

Spring 2018  
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# Bulletin



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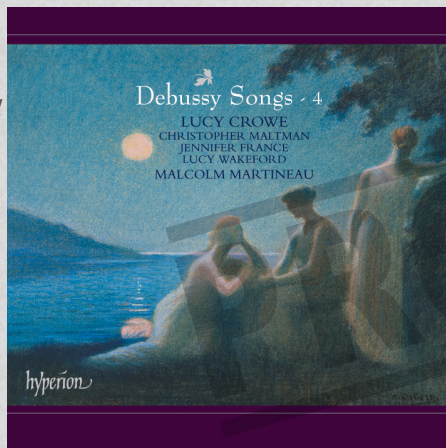
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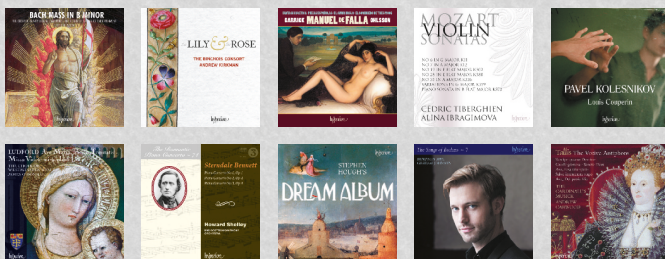
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JONATHAN COHEN conductor



## COMING SOON ...

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Bennett: Piano Concertos Nos 1-3 Howard Shelley (piano), BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Howard Shelley  
Falla: Fantasia Baetica & other piano music Garrick Ohlsson (piano)  
Ludford: Missa Videte miraculum & Ave Maria, ancilla Trinitatis Westminster Abbey Choir, James O'Donnell  
Couperin: Music from the Bauyn Manuscript Pavel Kolesnikov (piano)  
Mozart: Violin Sonatas K302, 380 & 526 Alina Ibragimova (violin), Cédric Tiberghien (piano)  
Brahms: The Complete Songs, Vol. 7 Benjamin Appl (baritone), Graham Johnson (piano)



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YALE SCHOLA CANTORUM  
DAVID HILL conductor



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**Front cover:** Photo credit: Ian Bailey

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

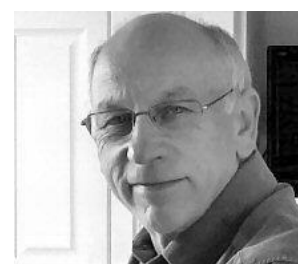
For more information about the FRMS please go to  
[www.thefrms.co.uk](http://www.thefrms.co.uk)

### Forthcoming Events

Y&NRG Spring Music Weekend, March 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> 2018 (Page 9)  
Torbay Musical Weekend, November 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> 2018  
FRMS 2018 AGM, date and venue to be advised

## EDITORIAL Paul Astell

**E**ARLY ON IN MY EDITORSHIP I inherited a batch of back numbers of this magazine. It is quite instructive to look back on times past within our recorded music movement. For example, the hundredth edition of *Bulletin* (Spring 1984) celebrated that particular milestone by including a couple of articles on the history of the Federation, and of *Bulletin* itself. The latter was penned by no less a person than the one responsible for getting the NFGS off the ground in the first place back in 1936. Number 100 also has photocopied images of the first-ever *Bulletin* issued in 1947. We have recreated its front page, if only to see how far we have come since those four pages were published! Check out our 'From the archives' feature within these pages.



The FRMS – and before it the NFGS – was a much larger organisation back then, of course, and many societies have since fallen by the wayside, but many are still going strong, including the good folks at Orpington RMS. Their vice-chairman, Ian Bailey, mentioned in the previous issue (Autumn 2017, page 14) that they have links with the beginnings of the Federation, and we hear from Ian again this time where he reports on last year's 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. Our records show that Orpington is just about the oldest Society having continuous affiliation to the NFGS/FRMS – unless, of course, you know different! So we are delighted to have Orpington as our front cover feature for this issue and we wish them many more years of musical pleasure.

The Autumn 2018 issue of this magazine will be the last under my editorship. By that time it will be almost eight years since I attended my first committee meeting as an observer, having shown an interest in the job. I'm sure I'll have more to say next time about my experiences, but it has been an enjoyable time. Meanwhile, we are looking for somebody to fill the editor's role. As FRMS chairman Allan Child mentioned in his recent Newsletter (No. 18, January 2018), as the Federation evolves, it may be appropriate to review the future of the magazine. Any new editor will certainly be involved with that process and anybody interested should contact us as soon as possible.

Finally, it has been a pleasure dealing with some wonderful people within the music industry. Judith Weir, Master of the Queen's Music, who appeared at the 2017 Daventry Weekend, is one such. Having received her copy of the magazine she wrote: '...a good read, and thanks to your reporter for the fine write-up of my own talk in Daventry'. That reporter knows who she is! ●

# FRMS Annual General Meeting 2017

Wollaton RMS were hosts for the 2017 AGM held at Nottingham's Best Western Westminster Hotel.

Photography: George Steele and Paul Astell.

**W**OLLATON RMS CHAIRMAN Ron Starling welcomed delegates to the meeting. Ron informed us that Wollaton was originally a small village about four miles west of Nottingham, built on coal with its own mine and a canal. These days it's part of the Nottingham conurbation although villagers still consider themselves 'special', not least because they have a music society! It's their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary year and a party was planned for later in the month.



Wollaton's chairman Ron Starling welcomes delegates

FRMS chairman Allan Child began by passing on a message from our President, Julian Lloyd Webber, who apologised for his absence. His busy schedule meant he was unable to be present at the meeting but sent his warmest greetings. He was also sorry to learn of the difficulties facing the Federation but hoped we could look to the future with greater confidence.

Allan proceeded with his **Chairman's Annual Report** by reiterating the concerns raised in his letter to all societies earlier this year, and echoed in *Bulletin* 167. The letter covered two subjects: the decision not to hold a Daventry weekend in 2018 and, more importantly, the committee's concern about a potential loss of continuity in the running of the Federation. The Daventry decision was taken in view of falling attendance over the past few years, but there was some encouraging news that two new members were being recruited to the committee, although retirements mean that we would still be below strength. Many responses to the letter indicate that societies face similar problems to the Federation, but there were some thoughtful and constructive comments.

The reasons for the decline in membership of recorded music societies are well known: members are usually from the older generation and as they are eventually unable to attend nobody is coming forward to replace them. This is reflected in the falling number of societies affiliated to the FRMS. Also, problems arise where existing members are unable or unwilling to take on the responsibility of officer duties. The problem is one of recruitment. How might we attract new recruits and from what age group should we be

recruiting? Allan thought we could rule out the 'Club 18-30' group. There are young people interested in classical music – often as performers – but most seem content to listen to music, of whatever genre, through mobile devices and share their interests through social media. The working population and retired people have different needs. Most people in regular employment are only able to attend evening meetings, older people are often reluctant (for various reasons) to venture out at night. Younger people probably appreciate the opportunity to widen their experience of music, whilst for those who are retired the social aspect of a meeting is likely to be as important as the music.

Since membership of societies seems to be predominantly drawn from the older generation, it is, arguably, sensible to look at ways of increasing our appeal to people of that group, especially the recently retired and those about to retire. They are likely to be active and to look for opportunities to remain active, both physically and mentally. Many people who fall into that category belong to groups under the aegis of U3A – the University of the Third Age.

The U3A network is extensive, and in every major town and city in the UK you are likely to find numerous interest groups. Could it be that U3A is such a well-known brand name, with a snappy title, that people looking for activities in retirement look no further than U3A? One of our local RMSs might not register at all on their radar and is unlikely to generate much interest.

Do we therefore need to make ourselves more visible? The initials FRMS on their own convey nothing to anyone not connected with the Federation, and the full title is something of a mouthful. The NFMS – National Federation of Music Societies – probably adopted the name 'Making Music' to solve a similar image problem, and in recent



FRMS officers

years the PRS (Performing Right Society) has tagged itself as 'PRS for Music'. Could we do something similar, maybe call ourselves something like 'Music Net' or 'The Music Network' with a suitable logo?

A name like 'Music Net' might give the impression that we run some sort of streaming website but we would need to think what our website offers. What are the practicalities of a 'find a society' search facility whereby the enquirer inputs his/her location as a town or postcode and is given details of societies nearby or within a certain radius? The Making Music website has a similar facility for finding not only groups/societies but also concerts. Presumably the software for this can be bought off the shelf and then

customised, but it might be expensive. And we should encourage societies who have their own websites to include a link to our site. For example, Cardiff, Loughborough and Nelson have such links, though it seems Putney Music do not.

Societies can do quite a lot in the way of promoting themselves. Posters are probably not as effective these days as they may once have been and they should be changed regularly. There should be one at your meeting place so that other users of the building will see it.



Allan Child

For security reasons restrict contact details to a phone number and/or email address. Most local radio stations have 'What's on' spots, but you need to follow their guidelines when sending in details. Mostly they want information about specific meetings/events submitted a few days in advance. Don't expect them to pick up details from a season's programme card.

Local free magazines are often financed by advertising from local businesses and distributed free to every household. They will usually include details of local clubs and societies free of charge but will have similar guidelines to local radio stations about submitting information. If you can set up your own website that's fine but it needs to be updated regularly, and you need to have a second person who can take over should your webmaster no longer be able to maintain the site. Alternatively you can have a dedicated page on the FRMS website, which our webmaster will create for you and update as you require. There are other websites, such as [www.wherecanwego.com](http://www.wherecanwego.com) where you can publicise your society. Email can be used to keep in touch with existing members and to remind them of the date and topic of the next meeting or to announce any last-minute changes or cancellations.

Allan finished by thanking all societies that responded to his recent letter.

Paul Corfield Godfrey began his **Annual Accounts and Treasurer's Report** by highlighting the problems that can occur when societies close down. Last year the Federation lost around £3000 of income caused by societies not informing us when they cease to function. The loss occurs because payments have already been made on their behalf to bodies such as PRS and PPL as well as



Paul Corfield Godfrey

for insurance cover. The same is happening in the current year with losses of around £1000 so far. This is a difficult problem to resolve. When a society

closes, perhaps in less than orderly circumstances in some cases, there may be confusion about whose task it is to inform the FRMS.

Affiliation charges have not been increased despite higher insurance costs, due mostly to government legislation. Inflation has risen in the current year and PRS have increased their charges accordingly, although we were informed too late for that to be reflected in affiliation fees. Our finances, however, are in a healthy state and well able to withstand such glitches.

The *Bulletin* editor is doing a marvellous job of drumming up advertising revenue which covers the cost of the magazine's production.

The previous problem where we were charged for unused rooms at the Daventry Weekend was avoided this year. Nonetheless, the weekend still showed a loss of some £600. Piano hire costs were higher than previously, but well worth it for the stunning recital we enjoyed. The free shuttle bus was also well worth running to the advantage of those using public transport. Most will now be aware that due to falling attendance numbers, there will be no Daventry event in 2018.

Although the FRMS has again shown an operational loss during the year 2016-17, the amounts involved remain well within the capacity of the organisation to absorb, especially considering that over £22,000 is held on deposit. The amount of interest earned on the deposit account has now reduced to a dribble. This makes a separate account not worthwhile and that sum will be transferred to the general account. These amounts will provide a healthy surplus for operations for a considerable time to come.

Paul announced that he would be looking to stand down as treasurer at the 2018 AGM owing to other commitments. Any member who has accountancy or book-keeping experience is encouraged to express an interest in taking on this vital role.

Introducing what he described as his penultimate **Secretary's Report**, Jim Bostwick began by expressing thanks to all his committee colleagues and fellow officers for their support, and also to the delegates present at the meeting for taking the time to attend.

During last year's AGM report at Bournemouth, Jim had drawn attention to his intention to step down from the secretary role at the 2018 AGM and invited members to get in touch if they were interested in the job. The chairman's letter to all affiliates earlier this year reinforced the issue.

Two people came as observers to a recent committee meeting and joined in the debate about the future of the FRMS. Jim was delighted that they weren't put off (!) and, on further reflection, submitted nomination forms to join the committee, with one expressing an interest to shadow the secretary's job. This is what Jim himself had done when taking over from his predecessor, Tony Baines. Jim did add, though, that yet again we go into 2017-18 with the committee one member fewer than that stipulated in the Constitution.

Jim had been pleased to return to the local Society in Bournemouth to present a programme in June and make an extended weekend of it. Prior to this was a highly enjoyable Daventry music weekend. The highlights for him were Judith Weir, Master of the Queen's Music, whose presentation was a delight, and the stunning recital of the young pianist Domonkos Csabay who opened the second half of his recital with the Improvisations on Hungarian Peasant Songs by Bartók. Sadly, there were only 49 people there.

The mailbag, or rather more the email bag, has continued to report on the diminishing fortunes for an



Jim Bostwick

increasing number of affiliates. And yet, there are pockets where individual societies thrive with healthy memberships. It would be very useful to have some input, perhaps in a future AGM debate, or even a *Bulletin*

article, if they could be persuaded to pass on their secret formula. The number of affiliates continues to fall due mainly to the ageing process over which no one has any control, with only 142 societies now remaining. Still, the FRMS has the necessary financial resources to continue providing the vital legal licensing for the performance of recorded music and other allied services. The website offers affiliates the opportunity to broadcast their programmes more widely and webmaster George Steele offers an efficient service in this regard via [www.thefrms.co.uk](http://www.thefrms.co.uk).

The make-up of the officers and committee for 2017-18 is known (see details on page 30) with, as mentioned, one vacancy continuing. Two members are leaving and it is fortunate that their places have been filled.\* Jim repeated his plea for ordinary members to come along as observers to any of the four committee meetings held each year in December, February, May and August to see what goes on. Anyone interested should make contact for dates and details.

Jim expressed his grateful thanks to hosts for the day, Wollaton RMS, particularly to Bill Clarke and Ron Starling who have been his contacts for the AGM arrangements. Also, we need somebody to host the 2018 AGM!

