



Compiled and edited by Simon Rawlings FRMS committee member

## From the Chairman's desk

As I write these words at the end of July, summer holidays have begun for many people, whether heading abroad or eschewing queues and chaos to stay at home. Some societies will have ceased meetings for the summer, others continue to meet all year round, but by the time this newsletter appears I expect that most societies will be fully active.

Sadly, Covid is still with us and may continue to affect society activities, but we look forward to some sort of normality before long. In this respect the Federation's AGM will be held 'live' instead of online – details will be found elsewhere in this newsletter – and after the Music Weekend finally took place this year the Committee are planning another for April 2023. At the time of writing details of the Weekend, including the venue, have still to be finalised but it is expected to be in a more central location to improve accessibility for members of societies in southern England.

So, I wish all societies success in the coming months and look forward to meeting members of as many as possible at the AGM and the Music Weekend. *Ed: see the next page for the latest information.*

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## At last, the 2020 FRMS Music Weekend!



To recount in all its detail the saga of postponement and uncertainty surrounding the Music Weekend would take up too much valuable space. Suffice it to say that it happened eventually at the end of March this year. Surprisingly, perhaps, all the presenters engaged for the original 2020 date were able to be with us, although some of the subjects were different, reflecting changes in topicality since 2020. Sadly, though, FRMS Vice-President Jim Bostwick who had been instrumental in the organisation of the weekend for 2020 was not with us, having died in December 2021.

The first presentation, by David Patmore, was one of the changes. Decca's 90th anniversary was no longer topical and instead David recalled the history of his own CRQ Editions; his programme also served as a tribute to Jim Bostwick who had made many of the transfers of historic recordings for CRQ.

The relationship of music to other arts – painting and dance – bookended our Saturday programme. Gary Midgley's presentation, *Music for ... Art's Sake*, was copiously illustrated with slides of the artworks depicted in music, whilst Nigel Simeone's exploration of British composers' contribution to ballet repertoire was an eye-opener (or should that be ear-opener?) for many of us. Between those two presentations Tim Lihoreau took us behind the scenes at Classic FM, and Brian Newbould made a welcome return to an FRMS event with *Schubert and the Age of Virtuosity*, demonstrating that virtuosity does not have to be limited to performance but can be expressed in other ways.

Composer (and FRMS Treasurer) Paul Corfield Godfrey's scenes from the mythology of J R R Tolkien date from the 1990s but it has taken until now for them all to appear on CD. On Sunday Corf (as he is known) spoke about the music, its composition, and the recording process – as well as playing extracts from the music. Then it was time for four musicians from Welsh National Opera, who were involved in the Tolkien recordings, to take the stage to regale us with a programme of songs and operatic excerpts, including, appropriately, the Welsh song, *Hiraeth*.

British seaside holidays had their heyday from the development of railways in Victorian times until the rise of the package holiday by air – although there are signs that their popularity may be returning. To conclude the weekend Sue Parker took us on a trip down memory lane to the beach with its sandcastles, donkey rides, kiss-me-quick hats, ice creams and sticks of Blackpool rock, all illustrated with appropriate music from the golden age of the seaside. All great fun to send us away with smiles on our faces.

That the Weekend did eventually take place is due to the efforts of Committee members and the co-operation of presenters who were still willing to take part. And special mention should go to our new technical team of David Wherrell (below left) and Tony Sanderson relaxing with David (below right), both in charge of the sound equipment.

*Allan Child FRMS Chairman*



## AGM 2022 – the live event!

I'm delighted to announce the return of the FRMS live AGM for 2022! After two years of on-line AGMs (in 2020 and 2021), it is wonderful to report that the long-delayed AGM in Leicester will finally happen.

The event will take place at Mercure Leicester - The Grand Hotel, with the formal meeting starting at 3.00 pm, a slightly later start than normal. Delegates will be able to register from 2.00 pm. Once the business part of the AGM is over, the afternoon's recorded music presentation will be delivered by renowned composer, Will Todd. Will is a British composer and jazz pianist, best known for combining jazz and blues with traditional choral music. One of his most famous works, 'Mass in Blue', was originally performed at the Cambridge Corn Exchange in 2003 and has since been performed over 200 times. His opera, 'The Blackened Man', won second prize at the International Verdi Opera competition in 2002 and his anthem, 'The Call of Wisdom', was commissioned by St Paul's Cathedral for the Diamond Jubilee Thanksgiving service in 2012. We certainly have an interesting talk to look forward to.

