

# SOIRÉES MUSICALES

Spring 2013 ~ Edition 47



**Linden Harris**

*The Magazine of the BBC  
Concert Orchestra's Supporters Club*

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Cover photo of Linden Harris courtesy of Ariel, the BBC Staff Magazine.  
We are indebted to Claire Barrett for allowing us to reproduce it.

## ED LINES



Welcome to another edition of the Club Magazine. It certainly doesn't seem six months since the last one, but I think you will find this edition particularly interesting – especially those of you with fond memories of the Golders Green Hippodrome.

We also have a lovely article from recently retired principal oboist Linden Harris, and an amusing report and pictures of the Orchestra's venture into the world of cricket (yes cricket!) AND at Lord's would you believe. Unfortunately they didn't manage to win, although as you will read they were certainly not disgraced. I'm quite surprised they didn't win because I have always been under the impression that the gentlemen of the Orchestra were pretty good at bowling a maiden over!!

*(Oh Gawd!... Other Ed)*

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# CHANGES IN THE ORCHESTRA & OTHER NEWS.

Retirement Wishes to Linden (Lindy) Harris Principal Oboe, who retired at the end of October after 35 years in the Orchestra. Everyone paid attention to Lindy – it was her oboe which delivered the pure note that heralded the cacophony of sound as the Orchestra tuned, whilst reducing the audience to silence. Quite an achievement! We all wish Lindy a long and happy Retirement, but we will miss her!!

Next Generation in the Orchestra.

Always a popular feature with the members, - but sadly the violin sections have not been forthcoming for this edition! However we should have one by the Autumn... watch this space!!

Nancy Violet

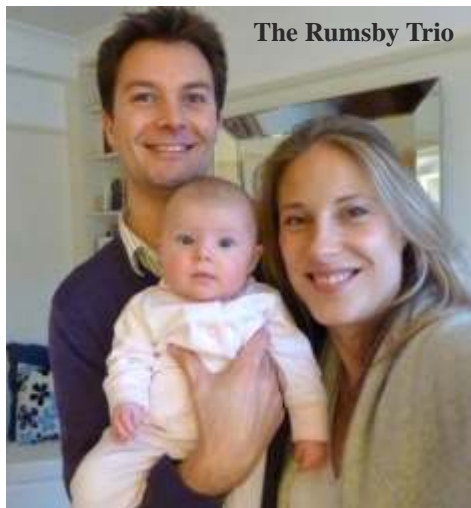


Meanwhile we do have contributions from others.

Congratulations to the Orchestra Manager Alex Walden who became a Dad for the third time with daughter Nancy Violet, born on 15th September and who he says, has kept him up almost continuously ever since!

Horning in on the act is Tom Rumsby who became a first time Dad with the birth of Anna Katherine on 7th October, weighing in at 6lb 8oz. Pictured here with his wife Kate, Tom is the Orchestra's No2 French horn.

The Rumsby Trio



# POSTBAG

A selection of letters received.

Dear Brian & Jenny,

Thank you for sending the Diamond Jubilee edition of Soirées Musicales.

I am very happy to renew my membership for another year. I think that I must have been to fewer BBC Concerts this year because of the reduced allocation which is now sent to Brian.

The classic archived repeats earlier in the year were very enjoyable to listen to again, and I also liked the Proms production of "The Yeoman Of The Guard" on 19th August.

With best wishes to you both

Alistair Wills  
St Albans.

*(It wasn't lack of tickets Alistair, but there were only 5 live FNIMN between January and September!..... Other Ed)*

Dear Brian & Jenny,

Thank you for the Magazine which, as usual, was very interesting.

Yes there are too many repeats, which equates to fewer concerts for us to attend!!! Listening on the radio is never as enjoyable as being there, even though we do not get home until midnight now!

Yours sincerely  
Angela & Bob Hills  
Wilmington

*(Midnight? Consider yourselves lucky, its nearer I am by the time we get home to Baldock!!....Other Ed)*

Dear Brian

Just a brief note to thank you and the “Team” for a super evening’s entertainment last Saturday (6th October). The first half’s piano recital by Susan Clark was wonderful and her choice of music was just right.

I was anticipating that the second half’s presentation by Geoff Bowden and David Reed would be the usual slide and chat show, but I was amazed at the really professional performance by Geoff and David.

Your title for the evening was exactly right and I look forward to the next “Saturday Special”. Once again many thanks and best wishes.