### Any Other Business

Jim Bostwick proposed that future AGMs should be held later in November than is currently the case. Many societies don't begin their season until October and might not see the various correspondence pertaining to the meeting until it's too late.

Graham Ladley (Oswestry RMS) reiterated the view that RMSs no longer fulfil the purpose to which they were founded in decades past, i.e. providing access to music reproduced on decent equipment that was unlikely to be available at home for the average person. Might there now be a case for informal

discussions with a view to linking up with U3A groups over the next few years? Philip Ashton (Radlett and Letchworth RMSs) said that he is a U3A co-ordinator. There is no musical representation on the national U3A and he saw little value in this approach. Brian Godfrey (Radlett RMS) wondered if we could consider being associated with the Making Music organisation.

The chairman thanked everybody concerned with organising the day's events and duly closed the meeting.

\* A third new member was co-opted onto the FRMS committee at their meeting on November 25<sup>th</sup>, returning it to full strength.

### Recorded music recital: Carlos Kleiber

John Hawes, a member of host society Wollaton RMS, opened his presentation by recalling the moment, at the age of 12, when his fascination with the art of conducting first took hold. His music teacher had taken him along to the Royal Albert Hall for an LSO rehearsal featuring the young Vladimir Ashkenazy, fresh from winning the Tchaikovsky competition. A rehearsal is the time to fully appreciate, if you haven't before, exactly what a conductor is all about.

Back in 2011, *BBC Music Magazine* carried out a survey of 100 leading conductors, including Sir Colin Davis, Gustavo Dudamel, Valery Gergiev and Mariss Jansons, to reveal who they are most inspired by. The results probably surprised many people. Attracting 50% more votes than any other was Carlos Kleiber. (Fourth placed was Karajan, third Abbado, and second place went to Bernstein.) The question asked was: why? Kleiber only conducted 96 concerts in a long career – someone like Gergiev might achieve that



John Hawes

number in one year – although Kleiber did conduct about 400 operatic performances. Carlos was, of course, the son of a very great conductor, Erich Kleiber, although father wasn't exactly keen for his son to follow in his footsteps.

John's first track was from the 1989 New Year's Day concert in Vienna, with that city's very own Philharmonic orchestra performing the overture to *Die Fledermaus* by Johann Strauss Jr which featured some lovely, poetic moments.

John had provided some written quotes from prominent musicians. One, from Plácido Domingo, noted Kleiber's 'musical technique, dramatic insights and analytical abilities, and which make him the greatest conductor of our day'. Kleiber made some very great opera recordings and John played 'The Drinking Song' from Verdi's *La Traviata* performed by Domingo. Next came two more examples from that 1989 New Year's Day concert: *Die Libelle* (The Dragonfly) by Josef Strauss, and that perennial favourite which always closes the concert, Johann Strauss the elder's *Radetzky* March.

Kleiber's recordings of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 and No. 7 come highly recommended, and we heard the final movement from the Fifth.

Was Carlos the greatest? Well he did have some downsides, perhaps. He performed relatively few works and demanded extraordinary amounts of rehearsal time while being very temperamental. Nevertheless, musicians loved to perform for him. His rehearsal technique can be checked out on YouTube.

John finished with his very favourite Kleiber recording: *Tristan und Isolde* by Wagner. This album almost didn't get released, with the conductor storming out of the studio at the end of the session. Fortunately, the engineers were able to successfully piece together the various takes. Kleiber's choice as Isolde was 'very daring, but inspired'. Margaret Price never sang the part in the opera house, and didn't sing it again after this recording. John played the final scene from Act III which he finds 'incredibly moving and sometimes difficult to listen to'.

This was a superb ending to a well-presented session on a subject which is obviously very close to John's musical heart.

### Live music recital

Following a most enjoyable dinner we were joined by musicians associated with Nottingham University's music facility. They are a string quartet who call

in his fourth year at Nottingham, studying medicine. John is President of the Academic Medicine society at the Medical School and is currently undertaking important research in the field of ophthalmology.

Lucy Dunn (2nd violin) is from Surrey and comes from a very musical family. She has just graduated from Nottingham and is now working as a junior doctor in Oxford. She has recently completed four months at an organ transplant unit in Oxford, but is interested in pursuing endocrinology as a career.

Stephen Smithers (viola) comes from Hertfordshire and was also a member of the NCO. He is studying history and hopes to train as a lawyer when he graduates next year. He is also a very keen go-karter and frequently competes in national championships with the University of Nottingham team.

Laura Elliott (cello) originally hails from Reading and has also just graduated from Nottingham and is working as a junior doctor in south-east London. She too was a member of the NCO – they think they might have unknowingly all played together at some point! – and also attends the Junior Department of the Royal Academy of Music. Laura hopes to work in medical journalism and in the field of obstetrics or general practice. She performed the Haydn Cello Concerto in C with the University Philharmonia in 2015. The four performers met while playing in the University of Nottingham Philharmonia over a 3-year period and the quartet was formed about two years ago.

Their first piece was one of Haydn's lesser-known string quartets – the Opus 9, No. 4. That was followed by the ever-popular String Quartet No.12 by Dvořák, usually referred to as the 'American'. Following appreciative applause, the quartet gave us two encores, pieces the performers say they always have great fun with. First came the famous Brahms Hungarian Dance No. 5. The recital came to an end with 'Por una Cabeza', a tango song written in 1935 by Carlos Gardel. *Strictly Come Dancing* fans would recognise this piece used as accompaniment to an Argentine



themselves No Added Sounds. This is a reference to a heart examination where no abnormalities are detected. Here is a brief bio of each member...

John Britton (1st violin) is from Kent and played in the National Children's Orchestra of GB (NCO). He is

tango in both the final and an earlier round!

The Federation is immensely grateful that these young musicians gave up the time in their busy lives to perform for us. We wish them all enormous success in their various careers. ●

*Hosted this year by Huddersfield RMS, the Autumn Day Meeting featured three presentations, and was attended by 50 guests, drawn from 10 different societies. Regional chairman Ron Cooper reports on a successful day.*

**Tony Haywood**, a seasoned presenter and reviewer, opened proceedings with a spirited programme, **All in a Night's Work**, in which he celebrated the working life of André Previn, now in his 88<sup>th</sup> year. Tony has for many years admired the versatility and artistry of the multi-talented Previn and his presentation reflected this eclecticism. He opened with the first movement of Barber's Violin Concerto, featuring a young Gil Shaham and the LSO, conducted by Previn. The warmth of Shaham's playing brought out the essential elements of the composer's neo-Romanticism in a beautiful balance of solo instrument and the LSO's glorious tone. As a contrast, we next heard the *presto con malizia* from Walton's First Symphony in a 1966 recording in which Previn produced a spiky, vibrant sound of jazz rhythm and syncopation, with the LSO's brass and percussion in superb form. Then, in a remarkable extract, we heard Previn rehearsing with the 'other LSO', the Leicestershire Schools Orchestra, as they prepared to play Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. His warm, friendly enthusiasm and encouragement to the teenage players said so much about his musical persona, as he strove to get the best out of them. Although, as Tony pointed out, Previn did not record much opera – in the maestro's opinion there was too much singing! – the next extract was from his own *A Streetcar Named Desire*, which featured Renée Fleming in Blanche's aria, 'I Want Magic'. The rich strings and depth of sound, with soaring highs and lows of emotion from the superb soprano voice, made for a memorable experience. Previn's jazz piano mastery and Sylvia McNair's sultry soprano came together beautifully in 'I'm Old Fashioned', from the Jerome Kern Songbook, with lyrics by the peerless Johnny Mercer.

In the ballet music from Holst's *The Perfect Fool*, we heard a vibrant performance with broad colours of the brass, and strong syncopated rhythms, complemented by languid melodies, giving a mixture of driving muscularity and tender subtlety. The finale of Rachmaninov's Suite for two pianos No. 2, with Ashkenazy and Previn, showed two maestros at their virtuosic best, in a stunningly difficult duet, recorded in 1974. As a complete contrast, we next heard the duet between the teapot and the china cup from Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, a one-act opera with a libretto by Colette, first performed in Monte Carlo in 1925, with ballet sequences choreographed by Balanchine.

The programme concluded with the final scene of Korngold's *The Prince and the Pauper*, one of 16 Warner Brothers Hollywood films for which he wrote the music. Previn's LSO gave us a stirring rendition of this exciting Romantic piece. Tony succeeded in giving us a programme which fully illustrated the breadth of André Previn's virtuosity as conductor, interpreter, composer and pianist, in a variety of genres. Truly, a memorable and fitting tribute to a great musician.

**Peter Smart**, the second presenter, began his **Sullivan without Gilbert** programme with a brief biographical outline of Arthur Sullivan's early years. He was the son of a military bandmaster at Sandhurst, then a chorister at the Chapel Royal, later at the RAM on a Mendelssohn scholarship at the age of 14. Finally there was an extended three-year stay at the Leipzig Conservatoire, where he was exposed not only to the music of Mendelssohn, but also Schubert, Bach, Verdi and Wagner. His graduation piece of 1861 was a set of incidental music to Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Op. 1. We heard two episodes: the Overture to Act IV, followed by 'Dance of the Nymphs and Reapers', both pieces well-scored, delicate and firmly in the vein of mid 19<sup>th</sup> century Romanticism and played by the BBC Philharmonic under Richard Hickox.

Sullivan's late light opera *Haddon Hall* of 1892, with Sydney Grundy as librettist, was composed after his collaborations with WS Gilbert were effectively over. It ran for over 200 performances, being well received and popular. A delightful extract from Act 1, 'Today, it is a festal time', was very much in the style of G&S and prefaces a tale of love and frustrated ambitions, loosely based on the historical elopement of Dorothy Vernon and John Manners. Here it was sung by soprano Fiona Main, with the Prince Consort Orchestra and Chorus under David Lyle. The Cello Concerto (1866), of which we heard the second movement, *andante espressivo*, featured a sweet, delicate melody, followed by a more expressive, dramatic passage, then a reprise of the opening melody. Cellist Paul Watkins played the solo with warmth, accompanied by the BBC SO, under Charles Mackerras. As a contrast, we next heard James Griffett (tenor) singing 'Once Again', a touching love ballad of 1872, one of the many songs that Sullivan composed over a period of 30 years. We were next entertained by extracts from the incidental music to *Macbeth*, featuring amongst others 'The Chorus of Witches and Spirits', written in 1888. The music is vibrant and dramatic, as befits the play, and was lustily performed by the RTE Chamber Choir and Concert Orchestra, under Andrew Penny. Popularly regarded as an unofficial Composer Laureate, Sullivan was asked to compose a thanksgiving for the recovery from typhoid of Victoria's heir, the future Edward VII. From the *Te Deum* of 1872 we heard two excerpts: the solo 'O Lord, save Thy people', followed by the chorus, 'Vouchsafe, O Lord', based on the hymn, 'O God, our help in ages past'. Both extracts, powerful and moving, were performed by Teresa Cahill (soprano) with the London Choral Society under Ronald Corp. Peter's programme concluded with *In Memoriam*, composed in 1866 in memory of Sullivan's father. A sombre opening was followed by an *allegro* episode suggesting a vigorous, vibrant life. Then came more contemplative passages with, fittingly, strong brass, woodwind and organ. Following Sullivan's death in November 1900, his



work was all but forgotten, but a revival over recent decades has brought a new audience to his work and Peter certainly left us in no doubt about the quality of Sullivan's music which covered different genres. The influence of Mendelssohn and his contemporaries is strongly felt in the orchestration and melodic sequences, with strings and woodwind particularly prominent in all his compositions, and Peter's selections bore this out and produced a most entertaining programme.

**Sue Parker** concluded the day's presentations with **Do Let's Ask for the Moon!**, a subtle reworking of Bette Davis's famous last words from the 1942 Warner Brothers melodrama, *Now, Voyager*, in which she looks into Paul Henreid's eyes: 'Don't let's ask for the moon. We have the stars'. The black and white clip evoked a wave of nostalgia amongst the audience. We were then treated to a wide-ranging programme featuring poets and composers covering almost two centuries, the most modern of which was Judith Weir's 1995 composition *Moon and Star* with the BBC SO and Singers under Martyn Brabbins in a vibrant, attractive choral piece. We then heard from the earliest of her selections: Schubert's 'To the Moon', based on Goethe's *An den Mond*, probably composed in 1819 and beautifully sung by Fischer-Dieskau and accompanied by Jörg Demus (piano), followed by Schumann's 'Mondnacht' (Moonlit Night) of 1840, based on a poem by Joseph von Eichendorff, one of Germany's leading Romantic poets. The baritone, Olaf Bär, accompanied by Geoffrey Parsons (piano), gave a moving rendition of the classic song.

A late Debussy extract from his Preludes Book 2 of 1913, 'The Terrace for Moonlight Audiences', was sensitively played by Izumi Tateno, the Japanese virtuoso pianist. Cecil Armstrong Gibbs (1889-1960), was a prolific English composer of songs and choral works, and we heard two of his songs: 'Silver', based on a poem by Walter de la Mare, a close friend, and 'Neglected Moon!', words by Clifford Bax, Arnold's younger brother. Both were sung engagingly by soprano Geraldine McGreevy, with Roger Vignoles (piano). As a contrast, we next heard 'Moonstruck' from the show *Our Miss Gibbs*, composed in 1909 by Lionel Monckton, and sung by Marilyn Hill Smith (soprano) with the Southern Festival Orchestra, under Robin White, in a delightful, comic vein. 'Hunter's Moon' of 1942 by Gilbert Vinter, brought together Lisa Ormston Bontrager (horn) and Kathy Gattuso Cinatl (piano) in a lively, then contemplative, then lively piece reflecting the hunt, the catch and final escape! The next two songs, with piano accompaniment, were products of the Dymock Poets, the Gloucestershire Poets' Colony group, which included Wilfrid Gibson, two of whose works were heard: the first, set to music by Ivor Gurney, entitled 'All Night under the Moon', and then Christian Wilson's setting of 'The Empty Cottage', both beautifully sung by Susan Bickley (mezzo) and Roderick Williams (baritone) respectively. The Bournemouth SO, under Richard Hickox, gave us an atmospheric and haunting rendition of Britten's

'Moonlight', the third of the 'Sea Interludes' from *Peter Grimes*, premiered in 1945. Glenn Miller's 'Moonlight Serenade' (1938) had us pinning for the dance floor and was followed by Rodgers and Hart's American Songbook classic 'Blue Moon' (1934), sung by Greta Keller with Peter Kreuder's Orchestra. Concluding her programme, Sue played us Dvořák's 'Song to the Moon' from *Rusalka* (1900), sung by Renée Fleming in a superb performance, with the Czech PO under Mackerras, a fitting end to a superbly-crafted, eclectic and entertaining presentation.

