respighi's operas and it has been well worth



waiting for. Respighi fell in love with the character of Rautendelien, the water nymph of Hauptmann's poem. He shows her frivolity, love, egocentricity, lack of care for others, cunning, magic powers and, finally, her magnanimity.

Respighi's own nature was compounded of fantasy, realism and morality, which certainly accounts for his fascination with her, as he matches her and her fairy world against the solid reality of Enrico's loving wife and children.

This is a recording of the 2003 festival performance, with all the immediacy that brings, and the 140 minutes are blessed by two fine sopranos and an excellent orchestra, which makes the most of the brilliant scoring. Rautendelein is sung by Laura Aikin in an inspired portrayal, her fine voice perfectly conveying the fabulous and mercurial temperament of the water nymph.

The story begins with Enrico, the bell caster, being injured, when elves cause the bell he is bringing to a new chapel to fall to the bottom of the lake. Despite warnings not to meddle with humans, Rautendelein tends him, using her magic powers to persuade him to leave his family and to make a fabulous bell for a pantheistic temple. Though anathematised by the pastor, he agrees to this, provided the sunken bell does not ring. Deserted by him, Enrico's wife throws herself into the lake, causing the bell to sound.

Finally, having lost his family, he searches for Rautendelein and she forgives his abandonment of her. Respighi's concern to convey the supernatural both musically and visually extended to detailed stage directions, with all but one act having the scenery and lighting of a world of fantasy. There are passages of great drama, while Enrico is torn between the charm of the supernatural world and the reality of his wife and children. Most poignant of all is the music accompanying the ghostly appearance of his children, holding the bowl containing the bitter tears of his wife, The sunken bell had pealed tragically from the lake's depths as, in suicide, her body grazed it.

Anthony Barker(c)

FRMS PRESENTERS PANEL

Societies are invited to recommend successful presenters for inclusion in this section. Please note, for those charging a fee there is a modest charge of £10 per entry per annum. An entry on the FRMS Website is also offered free.

Officers and committee of the FRMS are experienced presenters and are generally available to give presentations within reasonable distance of home. Contact them direct (see inside back cover). In addition, many record companies are able to give presentations, especially the smaller firms. Contact the companies direct.

This list is intended to be a general guide to programme planning. Reasonable care is taken to ensure accuracy of the details given but neither the FRMS nor the Editor can accept responsibility for any circumstances subsequent on the use of the list.



Owen Balls

1 Wilkinson Way, North
Walsham, Norfolk NR28 9BB
Tel: 01692 402737

Chairman: North Walsham Opera Appreciation Club.

Owen has attended courses at the RCM and is an experienced presenter of Opera and Opera Singers. Special subjects include:

the "Bel Canto Operas" –

Donizetti – Bellini

"La Stupenda" – a profile of
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"The Art of" Franco Corelli

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Ian Boughton

BA(Hons)Mus, MIAM,

25 Bearton Green, Hitchin,

Herts SG5 1UN

Tel: 01462 434318

Mobile: 07703 584152

E-mail: Ianrboughton@aol.com

During the 1920s, Rutland Boughton was the most widely talked about composer in England, surpassing that of Edward Elgar and Vaughan Williams. His Festivals were the first of their kind in England and his opera "The Immortal Hour" broke a world record that is still

held today.

Ian Boughton, a grandson of the composer, gives illustrative presentations to societies.

Expenses only; no fee.

Andrew Downes

2 Church St, Hagley,
Stourbridge, West Midlands,
DY9 0NA

Tele/fax: 01562 886625

Email:

downlyn@globalnet.co.uk

Website: [www.us-](http://www.us-ers.globalnet.co.uk/~downlyn)

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Recently described in a Czech Philharmonic Orchestra brochure as a composer "ranking today among the internationally acclaimed

personalities" Andrew's music has been performed in India, USA, Austria, France, Czech Republic, Mexico and Israel and all over the British Isles. Performers of his music have included the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Sarah Walker and John Mitchinson, and as well as CD, his music has been on BBC TV and radio, Czech, Dutch, Austrian, French, Italian, and Chinese stations. Andrew's music is always immediately communicative and melodically memorable. Andrew gives presentations to societies about his music illustrated by CD

recordings.