Yours sincerely  
Allan Middleton  
Caterham , Surrey.

Dear Brian & Jenny

Unfortunately we have decided not to renew this year, as we have been rather disappointed with the concerts of late. This is NOT a reflection on the BBC Concert Orchestra who always perform with such versatility and professionalism. We do not think the supporting artistes enhance the programme. We feel the producers are trying too hard to popularise, to encourage a younger generation, but which alienates our taste for a more classical content.

We would like to thank you both for all your hard work and devotion to the Club over so many long years and your fair distribution of tickets. We wish the Club and the BBC Concert Orchestra every success and hope to return as members again in the future.

Every good wish, Sincerely  
Gloria & Ron Prince  
London W2

*(This sentiment is echoed by so many of our members. We can only hope that the marked absence of younger people in the audience will eventually convince the powers that be that FNIMN is an institution, and a return to the lovely programmes of the past that we all so enjoyed is long overdue!.....Other Ed)*

Dear Brian

Thank you very much for the tickets for 21st December. We queued for one and a half hours, but the time went very quickly, Everyone seemed extra friendly as it was Christmas with chocolates being passed around which was lovely.

We didn't see Jenny in the Theatre, hope she is well?

Best wishes  
Bob & Angela Hills  
Wilmington

*(I was at home with a heavy cold and persistent cough. Trust me to miss the chocolates – I'm an addict!!.....Jenny!)*

## THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Club's 31st Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday APRIL 6th at Finchley Methodist Church, commencing at 7pm.

See back cover for full details.

***The Orchestra now has a Facebook page.  
Visit: [www.facebook.com/bbcconcertorchestra](http://www.facebook.com/bbcconcertorchestra)***



## LINDEN HARRIS

Well I can't really believe it, but I am no longer a member of the BBC Concert Orchestra – although I think I'm probably an honorary member, as I've been there longer than anyone can remember, and still feel part of the family.

Having started playing the oboe at the age of 8, it has been a part of my life for many years, and I think it's about time I spent my days doing something other than blowing down a wooden pipe and waggling my fingers. Actually, I think you'd be surprised at how much of the human body is involved in playing a musical instrument – and my body has definitely decided that it needs a rest!

People wonder sometimes how I stayed happily in the same orchestra for such a long time. The answer is that I may have stayed in the same place, but everything around me changed – the venues, the music, the management, the players. So I had the benefit of great variety over the years, but with the knowledge that I was always exactly where I wanted to be – in the most rewarding and interesting job one could possibly have.

Although in some ways it seems like just the other day that as a rather naive and very inexperienced 26-year-old I was offered my job, there were some significant differences in the working life of the orchestra then. I remember wondering how I would manage to breathe in enough fresh air to get through the next phrase of music. Back then, smoking carried on throughout rehearsals and recordings – and the lovely flute player next to me, Bill Bartlett, used to perch his cigarette on the music stand just a fraction away from his sheet of music. I sometimes hoped that it would indeed catch fire and that the ensuing crisis would give me a chance to look at the next few notes to play! That's another thing that was different. Because members of the orchestra were hardly ever given time off (are our management softer these days?), we would plough straight into recordings with hardly any rehearsal – and as the new girl, I was often the only one who had never played *Sorcerer's Apprentice* or *Donna Diana*. But there was always plenty of support from my colleagues, and I was cajoled through the baptism of fire.



That support and friendship from my colleagues is something that continued over all the ensuing years, and is one of the aspects of the job which made it so very enjoyable. Not long ago, the four principal woodwind players celebrated 20 years together as a team – quite an achievement I think, and one of which I am very proud. We have seen each other through many many hours of performance – and quite a few life events. One of my earlier memories of Mike Pearce’s beautiful playing was a performance of Rachmaninoff’s 2nd piano concerto. During the slow movement clarinet solo my unborn baby started kicking for the very first time – with a vengeance. So, do I hold Mike responsible still for the musical taste of Tom (now 22)? Mmm...

Although much new music has worked its way into the repertoire over the years, the Concert Orchestra still plays many pieces and arrangements by people I came across early in my career there. Stanley Black was a regular conductor and pianist on Friday Nights, and his arrangements are still some of the most exciting. *Manhattan Skyline* became almost a ‘signature’ tune, particularly with the cellists of the orchestra twirling their instruments at special moments.