## YORKSHIRE & NORTHWEST REGIONAL GROUP SPRING MUSIC WEEKEND

MARCH 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> 2018  
at the CRAIGLANDS HOTEL, ILKLEY

Our presenters are:

**Allan Child – How Did I Get Here?**

- a musical autobiography

**Paul Campion – Kathleen Ferrier Remembered**

- includes previously unreleased recordings

**John Futter – Putting the Record Straight**

- talks about record producer John Culshaw

**Sandra Parr – Backstage at the Phil**

- Royal Liverpool Phil's Artistic Planning Director

**Nigel Simeone – Václav Talich**

- a Czech master on an international stage

**Andrew Keener – Sir Malcolm Sargent**

- a 50<sup>th</sup>-anniversary tribute

**Gordon Drury – NW8**

- the Abbey Road studios

**James Murray – A Fine Romance**

- the life and music of Jerome Kern

**David Patmore – Great Nights at La Scala**

- unforgettable live performances

Following the announcement that the FRMS Daventry Music Weekend is not going ahead in 2018, the Ilkley weekend is now the only residential event in the FRMS calendar.

Our committee extends a warm invitation to support our event in this delightful spa town, and help secure its future.

While this is a 3-night event, 1- and 2-night, as well as day-only, options are available. For further information, please contact the event co-ordinators:

Geoff Bateman (01274 783285)

or

Jim Bostwick (01484 717865)

# FRMS Committee Profiles

The Federation is pleased to welcome these new members to the committee



**Adele Wills** Society: Street and Glastonbury

**Background** Originally from the Midlands, Adele has had a 30-year career in post-16 education ranging from Somerset to Solihull to Southport (despite appearances, places starting with S were not the primary consideration). She has a BA and MA in English Literature, specialising in the Victorian novel. Since taking early retirement, she has had the time and energy to pursue her lifelong passion for music, settling in rural Somerset in sight of Glastonbury Tor and the line of the Mendip Hills. She has been a member of both Solihull and Southport Music Societies, and is now a member of the Street and Glastonbury Society.

**Other activities** A member of Wells Cathedral Piano Group, the Orchard Piano Club, Wells U3A Music Appreciation Group, piano playing, singing, film, literature and theatre, art appreciation, walking in the Mendip Hills, strolling round Wells Cathedral and Glastonbury Abbey.

**Secret skill** Cooking - but nowhere near *Come Dine With Me* or *Great British Bake-off* standard! Currently taking A-Level Music which has a module on popular music – so will soon know all there is to know about Beyoncé, funk and hip hop!

**Music choices** JS Bach, Henry Purcell, John Dowland, Telemann, Monteverdi, Mozart, Shostakovich, Arvo Pärt, Philip Glass. Gradually filling in the missing middle years: Brahms, Grieg, Dvořák, Sibelius, Wagner, Rachmaninoff. Various forays into folk, jazz and rock.



**Ron Mitchell** Society: Leicester MS

**Background** Ron is an Italian-Scot from Edinburgh. After a degree in mathematics he taught at secondary school for a while before moving into IT and now works as a programmer for a large international business services company.

**Other activities** Ron is a compulsive buyer of books, joiner of libraries and subscriber to periodicals. His musical skills include piano (grade 6), guitar (amateur folk) and tin whistle.

**Secret skill** Used to be able to recite most of ‘Tam o’ Shanter’, and will sing Scottish songs at the slightest encouragement – handy for Burns Suppers.

**Music choices** Unashamedly late Romantic and early 20<sup>th</sup> century: Brahms, Rachmaninoff, Sibelius, Elgar, Nielsen... Great pianists of past and present. Scots, Irish and English folk song.



**David Wherrell** Society: Letchworth RMS

**Background** Born in Hammersmith, David grew up in a household often full of recorded music, as both parents were lovers of classical music. David took piano and viola lessons as a child. He has two adult children and is now single and lives near Baldock, Hertfordshire. David qualified as a technical author, working in the radio and TV industry (Dynatron Radio) and then for Neve Electronics, manufacturers of broadcast and recording studio equipment. He joined Acorn Computers and wrote the service manual for the BBC Microcomputer, before moving to a typesetting house pioneering a computer-based typesetting program. The launch of the Apple Macintosh-based desktop publishing technology was a ground-breaking system and David set up his own company, one of the first to provide a technical publications service using the Apple system. After sixteen years, a spell of ill health and, coincidentally, the decline of electronic and electrical manufacturing in this country, forced David to wind up the business.

**Other activities** David now runs a successful community transport scheme, a registered charity which employs over 80 volunteer drivers using five wheelchair-accessible minibuses. A micro-car enthusiast, he owns a rare Messerschmitt cabin scooter and a ‘baby’ Fiat 126, and tows them to rallies and shows with a classic VW camper. He also has a small collection of gramophones, record players and tape recorders with which he gives a talk on the history of recorded music. The fees for this talk, plus another on ‘bubble cars’, go towards fund-raising for the community transport scheme.

**Secret skill** Keeping the collections working and finding room for everything!

**Music choices** A wide range of genres, from pop to ‘popular classical’. Over the years, a liking for opera and less familiar composers has been developing. He has a ‘reasonable’ hi-fi system and too many records and CDs.

## FRMS VACANCIES

### Bulletin Editor

The editor is currently responsible for soliciting news items, articles and advertisements, preparing the layout of the magazine, and liaising with the printers prior to publication.

We are seeking someone to take on the editorship with effect from the 2018 AGM.

We are also considering whether *Bulletin* should continue in its present format and frequency of issue, and would welcome the views of applicants on the topic.

### FRMS Treasurer

The treasurer is required to maintain the Federation’s accounts and to arrange for their independent examination and timely submission to Companies House.

The task includes collecting affiliation fees, PRS/PPL fees, and insurance payments from societies, making payments to PRS/PPL and our insurance brokers, and managing the Federation’s day-to-day expenses. It is envisaged that the new treasurer would ‘shadow’ the role until taking over in 2019.

For both these posts good computer skills and access to email are essential. For more information about either post please contact the FRMS secretary (contact details are on page 30).

# SOCIETY NEWS

## Orpington anniversary celebrations



Further to our item in the previous *Bulletin*, here are details of how we at Orpington RMS celebrated our 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the Orpington Conservative Association on November 27<sup>th</sup> 2017.

Our chairman Dennis Page included a tribute to our recently relocated members Brenda and Lawrie Smith by playing a Pye recording of Marcello's Oboe Concerto, performed by Evelyn Rothwell and Sir John Barbirolli. Dennis continued with a reference to Vice-President Tony Brace, presenting a movement from a late Schubert piano sonata played on a Philips CD by Alfred Brendel. He concluded with a choice reflecting his own interests: an extract from Beethoven's song cycle *An die ferne Geliebte*, performed by Peter Schreier and Walter Olbertz on a Brilliant Classics CD.

Committee member Greta Bayley's choices were presented in her absence. These comprised British songs contemporary with the Society's inauguration, featuring items by Ireland, Armstrong Gibbs, Dunhill, Warlock, Howells and Finzi. The performances came from a classic recording by Dame Janet Baker and Martin Isepp on a Saga CD.

Ian Bailey, vice-chairman and programme secretary, presented an overview drawn from the ORMS archives of the first decade of the Society's existence. This included a tape recording of part of a tribute to Gilbert Parfitt presented at the 1990 FRMS Weekend in Cambridge. The section contained part of an interview between Lawrie Smith and Gilbert, undertaken in 1977. This segued into Delius's *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* played on an EMI CD by the RPO under Beecham.

Dennis Nicholas, our secretary, paid tribute to the now longest-serving Orpington member, Ian Walker, by playing the complete Octet for horn, piano, and strings by Sir Arnold Bax, performed by the Academy of St Martin in the Fields Chamber Ensemble on Chandos Records.

Our treasurer Phil Gray began with a work dating from 1937, Walton's *Crown Imperial*, following on with a tribute to, and a performance by, one of ORMS's early Presidents, Heddle Nash, singing the 'Flower Song' from Bizet's *Carmen*. He concluded with the Toccata from the Organ Symphony No. 5 by Widor – Widor died in 1937 – played by Fernando Germani at the organ of Selby Abbey, a disc produced by them in aid of the restoration of the Hill organ in the abbey church.

Another committee member, Tony Bradshaw, concluded the evening with a selection of movements from *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge*, composed by the young Benjamin Britten for the Boyd Neel Orchestra and first heard in 1937. He used the classic Decca recording by the English Chamber Orchestra, conducted by the composer.

**Ian Bailey**

## Ramsbottom RMS's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary



In 1967, my uncle, Mr Billy Hall, placed an advert in the local newspaper inviting music lovers to his home to enjoy an evening listening to recorded music on Thursday August 31<sup>st</sup>

1967. This inauguration of the Society was attended by 19 enthusiasts, two of whom are still members. One of these original members was a local school headmaster, Gordon H Sidery, who offered the Society its first meeting place and went on to become secretary of the FRMS.

The Society has an active membership of around 40, many of whom prepare and present programmes both to our members and to other groups and societies, e.g. Bury, Nelson, Rochdale and Swinton. In return, members from these groups present programmes to the RRMS. In addition, members write press reports, prepare refreshments, co-ordinate the recording equipment and act as disc jockeys. The Society also has an annual dinner in April and organises group visits to concerts held in Manchester. It has a reputation for being a friendly and welcoming society.

Our meeting on August 24<sup>th</sup> was a celebration, almost to the day, of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Society, and we were honoured by the presence of the Mayor of the Metropolitan Borough of Bury, Councillor Dorothy Gunther. We also welcomed representatives of other societies with whom we exchange programme presentations, past members and friends.

The first half of the evening covered highlights of the first fifty years of the Society through narrative and music. Richard Hall, the only founder member still active in the Society, outlined the very early years of the Society from its inception as The Holcombe Brook and District Gramophone Society.

We were pleased to have with us John Hall, the son of our founder Billy Hall. John felt very proud of his father's achievement in founding the Society and said how pleased and proud his own father would have been had he known it would still be thriving fifty years later, and hopefully for many years to come.

The story was continued by various members of the Society bringing us up to the present day. Amongst a number of musical offerings we heard the last movement of Mozart's Divertimento for String Trio, K. 563. Mozart was our founder's favourite composer.

Jim Hopkinson, our technical officer, chose 'Pines of the Appian Way' from Respighi's *Pines of Rome*, one of the pieces played when members heard the first demonstration of CD sound reproduction in 1984. Our chairman, Roger Howarth, concluded this part of the evening with the

final movement of Elgar's Symphony No. 1 in A flat Major, Opus 55.

The Mayor then made a short speech in which she thanked the Society for her invitation. She said that as a lover of classical music she attends concerts at Manchester's Bridgewater Hall when duty permits, and had thoroughly enjoyed the evening. She then joined President Mrs Pat Scott and chairman Roger Howarth in the ceremonial cutting of our anniversary cake, made by Richard Hall and beautifully decorated by member Gwyneth Adshead. Our chairman then presented floral arrangements to the Mayor and our President.

Roger Howarth brought to an end the official proceedings with his concluding remarks and various expressions of thanks after which members and guests enjoyed an excellent buffet co-ordinated by the ladies of our committee.

**Richard W Hall, general secretary**

### **News from Huddersfield**

Members of the Huddersfield RMS presented flowers and a voucher last July to the outgoing



secretary, Anne Hartley (pictured), who has been secretary of the branch for the past 17 years. She has served the Society for all these years with quiet efficiency, not only dealing with the day-to-day affairs of the Society but also spending time arranging a programme

for each year and liaising with visiting speakers. Anne loves going to Ilkley and Daventry, and hopes to meet her friends at the forthcoming Ilkley weekend.

**Wendy Jennings, secretary**

...On September 22<sup>nd</sup> 1947 the inaugural meeting of what was to become Huddersfield Gramophone Society took place in the town's YWCA. On September 25<sup>th</sup> 2017, now known as Huddersfield Recorded Music Society, we celebrated our 70<sup>th</sup> birthday at our present home, Fartown Methodist Church, with two varieties of cake supplementing our usual refreshments. Our longest-standing member, Shirley Bostock, presented a programme of appropriate musical memories and read out a very entertaining poem about the history of our Society which was written for its Golden Jubilee in 1997 by a previous member, Brian Jenkinson. There was a small exhibition of items from our very extensive archive, including several sample programmes from every decade of our existence. The earliest of these covers April to August 1948 and records that on April 5<sup>th</sup> members heard music by Bach, Corelli, Haydn and Mozart. It also notes that subscriptions for the Summer Session would be increased to 3/6d! Other items on display included newspaper cuttings, photos, and souvenir programmes of local events in which the Society had taken part. We have a complete set of committee meeting minutes covering

70 years, and are still using the original members' record book! As well as celebrating our history we continue to look forward to many more years of enjoying music together.

**Sue Parker, chair**

### **Dundee RMS closes**

When I first joined Dundee RMS some years ago there were about 25 enthusiastic members. Chris Hamilton was a splendid chairman, full of knowledge and always imparting his views. As well as members taking turns to give talks and sharing their interests in music of all kinds, we also invited guest speakers. When the FRMS Scottish Region Music Days were revived, the first meeting was in Dundee and thereafter in Stirling, Kirkcaldy and St Fillans.

DRMS had reduced to only six members. A number, including Chris Hamilton, have died, therefore, very sadly, the decision to close the Society was taken on June 1<sup>st</sup> 2017.