The talk will be followed by a three-course dinner and a live music recital.

Papers have already been sent to secretaries giving further details and booking forms, so hope to see you there. If you would like another copy of the paperwork, please email me on: [secretary@thefrms.co.uk](mailto:secretary@thefrms.co.uk).

*Adele Wills FRMS Secretary*



### The FRMS Music Weekend

14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> April 2023

As mentioned by our Chairman, we are planning to hold a Music Weekend in Spring 2023. The programme is still in preparation, but the dates and venue have now been arranged. So, if you have your diary for next year you may wish to make a note of the dates, Friday 14th to Sunday 16th April. The venue will be the Derby Conference Centre. Derby is served by direct trains from London, the Southwest and Scotland as well as being near to major roads and motorways, and we hope the central location will prove attractive to participants from different parts of the country.

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## Equipment Insurance



### *An important note!*

In the past our insurance brokers, Jelfs, not only provided public liability insurance for those societies that required it (some, for one reason or another, do not), but also furnished equipment insurance on an individual basis for societies who wished to take advantage of their offer of reduced rates. However, a couple of years ago those brokers were taken over by Marsh Commercial, whose systems evidenced difficulty in distinguishing between the two distinct elements of the policies held with them by FRMS. They have now indicated that, although they will continue to furnish **public liability insurance**, they are no longer able to provide **equipment insurance** to individual societies. Obviously FRMS is not in a position to take over this latter responsibility since (1) we hold no information whatever on either the equipment held by societies or the extent of cover required, and (2) are therefore quite unable to invoice individual societies on any equitable basis for the relevant premiums.

Societies will accordingly need to decide (1) whether they wish to insure their equipment, and (2) if so to make their own arrangements for this. It may well be if equipment is stored in the houses of individual members that it is covered by their own household insurance, or it is not worth making individual payments for. This will be a matter for individual societies to decide, and FRMS cannot advise on particular circumstances. Societies should be able to insure specific equipment with local brokers at a reasonable fee, but they will need to ensure that if they wish cover to be continuous they will need to make payments with effect from 1st September 2022 when their existing policies will cease.

The existing arrangements for **public liability insurance** remain unchanged; FRMS will invoice all those societies who participate in the scheme in the usual manner this autumn, and issue certificates to societies accordingly.

We have been provided by Marsh Commercial with a list of individual societies currently making payments for **equipment insurance** and have written to them separately.

*Paul Corfield Godfrey FRMS Treasurer*

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## VAUGHAN WILLIAMS 150

The 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Ralph Vaughan Williams falls on 12 October 2022, but the celebrations are already well under way. Choral Evensong in Cirencester in early February, near his birthplace Down Ampney, was followed by a concert at Charterhouse School, where he was a pupil between 1887 and 1890. Meanwhile, all nine of his symphonies were played in Manchester by the Halle and BBC Philharmonic Orchestras. BBC Radio devoted a whole month of their Composer of the Week programme to his music, an unheard-of tribute to the most English of all English composers.

Concert performances of his most popular pieces, such as *The Lark Ascending* and *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* are programmed across the length and breadth of this country for the next twelve months, and many less well known works will be championed by choral societies, cathedral choirs, singers and chamber ensembles – you name it, there is a great outpouring of love for this well-loved composer, from musicians of all kinds and of all standards of ability.



**Credit: RVWCT\*** Rehearsing the 8<sup>th</sup> Symphony in 1956

For the past three years, the Ralph Vaughan Williams Society, together with the Vaughan Williams Charitable Trust, has been spreading the word about this anniversary, encouraging performances of Vaughan Williams's music and also greater awareness of his long and remarkable life. Born in a country vicarage in the reign of Queen Victoria, he lived much of his life in the Surrey Hills and nearby Dorking, before returning to the London of his early married life, where, with his second wife Ursula, he witnessed the first years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Beginning with the great success of his first symphony in 1910, his stature grew steadily until, in the years after the Second World War, he became the grand old man of English music. He remained modest, refusing to accept a knighthood, and devoted to the musical life of his country, writing music for films and for amateur musicians to perform, as well as the great works for which he is best known.