Titles, fee and expenses by negotiation.

The Dvorak Society

Promotes the music of all Czech and Slovak composers, past and present. A few of its members are invited on occasion to give talks and lectures to societies at various locations.

Enquiries to: Shawn Pullman, Hon Sec, The Dvorak Society, 41 Priors Road, Tadley, RG26 4QL. Tel: 0118 981 2716

No fee, but expenses may be requested.

The Elgar Society

The Society will arrange for experienced presenters to give illustrated talks on general or specific topics concerning Elgar's life and work. Contact Branch Secretaries to arrange a speaker from the Society.

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Dr Relf Clark, 61 Torridge Drive, Didcot, Oxfordshire. OX11 7QZ.

Tel: 01235 813257

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Hywel Davies, 24 College Grove, Malvern. WR14 3HP. Tel: 01684 562692

North West

Mrs Pat Hurst, 60 Homewood Rd., Manchester M22 4DW.

Tel: 0161 998 4404
 Thames Valley
 Jon Beech, 38 Cedar Crescent,
 Thame, Oxon. OX9 2AU
 Tel: 01628 475897
 Southern England
 Chris Conally, 17 Lonsdale Ave.,
 Cosham, Hants. PO2PU
 Tel: 02392 389410
 South West England
 /South Wales
 Richard Kirk, Jesama, Hurn
 Lane, Berrow, Burnham-on-Sea,
 Somerset, TA8 2QT
 Tel: 01278 751519
 Yorkshire
 Robert Seager, 28 Alton Way,
 Mapplewell, Barnsley, S.Yorks.
 S75 6EY.
 Tel: 01226 383053
 Scotland
 Sharron Bassett, 9 George
 Street, Dunfermline, Fife.
 KY11 4TQ.
 Tel: 01383 727491
 Christopher Fifield
 162, Venner Rd, London
 SE26 5JQ Tel: 020 8289 6786
 Mobile: 07752 273558
 E-Mail: [christopherfifield@
 ntlworld.com](mailto:christopherfifield@ntlworld.com)
 Primarily a freelance conductor of
 30 years experience. Spent 12 years
 as a member of the Music Staff at
 Glyndebourne. Director of Music at
 University College London
 1980-1990.
 His books include *The Life and
 Works of Max Bruch* (Gollancz
 1988), *True Artist and True Friend.
 A Biography of Hans Richter* (OUP
 1993), and *Klever Kaff: Letters and
 Diaries of Kathleen Ferrier* (Boydell
 & Brewer 2003). His commissioned
 history of the music agents Ibbs and
 Tillett will be published by Ashgate
 in March 2005. A contributor to
 various publications, including
Classical Music, *Strad*, *Music and
 Letters*, *Elgar Society* and *Wagner
 Society Journals*, *BBC Music Maga-
 zine* and *Music Web*. He writes
 programme notes for the London
 Symphony Orchestra, Royal Liver-
 pool Philharmonic Orchestra, Trin-

ity College of Music and the
 chamber music society, SPANN. He
 has written CD insert notes for
 Philips, EMI, cpo, and Chandos.
 Illustrated talks include 'Behind the
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 sonal experience', the music of
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 ticular), and the life of Kathleen
 Ferrier as seen through her colour-
 ful letters and diaries.
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 miles from South London.

Dr. David Fligg

Leeds College of Music, 3 Quarry
 Hill, Leeds LS2 7PD
 Tel: 0113 222 3423
 E-mail: d.fligg@lcm.ac.uk
 Website: [www.impulse-music.
 co.uk/fligg.htm](http://www.impulse-music.co.uk/fligg.htm)
 Lecturer in composition and music
 history at Leeds College of Music.
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 Contact to discuss availability, de-
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John Gilks

The Old School,
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Eric Jennings

9 Hillside Road, Frodsham,
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Tel: 01928 733209
E-mail: fizneric@ic24.net
For 31 years was principal trom-
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nior administrator with City of
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Performances of Musical Works
in the United Kingdom,
1923-1996 (Ashgate Publishing,
2001); contributor to Fiddler on
the March; a biography of
Lieutenant-

Colonel Sir Vivian Dunn
KCVO OBE FRAM Royal
Marines by Derek Oakley (Royal
Marines Historical Society,
2000); article on the Celebratory
Music of the Masters of the
Queen's (King's) Musick in the
Twentieth Century (Journal of
the British Music Society,
Volume 26, 2004); Executive
Committee member of The
British Music Society since 2002.