**Pat Leishman**

... I joined Dundee Recorded Music Society in the mid 1970s and remained a member until the mid 1990s. Under the enthusiastic chairmanship of Chris Hamilton the Society and its loyal band of members enjoyed many an evening of musical entertainment and learning. This was a major factor in developing my interest in classical music and I look back on those days with affection. As Pat mentions above, Dundee RMS played a prominent role in reviving the FRMS Scottish Regional Group which had been in abeyance since Chris Hamilton passed away. Dundee had a proud history of hosting Scottish Regional events over the years with many enjoyable days spent meeting music lovers from Scotland and listening to excellent speakers.

**John Maidment**

### **New society springs up in the New Forest**

A new Society, Milford on Sea RMS, opened in March 2017 at Milford on Sea, Hampshire in the New Forest. Using most impressive hi-fi equipment kindly donated by the now defunct New Milton Society, the new group has gone from strength to strength with now more than 30 members. Meeting on the second and fourth Fridays at 2.30pm in Milford Library, members enjoy a wide range of mainly classical music, occasionally spiced up with a little blues or some foot-tapping jazz. Members are keenly looking forward to hearing more recorded music in 2018. Further details from David Scourse on 01590 645365 or Andy Clark on 01590 643249.

**Gordon Arnsby Brown, press secretary**

### **West Wickham's year**

West Wickham RMS in the London Borough of Bromley can report another busy and successful year in 2017. Once again the regular fortnightly meetings have been supplemented with concerts and opera visits, social events, a musical weekend, and the musical holiday. The membership numbers 90.

The main event of the year was the Society's visit to the King's Lynn Festival in July. The five-day holiday was based at the Globe Hotel in central King's Lynn and almost adjacent to the Corn Exchange, the main venue. The first evening was BBC Radio 2's *Friday Night is Music Night* with Ken Bruce introducing a very varied programme played by the BBC Concert Orchestra. Richard Balcombe conducted music from the world of film, theatre, television and the classics, with guest singers and instrumentalists.

The next evening, following a visit to the spectacular Thursford collection of fairground and street organs and concerts on the Wurlitzer organ, members attended St George's Guildhall for a recital by the Wihan String Quartet. The main works were Beethoven's Quartet No. 11 in F minor, Op. 95, and Dvořák's Quartet No. 12 in F, 'American'. The third day saw us on the Norfolk Broads for a lunch cruise and in the evening we attended a folk event in the Corn Exchange featuring the Demon Barbers with traditional and new folk music, clog and sword dancing.

On the last day a visit was made to Sandringham, viewing the house, gardens, museum and church. The festival closed in the evening with a concert given by the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Martin Yates. They opened their programme with Mendelssohn's Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, very appropriate for the time of year. Raphael Wallfisch was the soloist in Dvořák's Cello Concerto in B minor, this a stirring account of a superb work, followed by a rousing performance of Beethoven's Symphony No. 3, 'Eroica', a fitting climax to the 67<sup>th</sup> King's Lynn Festival.

In May, following a Thames cruise, we visited the Royal Festival Hall where members heard Brahms's Piano Concerto No. 1 with the Philharmonia Orchestra and Martin Helmchen as soloist. In the final work, Herbert Blomstedt conducted Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 in A, Op. 92.

The Society attended Glyndebourne On Tour to see *The Barber of Seville* by Rossini. The Glyndebourne On Tour Orchestra and Chorus were conducted by their distinguished musical director Ben Gernon. Jack Swanson was Count Almaviva, Marco Filippo Romano sang the part of Dr Bartolo, Tobias Greenhalgh played Figaro, and Rosina was sung by Laura Verrecchia. It was an excellent, very well sung and lively performance and was an outstanding October outing.

In April, the theme of the musical weekend held in Eastbourne was 'Inspirations'. Phillip Cox started the sessions with music inspired by Art and Literature. Excerpts included 'Promenade' and 'Gnomus' from *Pictures at an Exhibition* by Mussorgsky, 'Spring' from *Three Botticelli Pictures* by Respighi, and from *Estampes* (Etchings), 'Jardins sous la pluie' by Debussy. Korngold's Hornpipe from *Much Ado About Nothing* and ballet music for *Rosamunde* by Schubert were also played.

Marie Nasso's choice of music was inspired by the Sun Moon and Stars. The first excerpt, the opening 'Representation of Chaos' from Haydn's *The Creation*, was followed by the sunrise as depicted in Richard Strauss's *Also sprach Zarathustra*. Other works were 'E lucevan le stelle' ('And the stars were shining brightly') from Puccini's *Tosca*, the storm-tossed third movement of Beethoven's 'Moonlight' Sonata, and Elgar's *Chanson de Matin* and *Chanson de Nuit*.

Kate Severs took the third session using Landscapes, Waters and Rivers as the source of inspiration. The programme included Giorgetta and Luigi's duet from Puccini's *Il Tabarro*, set on the banks of the River Seine. Kate also played Borodin's *In the Steppes of Central Asia*, the 'Trevi Fountain' from *The Fountains of Rome* by Respighi, and a Hornpipe in D from Handel's *Water Music*.

Audrey Percival, giving the final session, chose music inspired by All Creatures Great and Small. Commencing with Vaughan Williams's Overture to *The Wasps*, the presentation included Fauré's *Papillon*, Haydn's String Quartet Op. 64 No. 5, 'The Lark', Tavener's *The Lamb* and Rossini's Overture to *The Thieving Magpie*. Also during the weekend, a DVD presentation featured excerpts from Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*, and Gounod's *Faust*.

The annual buffet supper and concert was held at Bencurtis Park in March with the London String Trio providing the recital. Three young artists Jemima Clarke (violin), Josephine Galton (viola) and Lucy Skinner (cello) played Mozart's *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, Fauré's *Pavane* and Brahms's Hungarian Dance No. 5. Also featured were Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 5, the Intermezzo from *Cavalleria Rusticana* by Mascagni, and excerpts from Handel's *Water Music*. The recital ended on a more modern note with 'Maple Leaf Rag' by Scott Joplin.

In December the Society attended a special celebratory concert given by the Philharmonia Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall. The occasion was the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary (almost to the day) of Finland's independence from Russia. The programme of music by Jean Sibelius, Finland's greatest composer, opened with *Finlandia*, which started life as a contribution to a political demonstration in 1899. During the emotional performance, the Royal Festival Hall organ displayed blue and white lighting (the colours of the national flag) illuminating the pipes in the organ gallery. This was followed by the Violin Concerto in D minor with the Norwegian Vilde Frang as soloist in a performance highly praised by *The Times* critic. The concert ended on a nationalistic note with the *Lemminkäinen Suite* which included 'The Swan of Tuonela' and 'The Return of Lemminkäinen' from Finnish mythology. The Philharmonia Orchestra's principal conductor and artistic adviser Esa-Pekka Salonen from Finland was on the podium.

Regular fortnightly meetings were presented throughout the year and our guest speakers included Terry Barfoot (The Gallic Muse), and critic and

composer Robert Matthew-Walker (Sergei Rachmaninoff).

**Phillip Cox, chairman**

### Silver celebration at Wollaton

It was at the Federation AGM in 1992 that the newly-formed Wollaton RMS announced its arrival on the scene. Edwin and June Marsh had recently moved to Wollaton, on the outskirts of Nottingham, from Surrey. There they had been members of Bookham RMS and finding that there was no society in Nottingham they decided to form one. Thus the Wollaton RMS was born. Twenty-five years on, Wollaton RMS was itself the host society for the Federation's 2017 AGM (described elsewhere in these pages) and a more intimate celebration was held later in November.

The Society's monthly meetings take place on the last Friday of the month and members duly gathered on November 24<sup>th</sup> for a meeting with a difference. The first part was fairly conventional with a programme of music chosen and introduced by members, but this was then followed by a celebration buffet. Edwin Marsh has not been too well in recent years but he and June were able to attend and to cut a celebration cake which was served to members, accompanied by glasses of sparkling wine.

As Federation chairman, I was pleased to represent the FRMS at this celebration with my wife Ruth. I was invited to propose a toast to the Federation during which I referred to the efforts of members in keeping their societies going and supporting the Federation. I also presented Bill Clarke, the Wollaton secretary, with a letter of congratulation to the Society and offered best wishes for the next 25 years.

**Allan Child**

### Torbay Musical Weekend



What a Grand Weekend! The response from those who attended the 2017 Weekend has been an astounding thumbs-up! Twelve presentations during the course of the weekend is a challenge for anybody, but even

the late night sessions were well supported. Nearly 100 members of the Friends of Torbay booked in to the Grand Hotel for the first time. Our previous venue had closed at short notice in the middle of the year.

After a warm reception and a good dinner our first presentation, from **Ian Bailey**, on the almost unknown composer Joachim Raff gave us a gentle start. To follow, **Mike Price** (our Welsh wizard behind the technical side of presentations) entertained us with a most exciting series of videos that are on continental screens but not on offer from UK channels.

Saturday started with **Barry Sterndale-Bennett** telling us about his great-great-grandfather, William Sterndale Bennett, who was a contemporary of

Mendelssohn and Schumann, and a highly regarded composer, conductor and pianist. Another Welsh wizard, **Geraint Lewis**, enlightened us on the life, church music and theatre works of Haydn. **Andrew Collins**, a very far-sighted entrepreneur and raconteur, then recounted the challenges facing the future of the music retailing business.

For connoisseurs of classical music of the chamber variety, our live recital on Saturday evening was given by members from the internationally acclaimed **Primavera Chamber Ensemble** led by Paul Manley, with Martin Smith and Jonathan Barritt playing works by Beethoven, Kodály, Ysaÿe and Dvořák. This was a very difficult and challenging programme that was quite exquisite and performed with panache. The night closed with **Marilyn Boyle** giving tastes of the Hallé Orchestra, Johann Strauss II and the City Varieties Music Hall in Leeds – something for all tastes.

On Sunday morning, **Hedd Thomas** was a force to reckon with! He spoke about Welsh National Opera and their 2018 upcoming spring tour in the UK performing *La forza del destino*. Hedd, the WNO's dramaturg, certainly had people wowing and determined to see this under-performed opera by Verdi.



**Hedd Thomas**

Yet another polished presenter, **Jonathan Willcocks**, talked about his late father Sir David Willcocks's contribution to choral music, not least from King's College, Cambridge where the descant became a must for so many carols. Jonathan also spoke about his own composing and conducting career.



**Jonathan Willcocks**

Our very full weekend programme's penultimate presentation was the duo of **Cathy Mackerras** with **Nigel Simeone** talking about Cathy's father, the Australian, Sir Charles Mackerras, an incredible conductor who was charming, dynamic and universally liked. We heard some unpublished recordings and watched rare filmed performances.

The last presentation is always a difficult one to programme. **Kay Jordan** did a masterly teach-in of the tricks of the trade of the professional singer. Using Gilbert and Sullivan as her base, she illustrated her talk by singing many extracts from their works. Not too taxing and a delightful way to end our weekend.

As a closing word, John Isaac reminded everybody to put the next Torbay Musical Weekend in their diary, the dates being November 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> 2018 at the Grand Hotel, Torquay.

**John Isaac**

## SOCIETY NEWS – PHOTO EXTRA



**Ramsbottom RMS celebrates 50 years**

L-r: Ken Adshead, Vice-chairman; Mayor of Bury, Councillor Dorothy Gunther; Pat Scott, President; Roger W Howarth, Chairman. *Photo: Jim Hopkinson*



**Orpington at 80**

ORMS chairman Dennis Page (left) and President Malcolm Ruthven. *Photo: Ian Bailey*



**Huddersfield's presentation to retiring secretary, Anne Hartley**

Left to right: Margaret Kneeshaw, Edgar Raw, Tony Haywood, Gary Midgley, Jim Bostwick, Anne Hartley, Tom Starkey, Geoff Bateman, Wendy Jennings, Sue Parker, Peter Smart, Robert Swithenbank, Shirley Bostock, David Smith, Eric Illingworth. Other contributing members who were unable to be present were Anne Traynor, Christine and John Barker, Joy Rogers, Joyce Whittaker, and Rosemary Hall. *Photo: Jill Mollitt*



**Torbay Musical Weekend**

Left: l-r Kay Jordan, Marilyn Boyle, Maureen Greenhouse

Right: Members of Primavera Chamber Ensemble

*Photos: Richard Stevens*





# Arts in Residence

CULTURAL BREAKS IN BEAUTIFUL PLACES



## BETWEEN TWO WARS

### Music from the 20s and 30s

Tuesday 29th – Thursday 31st May 2018

Highgate House, Creaton, near Northampton

with Terry Barfoot and Ian Lowes



The inter-war period produced music encompassing a wide range of styles, written by many of the century's greatest composers, including Stravinsky, Weill, Milhaud, Honegger, Nielsen, and those pictured above. We will explore aspects of this rich legacy, with illustrations on excellent hi-fi equipment.

Originally a coaching inn, **Highgate House** is a country house hotel set amongst rolling countryside in the picturesque Northamptonshire village of Creaton, just seven miles from Northampton town centre.

**Terry Barfoot** writes widely on music for Britain's leading journals, orchestras, festivals and record companies. He lectures at Oxford University and venues throughout the country, is Publications Consultant to the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and the Director of Arts in Residence.

**Ian Lowes** studied at Durham University and at the Janáček Academy in the Czech Republic. For many years he was a professional horn player, before becoming head of Composition and Academic Music at Bryanston School. He is an active composer and conductor, and is an international examiner for the Associated Board.

Course members will arrive on Tuesday at 5pm and depart on Thursday afternoon.

Arts in Residence and Highgate House offer an excellent cuisine including dinners with wine.

**Price:** £289.00 per person (twin/double rooms), £315.00 (single rooms) to include all meals, course fees and accommodation.