The RVW Society recently celebrated an anniversary of its own, its twenty-fifth! Our mission is to bring Vaughan Williams's music to an ever-wider audience in Britain and around the world. Our membership has recently passed the one thousand mark and is spread across twenty-five countries. Our Journal is published three times a year and caters for all levels of musical knowledge, from musicologists to those new to RVW's works. Our website at [www.rvwsociety.com](http://www.rvwsociety.com) is a mine of useful information, including how to become a member! We have our own record label, Albion Records, which will release its fiftieth CD later this year – we specialise in rare, unpublished works by Vaughan Williams and almost every disc has at least one world premiere recording. Our AGM is held in alternate years in London and in Surrey. We provide speakers for many events, including talks to Recorded Music Societies!

**'Our mission is to bring  
Vaughan Williams's music  
to an ever-wider audience in  
Britain and around the world'**

I hope that RMS members will take advantage of our anniversary activities to get to know more of the wonderful music of Ralph Vaughan Williams.

*Simon Coombs Chairman RVW Society*

\* We are very grateful to the **Ralph Vaughan Williams Charitable Trust**. <http://www.rvwtrust.org.uk/> for allowing the FRMS to publish this photograph of RVW, which is from the original collection of Ursula Vaughan Williams.

*Ed: I was first introduced to the music of Vaughan Williams during 1967 by my music teacher and good friend, the late F Roy Bennett. He advised me to listen to 'A London Symphony' (2<sup>nd</sup> symphony). I can clearly recall finding the work so absorbing with the rich textures and wonderful soundscape. Following this initial experience of his music, I felt the need to listen to much more RVW, which I have over the years and continue to do so! I would certainly encourage anybody with an interest in music to explore his works if they haven't already done so. I am also proud to be a member of the Ralph Vaughan Williams Society!*

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## New Vice-President!

The Committee are pleased to announce that Paul Astell, who was Editor of the FRMS *Bulletin* from 2011 until its final issue in 2018 and responsible for producing fifteen editions, has recently accepted an invitation to serve as Vice-President of the Federation. Paul, a member of Oswestry RMS, has been a firm supporter of the FRMS and he was present at this year's Music Weekend in Ilkley. We offer him our congratulations and best wishes.

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## A Forthcoming Weekend Event!



**18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>  
November 2022 at  
The Grand Hotel,  
Torquay  
TQ2 6NT**

Although not an FRMS event, the Torbay Musical

Weekend is supported by many FRMS members, and we are pleased to promote this event. The Grand Hotel is located on the sea front, adjacent to the railway station. Secretary Gillian Babbs writes...

'There will be two recitals. On Friday evening, Paul Manley will lead a trio from the **Primavera Chamber Ensemble** playing works by Beethoven, Dohnányi and Bach. On Saturday evening, **Andy Panayi** with three colleagues, will give a programme of classical music, jazz, and music from the shows.

Our diverse range of external presenters will be presenting sessions on the English composer, Dame Ethel Smyth, 'The Prison Choir Project', an outline and demonstration on the different techniques involved in performing the classical and jazz repertoire on the double bass and 'One building; two orchestras - how the National Orchestra of Wales and the Welsh National Opera orchestra co-exist in the Wales Millennium Centre'. Other presentations cover the little-known German composer Johann Adolf Hasse (1699 - 1783), a prolific composer of operatic and sacred music, a programme on organ music and a session of musical video clips from around the world.'

The full programme and booking form can be obtained on The Friends of Torbay website at [www.fot.org.uk](http://www.fot.org.uk) or by contacting Gillian Babbs on 020 8668 2775, giving your name and address.

## A personal note from our Treasurer



I am still occupied in the composition of several major works scheduled for both performance and recording over the next five years or so, a process which makes unexpected interruption unwelcome. Under the circumstances, should societies need to contact me please e-mail and **not** telephone unless the matter is extremely urgent. I will reply as soon as possible. Thank you. [paul.godfrey@thefrms.co.uk](mailto:paul.godfrey@thefrms.co.uk)

*Paul Corfield Godfrey FRMS Treasurer*

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## The current FRMS Officers and Committee

### President

Julian Lloyd Webber OBE

### Vice-President

Paul Astell

### Chairman

Allan Child – [chairman@thefrms.co.uk](mailto:chairman@thefrms.co.uk)

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## Distribution of Newsletters

If you are now willing to receive future newsletters electronically instead of hard copies, and have not already notified us of this, please contact:

[simon.rawlings@thefrms.co.uk](mailto:simon.rawlings@thefrms.co.uk)

*The next newsletter is planned for January 2023.*

*Please send any society news or articles in good time.*

Current and past Newsletters can be downloaded at:

[www.thefrms.co.uk](http://www.thefrms.co.uk)