After I’d been in the orchestra for a few years, the lovely Bob Docker told me one day that he imagined my playing whenever he wrote an oboe tune in one of his pieces. He asked if he could write a work for me to play – of course I was absolutely delighted! And so his *Three Contrasts* was born, which I played several times with the orchestra.

Throughout a career, it’s wonderful how some of the same musicians continue to be a part of the journey, going right back to early days. For two years at the Royal College of Music I played in the orchestra conducted by Vernon Handley, and it was such a joy to see him up in front of us many times in recent years. Barry Wordsworth and I go back even further. When I auditioned to go to the RCM as a sixteen-year-old, Barry was the piano accompanist. So I suppose he had many years to get used to my playing!

And where would we be without our terrific audiences, in particular our loyal Club members? As one of the original group of players who set up the fledgling club, I was responsible for typing (yes, on a typewriter!) all the addresses on labels. There weren’t so many members then, and it’s been brilliant to see the club expand and thrive.

Many of the best memories of my time in the Orchestra relate to the places to which we travelled, some more glamorous than others. Our annual trip to Jersey was a highlight of the year – three varied evening concerts, followed by a children’s concert on Monday morning. Then came the year that we also visited Guernsey – on a hydrofoil from Jersey. Unfortunately the weather was bad, the sea extremely rough, and by the time we arrived the boat was broken and the entire orchestra was seasick. A lasting memory will be our soprano soloist swaying amongst us singing to try and distract everyone.

Swimming in the sea before breakfast in the Isle of Man has to be the coldest memory, the back streets of Hong Kong possibly the hottest. Japan was maybe the most fascinating country. The bullet train, the skiing, Mount Fuji, a visit to Hiroshima, the temples of Kyoto – and then in the evenings, universally wonderful concert halls and appreciative audiences. More recently, two trips to Abu Dhabi were real eye-openers – what an interesting time to be amongst a totally different culture.

Having been spoilt with so many wonderful trips, I now feel ready to explore some new places. A couple of years ago I briefly visited Uganda and would love to see more of Africa. And I’ve never been to Australia or New Zealand. So, plenty of the world still to discover. Somehow I don’t think I’ll have trouble filling my time without blowing down that pipe.

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*It’s always nice to receive contributions from the members of the Orchestra, our thanks to Lindy for this interesting article. I can’t help wondering if she will try out a didgeridoo when she goes to Australia – watch this space!!*



**The Orchestra left on 29th January  
for the Mid-West & West Coast of America Tour.  
They will be performing 12 concerts at 12 venues in  
Michigan, Ohio, Idaho, Wisconsin, Nebraska,  
Kansas, Nevada, California and Arizona  
between 31st Jan – 16th February,  
and returning home on the 18th.  
You can read all about it in the Autumn edition  
of Soirées Musicales**

***The Orchestra now has a Facebook page.  
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There have been comments from some Club Members that there has not been much activity on the Club's website lately.

Well the webmaster Stephen would like to hear from YOU, the members, what you would like to see on our website and of course would welcome any contributions from you.

It is also worth remembering that this Club exists to support the Orchestra, and the website is the Club's window, so ideally contributions from the Orchestra would be particularly appropriate.

**PLEASE DO VISIT & CONTRIBUTE TO IT.**

# CLUB OUTINGS.

## AFTERNOON OUT

The Latest Afternoon Out was held on Monday 10th September when 31 members assembled at the Broadway Hotel Letchworth for the delicious Carvery Lunch. The balloon decked cavalcade of cars to Benslow attracted the usual looks of amazement from the locals and a honk from a passing bus!

The concert at Benslow featured the guitar of Simon Davies who played a delightful selection of music by Dowland, Bach, Albeniz and a selection from South America.



The afternoon rounded off with home made scones and chocolate cupcakes. Yet another successful day.

## TOUR OF LORDS

17 members met at the Grace Gate for our Afternoon tour of Lords Cricket ground. We were extremely lucky to have Graham as our guide, a devout Sussex supporter and extremely knowledgeable on all cricket matters, as well as having a seemingly endless supply of wisecracks and jokes.



Party at the Grace Statue

Our tour started in the Museum where, in a glass case, the little sparrow killed by a cricket ball. Upstairs the room with the famed Ashes Urn – the original one that is! - and the gallery with the shirts and bats of International Captains. Next the visitors changing room where we sat beneath the boards recording the names of many famous cricketers and their scores. We sat round the table in the Committee Room and then into the hallowed Long Room and of course the Long Bar, hung with paintings of famous cricketers from all eras. We sat in the JP Morgan Media Centre with its bird's eye view of the ground, so familiar to Test Match viewers. And finally our tour ended at the Lords shop.