#### Full details and Booking:

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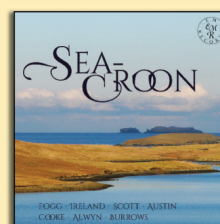


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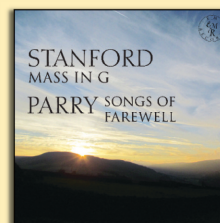


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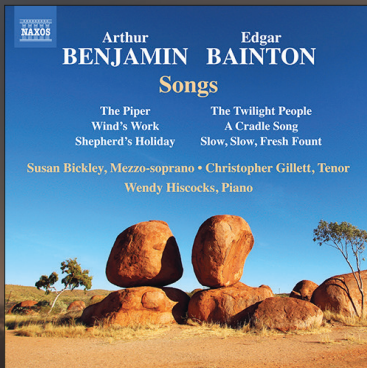
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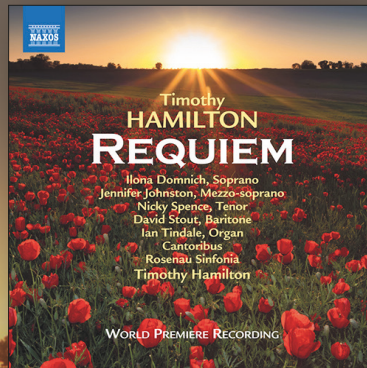
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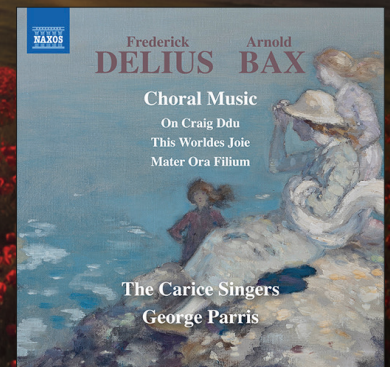
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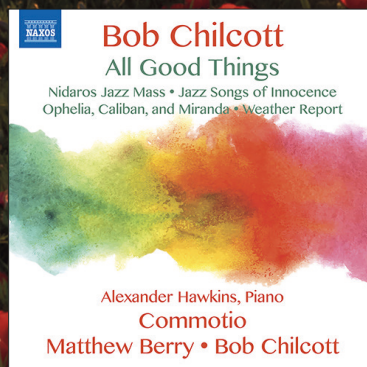
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## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT Allan Child

**A**S I WRITE THESE WORDS, the new year 2018 is but a few days old. There has been a hard frost in the night and those neighbours who have had to go to work were busy scraping windscreens in the semi-darkness of the early morning. But just outside our front door are green shoots where daffodils are already preparing to put on their golden display which, when this issue of *Bulletin* is published, should be shining in all its glory.

In the Federation, too, there are 'green shoots' presaging renewal. Many readers will be aware already, from the brief reports in the Newsletter circulated in January, that following election at the AGM, and a subsequent co-option, the committee is at full strength for the first time in five years. We are very pleased to welcome Adele Wills, David Wherrell and Ron Mitchell to the committee and to report that Adele is 'shadowing' the role of Federation secretary with a view to taking over the role when Jim Bostwick steps down later this year. You can find profiles of our new committee members on page 10 and a fuller report of the AGM beginning on page 4.

The injection of new blood into the committee is not merely good news but also important for the future of the Federation. However, it is still the case that several societies have closed recently, usually because of a decline in membership or the related problem of finding members able to take on committee tasks. In my chairman's address at the AGM I looked at these problems. There is no need to repeat here what I said then, but it is encouraging to note that there are societies or groups of members keen to carry on in difficult circumstances. So it is a pleasure to welcome the recently-affiliated society at Milford on Sea, formed by a group of members of the New Milton Society after they, sadly, had to close.

It has again been my pleasure in recent months to visit a number of societies, and I have further visits planned, so I look forward to meeting more of you before too long.



### Death of former *Bulletin* editor



We are sorry to report the death in March 2017 of Arthur Baker, editor of *Bulletin* magazine from 1999-2005. Arthur joined the Bramhall Gramophone Society in the early 1980s and soon became a committee member. He offered to revise

the Constitution, which involved the modernisation of the Society's name to the Bramhall Recorded Music Society. Although he held the posts of vice-chairman and chairman, it was as secretary where his contribution was most valuable. He printed the programmes 'in house' at nominal or no charge for many years and was utterly dependable in all his secretarial duties – a great asset to any chairman, including myself!

He presented many recitals, all exceedingly well-researched, interesting, and often intriguing, including a programme on Beethoven's works without opus numbers which he called 'woos'. That instantly spread to other members and became common parlance from then on!

Unfortunately Arthur had serious health issues which involved major operations, but, such was his commitment to the Society that he would reappear, perhaps a little early at times. Eventually, a general decline in his health forced him to resign from the secretary's post at the end of the 2011/12 season and his appearances dwindled thereafter. However, all those who were members during Arthur's best years would surely agree that his contribution and influence were greater than that of any other member.

Sadly, Bramhall RMS had to close last year because officer positions couldn't be filled.

### Phil Scragg, former chairman, Bramhall RMS

### Donald Rooksby (1926-2017)

It is with sadness that we report the death in October 2017 of Donald Rooksby. In 1945 Donald was the founder of Derby Recorded Music Society, which was an unusual name in those days for a 'gramophone society'. Clearly the emphasis was meant to be on the music. One of the members of the Society in those early days was the late Ted Perry and years later Donald joined Ted at Hyperion as general manager.

By that time Donald had left Derby, but not before he had been instrumental in organising two regional conferences of the National Federation of Gramophone Societies (as the FRMS was then known). His connections with the Federation and Hyperion led to him organising a scheme whereby societies affiliated to the Federation were able to order Hyperion CDs on advantageous terms. He was also willing to visit societies to present programmes, and not only about Hyperion Records. Other topics ranged from neglected works of Mozart to the music of Frederick Delius.

Among his visits to societies were many to the Derby society, including as guest of honour at both its 50<sup>th</sup> and 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. His visits were always welcome and the Society was pleased to make him their honorary President before age and ill health enforced his retirement from the FRMS Presenters' Panel. Despite this, he maintained contact with many societies through an annual newsletter and it seemed strange not to receive one at Christmas 2017.

Allan Child

# FROM THE ARCHIVES

It's always interesting to look through *Bulletin* back numbers to discover – or remember – how things were within the FRMS – and before it, the NFGS – in earlier times. *Bulletin* 100 of Spring 1984 marked its 100<sup>th</sup> issue by charting the beginnings of both the Federation and the magazine itself. Here we reproduce the text of two items exactly as they appeared in that issue, which includes the occasional inaccuracy as well as adhering to the house-style of formatting in operation at the time.

## OUR FOUNDING FATHERS

by S.O. Miebs

The minutes of the committee meeting of the Dulwich & Forest Hill Gramophone Society on May 28th 1936 record that the Hon. Secretary reported the receipt of a letter from Mr W.W. Johnson of Gillingham Society regarding the proposal to inaugurate a federation of gramophone societies. Mr Johnson had already broached the subject when he paid a visit to the society in the previous March. It was agreed to federate at a fee of 3s 6d (17½p) and to send a delegate.

The meeting that actually brought the NFGS into being took place on Saturday 25th July 1936 at the Columbia (EMI) Recording Studios at 3 Abbey Road, London, NW8. Fourteen societies were represented with a total attendance of 37. They were Acton & District (3), Agricola (2), Dulwich & Forest Hill (9), Gillingham (5), Hackney (2), Halifax (1), High Wycombe (2), Horsham (2), Inland Revenue (1), N.W. London (4), Northampton (1), Southsea (1), S.E. London (2) and Woodford Green (2). It may be worth noting that four of these societies are in membership today – Acton, Dulwich, Gillingham and Horsham.

Mr F.E. Young of Gillingham GS welcomed the delegates and introduced Mr Johnson who briefly related the history of the events leading up to the meeting. He made it clear to all present that the proposed Federation was to be entirely independent of *The Gramophone* (for which he wrote a monthly article) and also of the recording companies. Because of the choice of meeting place, several delegates had been worried in case there was a link.

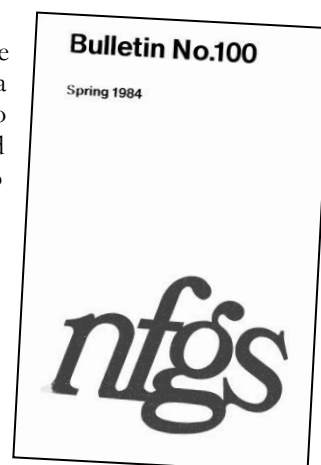
Mr Johnson was elected chairman of the meeting, and business began. A resolution was put before those present: "That this meeting of representatives does hereby inaugurate a Federation of Gramophone Societies". The proposed title produced a lengthy discussion; eventually, in the apparently optimistic hope that all gramophone societies throughout the country would eventually seek membership, our present title was adopted.

As could reasonably be predicted, Mr W.W. Johnson and Mr F.E. Young, Chairman and Hon. Secretary respectively of the Gillingham GS, the two promoters of this meeting and who had been indefatigable in their prior support for a linking of societies, were elected to serve in like positions in the new Federation. S.O. Miebs, Hon. Treasurer of the Dulwich & Forest Hill GS, was similarly elected as Hon. Treasurer of the new body, on the proposal of Mr F.T. Dixon, Hon. Secretary of the Dulwich society. Mr D.M. Freeland, Acton & District GS, who had been instrumental in setting up a short-lived similar group in 1931, but which had only the support of five societies, and Mr H.J. Lovick of Wood Green RMS were elected to serve as committee members.

The meeting unanimously resolved that the aims and objects of the NFGS should be: "The furtherance of interest in, and the extension of, the gramophone society movement by the establishment of an information bureau, by a register of gramophone societies, by securing closer co-operation between gramophone societies and the recording companies, by doing everything possible to ensure the establishment of a National Library of gramophone records, by the compilation of a panel of lecturers, by encouraging the interchange of visits between neighbouring societies, by ensuring the publication of gramophone society news in a suitable journal and by all other means in its power."

Like so many newly-formed bodies, the NFGS was ambitious! The committee was instructed to work on all these points, as well as to arrange Federation visits to the HMV Studios, the formation of a technical section, facilities for playing some of each month's new releases to members of gramophone societies, arranging for demonstrations of reproducing instruments by competent technical experts, as well as ways and means of achieving the Federation's aims. In the event, most of these objectives were achieved, but it took quite a time to do so. It was perhaps as well that, in 1936, the number of affiliates was less than 5% of the present figure!

The outbreak of war in September 1939 caused a break in Federation activities, although individual societies continued to meet and dozens of new ones were formed during the next six years. Many of them disbanded after a brief life, in part because of lack of a central focus. After the cessation of hostilities, Mr Johnson (still Chairman



and to remain in office for more than another twenty years) sent a pamphlet to all known societies. In this he wrote: "With the World War over, the NFGS intends to resume its work" which had had to be discontinued in September 1939, when suspension was clearly inevitable. The Federation officers, all honorary, soon became connected with wartime duties. The chairman was evacuated to the south coast and then to south Wales with his school. The secretary was commissioned into the Royal Navy, while the treasurer joined the Army and, after some time spent in England, was drafted to the Middle East. Under these circumstances the Federation could, at best, do no more than maintain very tenuous links. Fortunately, all the officers came unscathed through the war. Shortly after the issue of Mr Johnson's pamphlet, the three were able to meet and then get the Federation successfully functioning once more.

*Ed: In 1984, Stanley Miebs was an FRMS committee member, but as the article below shows, he was the Federation's treasurer during the 1940s.*

## **A "BULLETIN" HISTORY** **by W.W. Johnson**

Recovery immediately after the War, which ended in the Spring of 1946, was slow, especially for voluntary organisations such as ours with some of its main promoters well scattered. Co-founder F. Eric Young was serving with the Navy somewhere in the Mediterranean; Stan Miebs, Treasurer, was on dry land but further east, while committee man Dave Freeland was at home in Acton but fully occupied. I was in London too, in "digs" (so it happened) with our Auditor-to-be, Ernie Searle.

Resumption of the NFGS called for plenty of publicity. This came, as always, from *The Gramophone* whose manager, Cecil Pollard, offered us space in its pages each month. Then came abolt from the blue, when Decca's advertising manager offered to print in bulk any literature we needed, providing he could bring the merits of the new "ffrr" records to the notice of our societies – and that was how Bulletin no.1 was born. Affiliated societies, together with all our individual supporters and well-wishers received four foolscap sheets of news (cyclostyled on one side only at Decca HQ in Brixton, and this at a time of continuing paper shortage). It was dated April 1947. There was no real editor; the first dozen or so issues were drawn up by Fred Youens (soon to be the Hon. Secretary of the Federation) and myself in conjunction with the Committee.

Its ten short paragraphs detailed the duties of every society concerning Performing Right (ranging in cost between one and five guineas); Phonographic Performance (paid in respect of affiliated societies by the NFGS to the tune of five shillings per annum to cover *all*); Entertainments Duty, to be paid when societies were charging a subscription in excess of threepence per meeting!; Regional news; continuing activities of the pre-war Technical Committee; titles of works that we felt that the companies should record without delay; a new Panel of Lecturers, and suggestions for "travelling levies".

Issue no.2, similar in format, followed in October 1947. It reported the first postwar AGM, held the previous month and, in particular, the new committee of the NFGS. Young did not expect to return to civilian life for some months, so became Vice-Chairman, while F.G. Youens (a keen supporter) agreed to take over the post of Secretary since he was contemplating entering the recording world. Other items in this issue included an expanded panel of lecturers and advance particulars of a free record library.

Our societies still numbered less than one hundred, but we had great expectations. Among the thousands of men and women being demobilised was a fair sprinkling who had learned the art and pleasure of listening to recorded music, and many of those who had been "bitten" wished to continue the habit into civil life. So they approached us. One man, according to Bulletin no.4, secured our address from the *Iraq Times*!

To date, the NFGS had no fixed constitution, so a Special General Meeting was called in January 1948 and its findings became our "Bulletin no.3". From now on, alas, Decca presses no longer rolled on our behalf, and "Bulletin no.4" emerged as a ghostly looking affair, with mis-spellings and mis-typings for which we had to pay dearly. It was an issue that did us very little credit; however, it did include news about the new record library installed at Leavesden Training College, where I was in residence. By now our societies numbered 197 – an increase of 100% on the previous figure.