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Miss Joy Puritz

149e Holland Rd,
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Tel: 020 7602 4187 (evenings) 020 7494 3130 (daytime).
E-Mail: jepuritz@tiscali.co.uk

Granddaughter of Elisabeth Schumann and translator of her biography (written by the singer's son, Gerd Puritz).

Illustrated presentation entitled A Portrait of the Soprano, Elisabeth Schumann has been well received by the Friends of Covent Garden, The British Library National Sound Archive and many recorded music societies.

Fee negotiable.

Donald Rooksby

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North Wales LL28 5AQ.
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Founder of Derby RMS and general manager Hyperion Records until 1986.

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Over the Hills and Far Away - an evaluation of Frederick Delius
Off the Beaten Groove - a personal search in the byways of music

No fee for Hyperion presentation; other talks minimum expenses.

Midlands, Northern England, Wales, Scotland preferred.

Clive Wilkes

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

Tel: 01323 724916.

Has been a Society recitalist for many years. Details of present Programmes:

Wagner and Liszt, an uneasy friendship.

(Programme linked to)

Wagner and Liszt, their musical legacy.

Vienna - Mahler and his contemporaries.

(Programme linked to)

Exiles and emigres - follows fortunes of composers who fled Vienna and Nazi Germany

George Gershwin - Crazy for you - a centenary tribute

Sergei Prokofiev - the prodigal son.

Golden age of film music

Aspects of opera in the 20th Century

Viva Verdi

Viva Verdi (Encore)

Once upon a time - fairytales, myths and legends

Further details on request.

No fee. Expenses only.

Catherine Wilmers

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

Tel: 01462 730490

E-mail: ccwilmers@bigfoot.com

Professional cellist, LPO and chamber music. Recorded CD for ASV, 'A Cello Century of British Women Composers 1884-1894';

this had beautiful, neglected works for cello and piano by Rebecca Clarke, Imogen Holst and others. Catherine talks about this music with examples from the CD and anecdotes about the composers and how the CD was made. The CD won a Gold Star from Diapason (French Recordings Magazine).

Another talk Catherine enjoys presenting is 'The Not so Silent Minority', late 19th and early 20th century string chamber music by Farrenc, Smyth, Clara Schumann, Fanny Mendelssohn, Carreno, Rebecca Clarke and others.

Travels countrywide, fees negotiable plus expenses.

Quotations:

A great symphony is like a man-made Mississippi down which we irresistibly flow from the instant of our leave-taking to a long foreseen destination.

Aaron Copland,

[The double bass is] a dangerous rogue-elephant.

Charles Villiers Stanford

I occasionally play works by contemporary composers for two reasons. First to discourage the composer from writing any more and secondly to remind myself how much I appreciate Beethoven.

Jascha Heifetz

Flint must be an extremely wealthy town: I see that each of you bought two or three seats.

Victor Borge speaking to a half-full house in Flint, Michigan

Crossword

(Mainly Music!)

By Hein Kropholler

CHANDOS

This crossword has been sponsored by Chandos Records who will give a prize of a CD from their catalogue to the winner who will be chosen by a draw from all correct answers received by the editor before the 1st January. In the event of a correct answer not being received, the best attempt (at the discretion of the editor) will win the award.

If you are nearly there, chance your arm!