The Ground



The JP Morgan Media Centre



The Party at the Nursery End

Although some of the party admitted they were not ardent cricket fans, everyone agreed that this was indeed a place of great historical interest and importance and well worth the visit.

**Our Tours Secretary Doug French has suggested organising the following trips: Whitechapel Bell Foundry. This would take place on a Saturday at a cost of £12.50, lasting approximately 2 hours.**

**London Palladium. Probably the most famous Theatre in the world, it celebrated its 100th birthday on Boxing Day 2010. The tour lasting 2 hours on a Friday, also at a cost of £12.50.**

**Anyone who would be interested in either of these please contact Brian (01462 892 670) to add your name to the waiting lists.**

## **SATURDAY SPECIAL.**

Well over 70 members attended the latest in our Club Special events held at Finchley Methodist Church on October 6th.

This was a double delight as the evening featured two contrasting forms of entertainment. First Susan Clark gave an excellent varied piano recital featuring works by Brahms, Sinding and Saint Saens.

Then after an interval when refreshments were served, members Geoff Bowden and David Reed presented an audio-visual tribute to Ivor Novello and Noël Coward. The illustrations coupled with vocal extracts really emphasised what giants of the last century Ivor and Noel really were.

An unusual and highly entertaining evening - hopefully more to come.

As the Club were not charged for the use of the Church, a collection in aid of Church funds was made and raised nearly £160. Thanks to all who contributed.





David and Geoff



## CD REVIEWS

By Dave Daniels.

No sooner had I posted off my last review to Jenny in which I remarked on the low key nature of the celebrations of the Orchestra's Diamond Jubilee than I came upon the August issue of the BBC Music magazine with the CD on the front proclaiming "60 Years of the BBC Concert Orchestra" I am sure you can get a back copy if you've not already got it. It features all 3 of our conductors in mostly live recordings starting with Barry Wordsworth from Birmingham (the concert – not Barry!) in May 2102 in Eric Coates' suite "The Three Elizabeths" in a performance as good as you will ever get, whilst from Johannes Wildner we hear Enescu's "Romanian Rhapsody No 1", recorded at Chichester February 2012 and the "Tritsch Tratsch" polka from Watford March 2012, in that wonderful Viennese Concert which went out in May I believe on FNIMN. For me they could have made the whole disc from THAT concert!! The majority of the disc is taken up with the music of Malcolm Arnold, conducted by Keith Lockhart – not as you might have expected some of his wonderful dance suites from England, Scotland or Cornwall which in my opinion would have been more appropriate – but by his No1 Symphony, recorded it would appear at Watford just for this disc. Written in 1948 when he was suffering from the emotional problems that would dog him for the rest of his life, the work has a dark, almost Sibelian quality at odds with the rest of the disc.

A welcome return to the Decca label for the Orchestra accompanying the latest hot property on the Italian tenor market namely Joseph Calleja who wowed the audience at the last night of the Proms 2012. I find it difficult to be objective about this as the celebrity tenor is not one of my favourite musical genre, however if you enjoyed the concerts given by the Orchestra in the 1990's with Jose Carreras and broadcast on Radio2 and TV you'll love this. "A tribute to Mario Lanza" contains all the favourites you could wish for, operatic items by Puccini, Bizet, Giordano plus Neapolitan songs by Tosti, and of course the great movie songs by Nicholas Broadsky including "Be My Love" DECCA 478 3531.



The music of American composer George Chadwick (1854-1931) features on Dutton CDLX7293. I first encountered his music in the 80's when Yorkshire TV showed in a late night slot a series of "An Evening at Pops" featuring John Williams and the Boston Pops Orchestra and it is appropriate for Keith Lockhart is conducting on this disc. Attractive music written between the end of the Civil War and WW1, the style is firmly in the European late Romantic tradition and well worth a listen. The main work is his "Sinfonietta" from 1904 (in effect his 5th symphony) in which influences range from Bizet to Ravel! A Pastoral Prelude a Symphonic Poem and an Overture complete the record.