Issues 5 and 6 (October 1948 and January 1949) gave mainly routine information, although the latter was enlarged by an extra page from the Technical Committee, informing readers of wartime developments in loudspeakers and pickups. The following issue outlined the Federation's first insurance scheme, which covered equipment to the value of £100 for a premium of thirty shillings. "Bulletin no.10" (May 1950) announced the first post-1938 Hoddesdon conference. The final stencilled edition was no.14 (November 1951) and from this time, until no.43 of March 1961, the "Bulletin" was a clearly duplicated and stapled booklet with a buff cover overprinted in bright red. Gilbert Parfitt not only edited the new production but also took over the NFGS column in *The Gramophone*. He was relieved of part of his responsibilities when Peter Laming did a sterling job by

editing a number of issues, one of which included an announcement of my publication *The gramophone book* (Hinrichsen, 12s 6d, but 7s 6d to affiliated societies). The change of secretary from Roderick Shaw to the Rev. Harold Luckman was noted, and one could read a six-page history of the Acton & District Society, founded in 1927 and a comprehensive article on the NFGS Record Library's first eight years.

With the arrival of the new LP format at the beginning of 1950, the Library underwent a complete overhaul. The 4,000 78s were gradually withdrawn and replaced by nearly 1,000 LPs. It was revealed that during the previous eight years 1,500 parcels had been despatched, a figure that represented about 10,000 discs. Other features included celebrations by Orpington and Putney societies on reaching their (old-style) majorities, while technical matters were now handled by Bert Webb who had taken over from George Palmer. A new, regular contributor making pungent observations and criticisms on matters gramophonic was W.L. Dixon.

When Harold Luckman resigned as Secretary, Dixon not only took over that office – he offered to edit the “Bulletin” as well. The result was that issue no.43 (March 1961) was an entirely different publication from its predecessors; it had an orange cover and was succeeded within a few weeks by no.44, which was announced as a new quarterly publication. It opened with the declaration: “Calling all secretaries – at long last the magazine appears IN PRINT. It ceases to be a dessicated, typewritten information sheet for secretaries – often ignored...” and (at least on this occasion) could hardly be ignored with a new format, the inclusion of photographs, advertisements and plenty of eye-catching slogans. For long enough, Dixon had been our strongest critic and now he was to take over and try to transform our movement. He held that every town of any size in the country should have its gramophone society; our 372 affiliations should at least be doubled. He launched the “Hoddesdon” loudspeaker in issue no.45 (September 1961) at a “reduced” but unspecified price. Yet it was never heard of again, and I doubt if one was sold. If there is an example extant, it might fetch a fortune at Sotheby's one day!

No.49 (September 1962) appeared in two editions: no.49a, marked “Prom Concert Special”, priced at one shilling, was on sale outside the Albert Hall to promenaders. Then came the shock. Issue 51 (March 1963) opened, “Readers of our Bulletin will learn with regret that our lively Editor and Honorary Secretary has resigned...” Nobody was willing to try to continue the entertainment, amusement and instruction of the previous issues, so that the present writer had no option but to do the best he could, which was to produce a staid, parish magazine style of publication, reluctantly accepted.

Thenceforward we were beset by all sorts of troubles – a new cover, new format, new printers, new editor. But by issue no.69 of October 1966 the sky was brightening: an excellent report on the 1968 Hoddesdon weekend was a harbinger of what was to come. The following number announced the end of the Federation Record Library which had been steadily declining in usefulness and was expensive in upkeep. There was a report on a presentation to the Chairman who was resigning after 32 years in office. And so, when “Bulletin” no.71 arrived in September 1969, we learned that Peter Clark had resigned his brief editorship and the reins were handed into the capable hands of Bill Bryant whose keen pen and sharply pointed blue pencil have been with us ever since. With Peter Clark, the number of issues had been reduced from three to two each year. That pattern has been maintained, but the average bulk has noticeably increased with some issues requiring as many as 32 pages.

A new printer had been found who maintained the quarto size as far as no.61 (July 1966). From the next issue (October 1966) the “Bulletin” assumed its present page size. Issue 74 saw a further change of printers to Crown Press of Keighley who continue to serve us, and introduced the new Federation logo on the front cover of each issue.

A curious question was to be found in this issue: George Blong, one of the Acton stalwarts, had a complete collection of our publication except for no.23. Was it ever issued, he asked? Here and now I can tell him – it wasn't!

Gilbert Parfitt edited issue 22 and, when sent on a course, resigned and handed over to Peter Latham who mistakenly numbered the first issue for which he was responsible as 24. Nobody seems to have noticed the discrepancy until the query of 1970! So, through the years to this our first century, succeeding numbers have rolled off the presses under the safe, sure eye of our present Editor, with each issue containing official announcements, essential news, challenging views, responsible articles (just think of our Chairman's stimulating contributions, based on research and appearing in nearly every number), a Portrait Gallery of our leaders which neared a score of issues and, above all, “Around the Regions and Societies”, packed full of ideas that should give every group of thought and action. Who can question that we have, in our present “Bulletin”, a magazine that any organisation, large or small, would not be proud to possess?

*Ed: At the time of Bulletin 100, WW Johnson was the FRMS's Vice-President.*

**Opposite page: Issue 100 featured a photocopy of the first-ever *Bulletin*. That image was unsuitable for re-use, but here Sue Parker has faithfully recreated the front page, even down to the first-ever *Bulletin* typo – can you spot it?**

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF GRAMOPHONE SOCIETIES

Talbot Mansions,  
25 Museum Street,  
London, W.C.2.

April, 1947

BULLETIN No. 1.

Since the first post-war A.G.M. which was held last July the Committee has been grappling with the task of launching the National Federation on its way so that the interests of the affiliated Societies, at the time of writing exceeding 100 in number, can be served to the fullest degree possible. The fact that the membership is now five times what it was in 1939, coupled with the incidence of the fuel crisis earlier this year, has rather cramped certain plans for issuing a regular series of bulletins, a Federation Handbook, and so on, but a start has now been made in both the first two directions, and it is hoped that a regular contact will henceforth be maintained between Societies and Headquarters. The following report will give some idea of what has been done since the A.G.M.

PERFORMING RIGHTS SOCIETY. The P.R.S. had intimated last year that it wished for a revision of the terms on which Societies affiliated to the National Federation obtained their licences covering performing rights liabilities incurred by recitals. The terms that were offered were considered by the Committee to be rather on the high side and it was decided to ask for an interview to see if any agreement satisfactory to both sides could be reached. Negotiations resulted in a reduction of the original terms being offered by P.R.S. after various points had been put over, and agreement was reached on the following scale:-

				Number of recitals per annum not exceeding		
				26	39	52
Clubs with a membership						
	not exceeding	50	£1. 1. 0	£1. 11. 6	£2. 2. 0	
"	"	100	£2. 2. 0	£2. 12. 6	£3. 3. 0	
"	"	200	£3. 3. 0	£3. 13. 6	£4. 4. 0	
"	"	300	£4. 4. 0	£4. 14. 6	£5. 5. 0	

Societies should note that payment to the P.R.S. of the appropriate fee is due at the commencement of the P.R.S. year, which starts on 5th September, in full, and the Treasurer's burden will be considerably eased if timely payment of this and the N.F.G.S. affiliation fee can be made.

No separate licences are issued for each Society but a comprehensive licence detailing the Societies covered therein is issued to and held by the N.F.G.S. Production of a receipt from the N.F.G.S. should satisfy any enquirer.

PHONOGRAPHIC PERFORMANCE LTD. As a result of negotiations between the Vice Chairman of the N.F.G.S., Mr. F. Eric Young, and P.P.Ltd., an agreement has been reached whereby affiliated Societies are automatically covered for P.P. licence liability by virtue of a token payment by the N.F.G.S. of 5/- per annum to cover all Societies. The N.F.G.S. is indebted to Mr. Young for this achievement.

# Fame to Obscurity

Paul Astell looks at the strange affair of the superstar and the aristocrat

**I**HAD LONG AGO taken the opportunity to explore Montmartre cemetery in Paris, the final resting place of Berlioz, Nadia Boulanger, Delibes, Degas, Nijinsky, Offenbach, and many other famous names, but I'd never quite managed to get myself to a similar place much closer to home. So, on one of my frequent trips to the north London area of my childhood and teens, I decided, at last, to visit Highgate cemetery, just a couple of miles from my former home – long since demolished! Highgate is definitely on London's tourist trail where the graves and memorials of many of those that might be filed under 'the great and the good' (depending on your point of view, of course) can be viewed.

It was quite fascinating to note so many easily recognisable names from all walks of public life. One of the most famous memorials is that of Karl Marx, not least because of its sheer size. In terms of musicians, I soon noticed the grave of Shura Cherkassky, the Ukrainian-born American pianist who died in 1969, and I tried to recall which LPs I used to own featuring his performances. Then, my eye was drawn to a very scruffy looking and unkempt grave bearing the name Leslie Hutchinson (Hutch). This immediately rang a bell, but only distant memories of him and his music being mentioned in affectionate terms by my family. My immediate impression was that this person was once a very famous character but



now largely forgotten and marked by this sad, neglected plot.

I set out to discover more about 'Hutch' as he was commonly known to his fans. He was indeed one of the world's best-known (and paid) cabaret entertainers and recording artists during the 1920s and 1930s. He certainly wasn't easy to ignore as he arrived at nightclubs with a white piano strapped to his chauffeur-driven car and dressed like an aristocrat. But it was his connections to the aristocracy that ultimately proved fatal to Hutch's career.

Leslie Hutchinson was born in Grenada in 1900 and showed early promise at the piano. He left the Caribbean for New York in 1916 to study medicine, but eventually became troubled by open racism and the antics of the Ku Klux Klan and moved to Paris in 1924. His musical skills were now such that he played all the city's top clubs. He also met and became a close friend of Cole Porter and performed many of Porter's songs. In 1927 Hutch was invited to London by the impresario CB Cochran to appear in the Rodgers and Hart musical *One Dam Thing after Another*. This and other shows led to a recording contract with Parlophone, a wise move by the record label



which saw big hits such as 'Ain't Misbehavin'' and 'You're the Cream in my Coffee' send the performer's popularity ever higher. His versions of Cole Porter's 'Let's Do It' supposedly included as many as 70 of his own verses!

In the 1930s, Hutch was moving in high-society circles, performing for the Prince of Wales and Wallis Simpson who were great fans, and openly embarking on a number

of affairs, while keeping his family hidden from view. The real scandal was his long-running liaison with Edwina Mountbatten, the wife of Lord Louis, which was an open secret. One bizarre example of this most unlikely of relationships was the pair turning up at Dartmoor Prison in their chauffeured limousine where Hutch performed for the inmates.

At first, Fleet Street overlooked this seemingly scandalous situation with royal implications, but when one tabloid newspaper, *The People*, broke cover they made the mistake of implying that Paul Robeson was the 'other' man. The ensuing High Court libel proceedings in 1932 were a sensation. Sizeable damages were awarded and Edwina was off the hook, but no such luck for Hutch. The establishment closed ranks (the Mountbattens were soon guests at Buckingham Palace) but Edwina nevertheless resumed her relationship with Hutchinson, the man *The People* had failed to identify. The affair meant that Hutch was soon marginalised. He was never again invited to perform at the Royal Variety Performance, the BBC gave him the cold shoulder, and at least one newspaper proprietor ruled that his name should never appear in their titles.

During World War Two, Hutch offered his services and tirelessly performed for thousands of troops but was never formally recognised for his war effort. The 1950s saw an attempted comeback, but Hutch's style of music had largely become unfashionable. Hutch's wife since 1923, Ella Byrd, died in 1958, and Edwina passed away in 1960. These were now grim times for the one-time superstar, reduced to performing in down-market clubs and holiday camps. His fortune had evaporated leading to mounting financial problems. Alcohol excesses exacerbated the situation and he was forced to sell his home.

Leslie Hutchinson died from pneumonia, aged 69, in 1969. He was more or less penniless, but there was one more twist to this story when Lord Mountbatten offered to pay for Hutch's grave in Highgate cemetery. A mere 42 people attended the funeral of a former superstar who had once been one of the most famous names in the entertainment world. ●



31 Steele's Road in Chalk Farm was Hutch's home for most of the 42 years he lived in London.



## CHOPIN Preludes, Op. 28; Piano Sonata No. 2; Scherzo No. 2

Cédric Tiberghien (piano)

Hyperion CDA68194 (71:33)



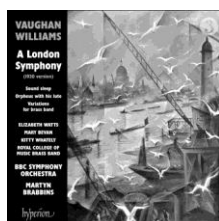
Chopin's glorious set of Preludes, Op. 28 is one of his finest creations and has been recorded by virtually all the greats. When this Hyperion disc arrived I happened to have just downloaded the classic Martha Argerich DG recording from 1974

to add to my collection. This also couples the Sonata No. 2, so made for a fascinating comparison. In general, Tiberghien is a shade more measured than Argerich, but she is well known for volatility and extremes of speed and passagework that can border on idiosyncrasy, so in many ways his approach provides a welcome contrast. In quite a few of the individual pieces I actually preferred his more nuanced playing. Those wonderful chiming bottom A flats at the end of No. 17 are far more subtle in his hands, and the famous 'Raindrop' has a wistful quality that eludes Argerich. Having said that, the sheer visceral effect of No. 16 is overwhelming from Argerich, and the way she dispatches the final D minor is truly thrilling. Here, Tiberghien's decision to hold the pedal down throughout those final tumultuous bars is a miscalculation. I suppose there's no one quite like Argerich, warts and all, but in many ways Tiberghien would make a sound library choice overall. Things are more even in the Sonata, though again Tiberghien's rather wilful slowing of the first movement's second subject doesn't quite work. He is much more subtle in the famous Funeral March slow movement, but Argerich is simply matchless in the teeming finale. The B flat minor Scherzo is superbly done and fills the disc out generously. It should also be mentioned that while Argerich's DG sound holds up reasonably well, Hyperion's engineering is truly state of the art.