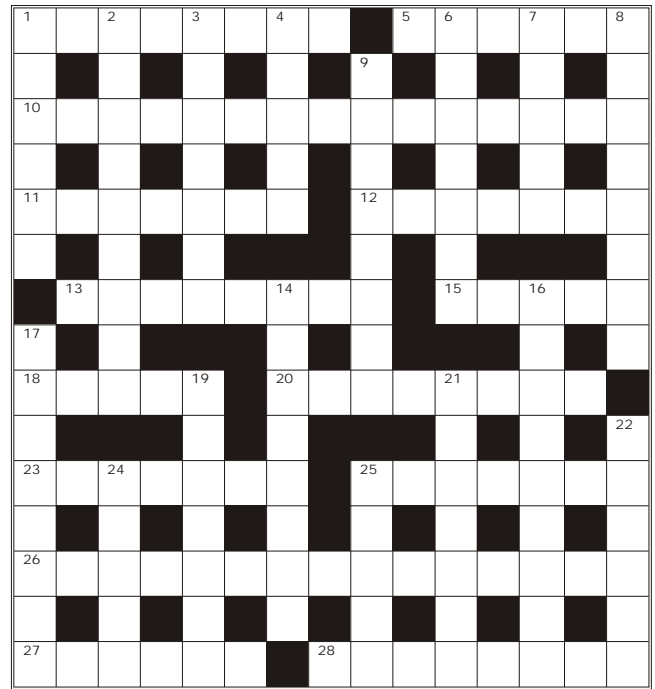
ACROSS

- 1. Single cries. [4,4]
- 5. To sing you need to have this. [1,5]
- 10. Early autumn vocal sounds. [9,6]
- 11. "Come to..." as the song goes. [3,4]
- 12. Sung in early Garland film. [7]
- 13. Composed a melody. [3,2,3]
- 15. Below with respect to the voice. [5]
- 18. The soft part of the soft loud instrument. [5]
- 20. Instrument important in Nielsen 5th Symphony. [4,4]
- 23. When all else fails be taught again. [7]
- 25. Soldier. [7]
- 26. Beethoven opus 2, 5 and 10 gives these. [3,5,7]
- 27. Sounds like big guns. [6]
- 28. Goats rod changed, to give quality. [4,4]

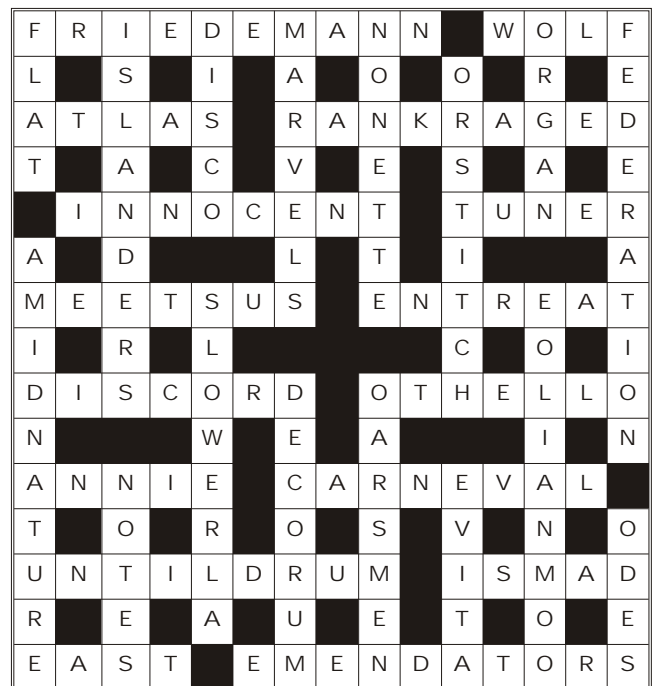
DOWN

- 1. No ties makes here. [2,4]
- 2. What this age would have been if there were no tin. [6,3]
- 3. Regarded as founder of Czech music. [7]
- 4. German/Bohemian composer. [5]
- 6. The first of the orchestral strings. [7]
- 7. Travelling by taxi! [2,3]
- 8. Forest on the right? English composer. [8]
- 9. Roses not yellow but this colour. [2,3,3]
- 14. Woody nematode in alcohol. [8]
- 16. Brass player for fanfare. [9]
- 17. What a play with song and music is. [8]
- 19. When the audience like the music you get an... [7]
- 21. Stayed under water for too long. [7]
- 22. Romantic meetings. [6]
- 24. Can do this on a drum. [3,2]
- 25. Liszt orchestral work inspired by Goethe poem. [5]

Crossword 142



Solution to Crossword 141



Winner

There were 3 correct solutions submitted for crossword no 141, and the lucky winner picked at random was Jean English from Lancaster. Others who had correct answers were Gordon Arkwright from Morecambe and Philip Lusman of Falkirk. Five other entries had one or more errors.



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