## VAUGHAN WILLIAMS Symphony No. 2, 'London' (1920 Version); Sound Sleep; Orpheus with his Lute; Variations for Brass Band

Elizabeth Watts, Mary Bevan (sopranos); Kitty Whately (mezzo); RCM Brass Band; BBC Symphony Orchestra, Martyn Brabbins (conductor)

Hyperion CDA68190 (72:22)



Here we have the second modern recording of Vaughan Williams's first revision of his 'London' Symphony, which is a sort of half-way house between the original 1913 score (recorded some years ago to great acclaim by Richard Hickox) and the final version that

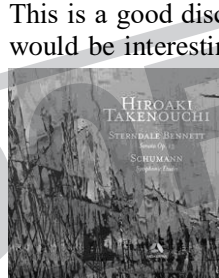
is most commonly recorded. The ubiquitous Martyn Brabbins is at the helm of a tremendously convincing performance, coaxing playing of wonderful flair and power from the BBC SO. His pacing throughout is generally quite spacious, yet it never for a moment feels underpowered or lacking weight in the great climaxes.

This won't persuade me to part with my long-time favourites of the final version, Previn and Haitink, but the extra music is worth hearing and this is a performance of real distinction. I admit to not paying much attention to the fillers at first, but they've proved a real pleasure. *Sound Sleep* is a lovely early setting of Christina Rossetti's poem for three female voices and small orchestra, whereas the Variations for Brass Band are very late (1957) and demonstrate again what amazing facility the composer had in old age. The eleven variations play continuously and cover a wide stylistic range producing an organic piece that is clever but entertaining and really ought to be in the band repertoire. I still have to admit that Vaughan Williams probably knew best when he produced his absolute and final version of the 'London', but as ever the recording medium allows us to hear and enjoy those earlier thoughts and this version will happily sit alongside established classics.

## STERNDALE BENNETT Piano Sonata Op. 13; SCHUMANN Symphonic Etudes, Op. 13

Hiroaki Takenouchi (piano)

Artalinna ATL A018 (62:34)



This is a good disc to try out 'blind' on your friends. It would be interesting to see which composers would be mentioned when you played them the Sterndale Bennett Piano Sonata. My betting would be that Bennett's two most famous friends and contemporaries, Mendelssohn and Schumann, would both get a look in, as might early Brahms, for the piece is suffused with these influences. It's actually a very ambitious work, coming in at over 35 minutes, and the piano writing is flamboyant and virtuosic in many passages but held together by a commendably tight sonata structure. The scherzo does have a Mendelssohnian dash that is quite compelling, and while it never, for me, hits the heights of its more famous models there is much to enjoy, especially in the committed playing of Takenouchi. It's interesting to note that his friend and sometime duet partner is Simon Callaghan, an artist also devoted to these sorts of musical byways, and his own recording is Takenouchi's main rival. In reality there's not much to choose between the two, but where Callaghan gives us more English rarities, Takenouchi plays a staple diet of the early Romantic school in Schumann's Symphonic Etudes, a natural choice given its dedication to Sterndale Bennett. Here, of course, his playing is suddenly up against keyboard titans such as Richter, Kissin, Pollini and my favourite, Pletnev. It's to his credit that Takenouchi is not outshone in such exalted company; indeed, he maintains an admirable grasp on the longer line in what can occasionally seem a rather disparate piece. He uses the original 1834 edition, thus omitting the five 'extras' that were added later, but in many ways this is a wise decision. He may not quite have the last ounce of demonic abandon that Pletnev

gives, but this is admirable playing, and the Steinway D is beautifully captured by the engineers.

### TIPPETT Symphonies No. 1; No. 2

BBC Scottish SO, Martyn Brabbins (conductor)

Hyperion CDA68203 (74:40)



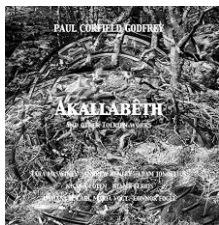
This is the first of a series of new Tippett symphony recordings from Hyperion and enthusiasts are eagerly awaiting a future instalment that will include the very early and never-recorded Symphony in E flat from 1933 that Tippett suppressed.

Competition on disc is very fierce from Richard Hickox and Colin Davis, but if this new release is anything to go by, the Brabbins cycle could well be a new benchmark. These are performances of the highest quality, both as interpretations and in the calibre of the orchestral playing. The first published symphony is still a relative rarity but contains all that's best about early Tippett, both harmonically and rhythmically. Indeed, Brabbins gives the faster passages an incisive, almost Stravinskian edge that really pays dividends. Whether it's conductor or recording engineer – or both – the inner detail of woodwind and brass is superbly caught, especially in the *presto* third movement. The Second Symphony is especially well served on disc with Davis's Argo LSO version the main frontrunner, but this new recording has everything that offers and more. Those pounding Cs at the start are really high octane, and the contrapuntal complexity in the upper strings that caused the premiere under Boult to fall apart is handled with consummate ease here. Of course, one could say that an 'edge of danger' in such difficult passages brings a tension that actually helps the music, as in Colin Davis's famous account, but the Brabbins strikes a perfect balance to my ears. Add in exemplary liner notes and this is a very desirable release.

### PAUL CORFIELD GODFREY *Akallabêth* and other Tolkien works

Various artists

Prima Facie PFCD069 (67:05)



If the name Paul Corfield Godfrey is not already familiar to you, turn to the back pages of this *Bulletin* and you will see he is treasurer of the Federation, a post he has held for some years. That he is a prolific composer may well come as a surprise to some, but the booklet

note tells us he studied at various times with Alan Bush and David Wynne. He has an obvious passion for the works of Tolkien and this disc is devoted to a variety of settings of Tolkien texts as well as solo works inspired by him. I can't confess to being a Tolkien expert, or even a fan if I'm honest, but lovers of the English pastoral school will no doubt find things to enjoy here as most of the music is safely tonal and undemanding. The modality and folk-like character of the Tolkien Songs, Op. 9 could easily be mistaken for a number of other more famous composers, though it never descends

into pastiche, and the texts are set with a good deal of sensitivity. The longest work here is the titular *Akallabêth*, an extended rhapsody for solo piano that has its moments but perhaps needed greater virtuosic abandon than it gets from Connor Fogel to make a really convincing case. The vocal contributions are generally very good, though the soprano of Tara McSwiney shows some strain in higher registers. If you enjoy English song, this is worth exploring.

#### Paul Corfield Godfrey writes about his CD...

The favourable critical reception given to this disc has been most gratifying, not least that by Brian Wilson for *MusicWeb International*, who remarked of my songs that 'at times these reminded me of Vaughan Williams' settings of Housman's poetry (*On Wenlock Edge*). I shouldn't be surprised if, with continued listening to these very accomplished performances, well recorded, some of Godfrey's music becomes as well-loved as the Vaughan Williams.' Chris Seeman on the Tolkien Music website was perhaps more pictorially graphic: 'In the annals of Tolkien-inspired music, Paul Corfield Godfrey is the proverbial oliphaunt\* in the closet... but alas, Godfrey's musical vision has gone largely unsung and unheard, until now.'

And yet the recording of this CD, the first devoted entirely to my compositions, came about almost by chance. The producer for Prima Facie Records, Steve Plews, had recently released a disc of music by Welsh composer Mike Parkin, and the latter had suggested that Steve might be interested in undertaking a recording concentrating on works related to my massive tetralogy based on Tolkien's *The Silmarillion*. The items finally assembled for the disc were not exclusively Tolkien settings, but all contained musical material associated in one way or another with the 'epic scenes'.

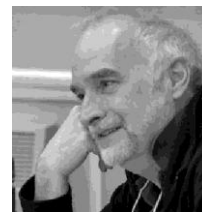
The performers too were assembled by a series of lucky accidents. Connor Fogel had already expressed an interest in performing my *Akallabêth*, a piano piece of massive difficulty, and his concerts in Cardiff including phenomenally complicated works by Messiaen and Fernyehough were already the subject of much excitement. At the same time Adam Jondelius had taken up some of my songs, and these were reviewed with enthusiasm by Gwyn Parry-Jones when they were included in a recital given at Daventry in 2016. With a number of colleagues associated with performances at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in earlier years, we managed to collect everybody together for two long sessions in a Hereford church with a marvellous Steinway grand piano on one day in November 2016.

The results have gratifyingly proved to be one of the label's best sellers – no mean compliment in a catalogue that includes music by John McCabe, Alan Rawsthorne and Havergal Brian. It is hoped to follow it up in 2018 with a complete performance of *The Fall of Gondolin*, the final section of *The Silmarillion*, with a cast featuring singers from the Welsh National Opera, much of which has already been recorded.

\*Oliphaunt is the name given to the large elephant in Tolkien's mythology featured in *The Lord of the Rings*. In the Peter Jackson films the animal is depicted as a massive monster, the ability of which to conceal itself in any context whatsoever must be the subject of the severest scepticism.

## A VIEW FROM YORKSHIRE Jim Bostwick, FRMS Secretary

**I**N LAST AUTUMN'S *BULLETIN* I was very taken by Debbie Bilham's article about cassette decks and their maintenance. Like her, I have an interest in restoring recordings from all sorts of sources, which started as a hobby some 15 years ago. But my interest in recording goes much further back.



I think I was 13 when a Fidelity reel-to-reel tape recorder was the exceptional Christmas present that year. Mono, of course, but you could record on each side of the tape. The plastic crystal microphone which came with it looked like a small, old-fashioned radio with a fold-up leg so it could sit on a table. Many experiments, like secretly recording conversations around the house and birds twittering in the back garden, soon palled, but the opportunity arose to record something special. My Auntie Ethel, a music teacher, was to conduct *Messiah* with her local church choir and I got my first proper recording job. I had a place reserved in the balcony of the Methodist church and set up my tape machine with microphone Sellotaped to the rail. I looked the part, a pair of those black headphones, without comfortable earmuffs, clamped on my head watching the magic-eye recording level. The sound I heard was OK – it was coming straight from the microphone. But I ran out of tape and missed quite a bit while I turned the reel over to record on the other side. The actual recording when played back was very disappointing for all concerned! The tape recorder, I concluded, wasn't up to much.

What put paid to things was connecting wires from the loudspeaker on the FM radio to feed into the Fidelity and switching on the radio. The house fuse blew, plunging all into darkness. My dad, complete with candle, put new fuse wire into the porcelain holder and light was restored. I checked the wires and all seemed fine to me – tape recorder off – wireless off – tape recorder on – wireless on – darkness again. Patience was now somewhat strained so I, and the tape recorder, were banished. What did it teach me? Be careful what you mess with. Get a Teach Yourself Electronics book (green and yellow paperbacks, remember?) and follow it. I've been careful with electricity ever since.

Then hi-fi came along and a project opportunity for me and my dad. We built the speaker cabinets for the 8-inch Wharfedale units, adapted a small chest of drawers to mount a Garrard SP25 turntable on, and an Armstrong valve amplifier in, all separate components ordered from the Co-op Wireless shop. Everything assembled, the first stereo LP, Yehudi Menuhin with, I think, Walter Susskind conducting Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto. Hooked!

But back to Debbie's article. I share her high regard for audio cassettes and have quite a collection. That such high-quality stereo could come from very narrow ultra-thin tape and a slow tape speed is testament to the ingenuity of the designers and manufacturers who took the medium to its analogue limits. And the great thing about transferring them to CD? No clicks to get rid of.

I thought the maintenance tips very helpful but would add just one caution, if it's not too late. I'd leave the little screws and springs attached to the tape heads well alone – it is not for nothing that anti-interference paint is applied. Without a professional cassette test tape and other gear, leave them be or try and find someone like Debbie if you suspect you could get better sound.

The Autumn *Bulletin* will see my final article. Luckily, Adele Wills has joined the committee to shadow me until this November's AGM when she will take over the secretary role. ●

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### FRMS Presenters Panel

*Societies are invited to recommend successful presenters for inclusion in this section. Please note, there is a modest charge of £10 per entry per annum for presenters who charge a fee (as distinct from reasonable expenses). A free entry on the FRMS website is also offered. This supplement is intended to be a general guide to programme planning. Reasonable care is taken to ensure accuracy of the details given but neither the FRMS committee nor the editor can accept responsibility for any circumstances subsequent on the use of the supplement. We recommend that you check with the presenter (a) the nature of the presentation and (b) the likely total amount of the fee, where applicable, and any travel and accommodation expenses. Thanks go to Allan Child who maintains this list.*

**Officers and committee members of the FRMS are experienced presenters and – if not listed here – can be contacted at the addresses at the back of the Bulletin.**

#### **GEOFF BATEMAN ACIB Cefa**

'Eroica', 1 South Road, Bradford BD9 4SU  
Tel: 01274 783285

email: geoffbateman@blueyonder.co.uk

Wide variety of programmes including artist and composer profiles.

Most programmes feature audiophile recordings.

No fee, minimal travel expenses only.

#### **BBC MIDLAND RADIO ORCHESTRA**

Paul Arden-Taylor, 11 Romsley Hill Grange, Romsley,  
Worcs, B62 0LN

Tel: 01562 710801 mobile: 07778 016769

email: paul@dinmore-records.co.uk

An evening of light music presented by former MRO oboist Paul Arden-Taylor, who now works as a recording engineer

and has compiled an extensive archive of surviving MRO recordings. Midlands area only. No fee, petrol costs requested. Selection of classical CDs for sale.

#### **IAN RUTLAND BOUGHTON BA (Hons) DipMus**

25 Bearton Green, Hitchin, Herts SG5 1UN

Tel: 01462 434318; mobile: 07703 584152

email: ianboughton@btinternet.com. Under the title 'Rutland Boughton: Beyond The Immortal Hour', Ian gives illustrated talks on the life and music of his once famous grandfather.

Expenses only.

#### **BRITISH MUSIC SOCIETY**

www.britishmusicsociety.com

**Dr Wendy Hiscocks, chairman**

Tel: 0208 883 3375

email: chairman@britishmusicsociety.com

**John Gibbons**, vice-chairman

Mobile: 07973 617 064

vicechairman@britishmusicsociety.com

Discover a hidden world of music. The Society's aim is to bring together a broad range of opportunities and experiences for supporters of British music. Our growing catalogue of recordings, in collaboration with Naxos, continues to uncover and preserve often unknown repertoire. Expenses requested. CDs for sale.

#### **THE DELIUS SOCIETY**

Speakers from the Delius Society or Delius Trust are available to give presentations. No fee, expenses only. Contact one of the following or see the Society's website, [www.delius.org.uk](http://www.delius.org.uk)

**Martin Lee-Browne**, Chester House, Fairford, Glos GL7 4AD. Tel 01285 712102;

email: [adviser@TheDeliusSociety.org.uk](mailto:adviser@TheDeliusSociety.org.uk)

**Lionel Carley**, Old School House, Sheepscombe, Stroud, Glos. GL6 7RH Tel: 01452 812735;

email: [l.carley@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:l.carley@yahoo.co.uk)

**Mike Green**, 4 Caxton Close, Beeston Regis, Sheringham, Norfolk NR26 8SY. Tel: 07833 300450

email: [michael.heather.green@gmail.com](mailto:michael.heather.green@gmail.com)

#### **THE DVOŘÁK SOCIETY**

Promotes the music of all Czech and Slovak composers.

Members give talks and lectures to societies at various locations. Enquiries to: David Roberts, Hon Sec, The Dvořák Society, 13 Church Lane, Knutton, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs ST5 6DU; Tel: 01782 631274.

email: [secretary@dvorak-society.org](mailto:secretary@dvorak-society.org);

website: [www.dvorak-society.org](http://www.dvorak-society.org)

No fee but expenses might be requested.

#### **THE ELGAR SOCIETY**

Branch Secretaries in several areas of the UK can arrange a speaker from the Society. In the first instance contact the General Secretary who will forward enquiries as necessary: George Smart, Elgar Society Hon. Sec. 10 Cullinpark Grove, Strathaven, South Lanarkshire ML10 6EN  
Phone 01357 520314; email [hon.sec@elgar.org](mailto:hon.sec@elgar.org)

#### **DR DAVID FLIGG**

Email: [david.fligg@ncm.ac.uk](mailto:david.fligg@ncm.ac.uk)

Website: [www.ncm.ac.uk/people/david-fligg/](http://www.ncm.ac.uk/people/david-fligg/)

Tutor in Academic Studies at the Royal Northern College of Music; Visiting Professor at the University of Chester; Project Consultant, Performing the Jewish Archive, School of Music, University of Leeds; Member of the Incorporated Society of Musicians.

Various and wide-ranging topics.

Contact by email in the first instance to discuss availability, fees and your Society's requirements.

#### **DR JOHN MALPASS**

4 Carlton Road, Kibworth Harcourt, Leics LE8 0LZ, email: [jrm@le.ac.uk](mailto:jrm@le.ac.uk); Tel: 0116 279 2557

Former Trustee and Membership Secretary of the Rachmaninoff Society. Currently one presentation is offered: 'Sergei Rachmaninoff - his life and music'. This is a Powerpoint-based presentation covering Rachmaninoff's personal and musical development and includes many historical photographs.

The many musical examples concentrate on less well-known compositions and include significant recordings of his songs, choral music, chamber music, and piano works (some with the composer at the piano) together with selected orchestral excerpts.

No fee; reasonable expenses.

#### **EM MARSHALL-LUCK MA (Oxon) MCIJ**

EM Records / English Music Festival

Suite M0222, 265-269 Kingston Road,

Wimbledon, London SW19 3NW Tel: 07808 473889

email: [em.marshall-luck@em-records.com](mailto:em.marshall-luck@em-records.com) or [em.marshall-luck@englishmusicfestival.org.uk](mailto:em.marshall-luck@englishmusicfestival.org.uk)

Director of EM Records and Founder-Director of the English Music Festival - can give talks on both subjects. In the EMF talk, illustrated with music and visuals, she covers the aims, objectives and achievements of the Festival - her mission to put English music back on the map. And with her husband, violinist Rupert Marshall-Luck, she delivers a presentation on EM Records, covering the *raison d'être* of the record label, as well as topics such as how repertoire and venues are chosen, what takes place at recording sessions (exploding bows and mysterious noises), how works are edited for recording, and what is involved in the running of a label. With musical excerpts.

Reasonable expenses and a modest fee requested.

#### **CHRISTOPHER MORLEY**

16 Melbourne Road, Halesowen B63 3NB

Tel: 0121 550 4482.

email: [cfmorley47@aol.com](mailto:cfmorley47@aol.com); mobile 07958 509391

Chief music critic of Birmingham Post; Midlands correspondent for Classical Music, Musical Opinion, Opera and other music publications.

Illustrated programmes include, among others:

Confessions of a music critic; Changing critical attitudes to Elgar; The Symphonies of Gustav Mahler; Composers on record; The problem of bespoke music; Rachmaninov and plainchant; Beethoven the Bounds-Breaker; European Composers in America; Did Mozart burn himself out? The Faust legend in music; The Orpheus legend in music; European visitors to the Birmingham Triennial Music Festival. Fee negotiable

#### **NIMBUS RECORDS**

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Tel: 01600 890007 email: [marketing@wyastone.co.uk](mailto:marketing@wyastone.co.uk)

We love travelling to societies but find it increasingly difficult, so we have created a VIRTUAL PRESENTATION introduced by Nimbus Directors Adrian Farmer and Antony Smith. They guide you through the company's history and introduce selections from the catalogue. Your pack is completely free and contains a pre-recorded programme with supporting information including vouchers and special offers. For more information or to order your pack please call Sara Moore on 01600 890 007.

#### **DR GEOFF OGRAM, Secretary, Stafford RMS**

6 Silverthorn Way, Wildwood, Stafford ST17 4PZ

Tel: 01785 663423 email: [geoff.ogram@talktalk.net](mailto:geoff.ogram@talktalk.net)

A number of recital programmes, with a significant content of C20th British music. My specialist composer is Gordon Jacob, whose music I discovered in 1956. Over the years we met frequently and became friends. I now act as a consultant to help performers and others with information about his music. Although I have completed a book on his music it remains unpublished. The recital on his work is entitled Seventh Son. No fee required, just minimal travel expenses.

#### **PROFESSOR ANTHONY OGUS, CBE, FBA** Gowland

Court, Ogleforth Mews, York YO1 7JG

Tel: 01904 801804; email: [anthony.ogus@gmail.com](mailto:anthony.ogus@gmail.com)

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

Critic for *Opera Now* and author of book *Travels With My Opera Glasses*. Talks on and around opera and opera composers, performers, productions, opera houses, audiences, 'calamities'.

No fee. Travelling expenses negotiable.

### LYNNE PLUMMER

52 Judkin Court, Century Wharf, Cardiff CF10 5AU. Tel: 02920 489332; email: lynne@lynneplummer.co.uk  
Professional career as a broadcaster with the BBC and other radio stations. Illustrated talks with interviews on various topics, such as 'Conductors: who needs 'em?', 'The craft of instrument-making', and 'Planet Mozart and his satellites' - or maybe ask me to cover a subject of your choice.  
Will travel. Fees negotiable + expenses.

### DR JIM PRITCHARD

15 David Avenue, Wickford, Essex SS11 7BG  
email: jimjprmusic@gmail.com; website: <http://seenandheard-international.com/tag/pritchard-jim/>  
Former chairperson of the Wagner Society and the Gustav Mahler Society UK ([www.mahlersociety.org](http://www.mahlersociety.org)), editor of 'The Wayfarer' and online music magazine reviewer. Many very successful previous presentations and now concentrating again on his Wagner talk - 'The Ring Road to Bayreuth' and a new talk about the great British tenor, Alberto Remedios, 'From the Mersey to the World'. No fee; reasonable expenses; date and travel never usually a problem.

### MISS JOY PURITZ

149E Holland Rd, London W14 8AS  
Tel: 020 7602 4187; mobile 07867 698175  
email: jepuritz@btinternet.com  
Granddaughter of Elisabeth Schumann and translator of her biography (written by the singer's son, Gerd Puritz).  
Illustrated presentation entitled *A Portrait of the Soprano, Elisabeth Schumann* has been well received by the Friends of Covent Garden, the National Sound Archive and many recorded music societies. Fee negotiable.

### RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS SOCIETY

[www.rvwsociety.com](http://www.rvwsociety.com)  
**Simon Coombs**, chairman; 24 Wellsworth Lane, Rowlands Castle, Hampshire PO9 6BY  
02392 412837; email: [simonandlaura2004@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:simonandlaura2004@yahoo.co.uk)  
**John Francis**, vice-chairman; The Vicarage, Corseley Road, Groombridge, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 9SE  
01892 864 265; email: [john@lffuk.com](mailto:john@lffuk.com)  
**Graham Muncy**, Information Officer; Rose Cottage, 8 Belvoir Bank, Malvern, Worcestershire WR14 4LY  
01684 578794; email: [g.muncy058@btinternet.com](mailto:g.muncy058@btinternet.com)  
Ralph Vaughan Williams is arguably Britain's greatest composer: his works include nine symphonies, operas, song cycles, music for film, ballet and choirs. Members of this flourishing society enjoy exclusive events and RVW-related publications as well as recordings of lesser-known works by the composer through the Society's own recording label 'Albion Records'. In 2022 we will celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Vaughan Williams's birth. Expenses requested. CDs for sale

### CATHERINE WILMERS

The Brew House, Radwell, Baldock, Herts SG7 5ES.  
Tel: 01462 730490. email: [cwilmers@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:cwilmers@hotmail.co.uk)  
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Travels countrywide. Fees negotiable + expenses

## MUSIC WEEKEND SEMINARS

**If you are looking for music weekends that are stimulating and rewarding, held in peaceful, comfortable, congenial surroundings, reasonably priced, and with the opportunity to meet nice people, please consider the following.**

Located in pleasant surroundings, weekend music courses begin on a Friday with an excellent meal, followed by the evening session. The course continues throughout the Saturday, time being allowed for music-lovers to get to know each other. The course concludes the next day after a substantial lunch. Organised by **Professor Gerald Seaman**, formerly Professor of Musicology at the University of Auckland and subsequently on the staff of Oxford University, the courses are informative and interesting, though fully comprehensible to the non-musician. The venues for the next two courses are **The Cedars Hotel, Loughborough**, and **Stanton House, a beautiful manor house near Oxford**, situated in the village of Stanton St John. Both are easily accessible by train or by car. The cost for each weekend, including full board and comfortable accommodation, is £280.00, though, of course, the fee is reduced if you live locally and do not require accommodation. The courses are as follows:

### **Friday 6 - Sunday 8 April: *The Music of Carl Maria von Weber*. The Cedars Hotel, Loughborough.**

Carl Maria Friedrich Ernst von Weber (1786-1826) is remembered as the first really great Romantic composer. His opera *Der Freischütz* is regarded as the first German nationalist opera, and his use of the leitmotif technique in his opera *Euryanthe* undoubtedly influenced the operas of Wagner. He was the first European composer to use a Chinese melody in his incidental music to Gozzi's *Turandot*, while his brilliant piano sonatas and concertos had a powerful effect on the music of Chopin. His *Invitation to the Dance* was one of the great showpieces of the Ballets Russes. His concertos for clarinet and for bassoon were very popular as was his remarkable Concertino for horn and orchestra. This course, illustrated with opera DVDs and CDs, is not only refreshing but will introduce much attractive music that is not generally known. **Fee: £280.00 for full board and residence (£150.00 non resident).**

### **Friday 20 to Sunday 22 July: *Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921) and the Revival of French Music*. Stanton House, near Oxford.**

One of the unexpected results of the disastrous Franco-Prussian War of 1865 was the emergence of French nationalism, in which Camille Saint-Saëns played a notable part. Founded in 1871, the National Society for French music encouraged a host of great composers, including César Franck, Gabriel Fauré, Claude Debussy and others. This interesting course will look at the work of Saint-Saëns and his fellow composers, showing the way in which French music was closely allied with French art and culture generally. Beautifully illustrated with CDs and DVDs. **Fee: £280.00 for full board and accommodation.**

**For further details and booking, please contact:**

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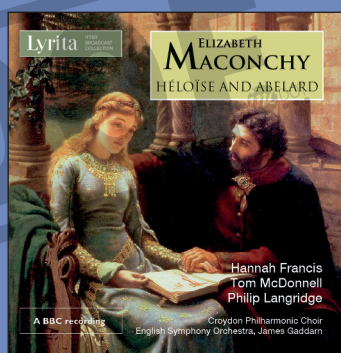
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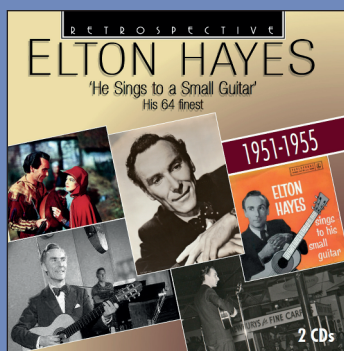
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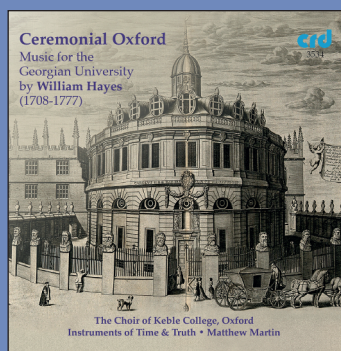
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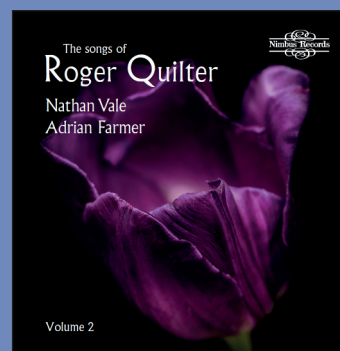
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