Dutton CDLX7295 finds us firmly back in this country in the company of conductor Stephen Bell and Roger Chase, viola, for a delightful programme of music for viola and Orchestra, much of it influenced by the great Lionel Tertis. As you might expect the music of Bax appears with his "Phantasy" for viola and orchestra there is a suite from RV-W and a most attractive piece depicting the Suffolk landscape "Ellingham Marshes" by a name new to me, Theodore Holland, a contemporary of Bax. But I think my favourite is the most recent composition "reflections" for viola and orchestra in effect a 4movement concerto written in 1990 but revised last year and conducted by the composer Richard Harvey – a very attractive work.

Lastly a CD that is causing quite a stir. Making their first appearance on the SOMM label the BBC Concert Orchestra's playing "Displays bright eyed conviction coupled with commendable polish" according to the review in "Gramophone" magazine whose Editor makes the "Longed-for Light" one of his Discs of the Month January 2013. Under the baton of John Wilson the Orchestra plays a programme of Elgar's music written just before and during WW1. Three of the pieces "carillon", "Le Dragon Belge" and "Un Voix dans le Desert" feature a speaker (Simon Callow) reciting the poetry of Belgian poet Emile Cammaerts, which to some may sound a little overblown. That at least is the opinion of David Mellor who enjoyed the CD so much as to review it in his Sunday newspaper column. Other works include "Polonia" written in support of Polish victims, two miniatures "Carissima" and the intensely moving "Sospiri" which though written just before the war seems to anticipate the catastrophe to come, and a favourite of mine the early "Sursum Corda", which features a prominent part for organ, presumably that of the Watford Colosseum though the organist is not named I am guessing at Roderick Elms.\*

This last piece I first heard on an LP from the Bournemouth Sinfonietta under the much underrated George Hurst who sadly died last year – though typically I saw little about his death in the press or on TV, now if he had been an ageing Rocker.....! A major work on this disc is the ballet music from “The Sanguine Fan” written in support of a wartime charity in 1917, it remained forgotten until revived and recorded by Sir Adrian Boult in 1974, Our reviewer in “Gramophone” concedes that the Concert Orchestra’s performance is every bit as good as that landmark recording. A record no self respecting Concert Orchestra Supporter should be without (SOMMCD247

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*Congratulations to Dave on becoming a Grandfather!!*

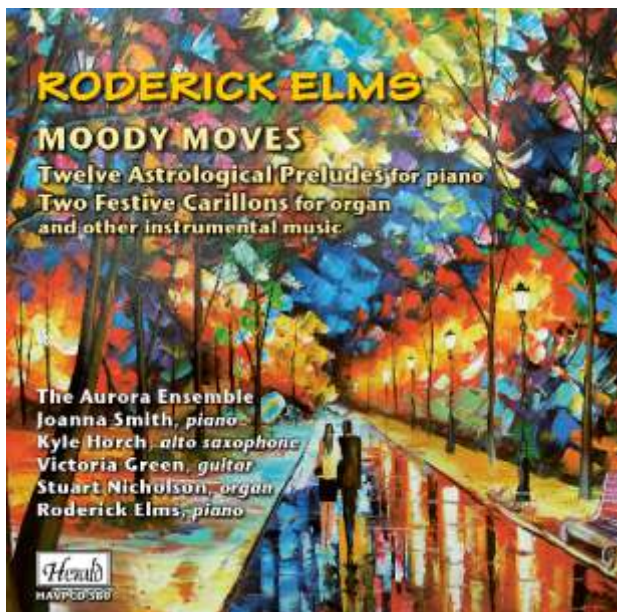
*\*Yes it was indeed Roderick at the Organ. Most unfair not to give him the courtesy of a credit!*



## “MOODY MOVES”

Is the title of the latest CD by Roderick Elms, to be released on 11th March on the Herald label (HAVPC 380)

Featuring his new Sextet for piano and winds, and a complete recording of “Twelve Astrological Preludes” for piano, many of which Roderick has played on FNIMN over the years. This is a “must have” for all lovers of Roderick’s playing and composition.



# Anyone for Cricket?

## Orchestra Super 8 Indoor Cricket Competition

by David Wythe



David Wythe

I'd like to tell you a couple of stories, stay with me, they are related. Are you sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin.

Parte the firste: (For those of musical knowledge) I used to play a lot of cricket. I used to play for my parents village in Hampshire, and for many musicians teams, or whoever would ask me. I was a fast (well, pretty nippy, for the standard I played in) bowler, and a middle order batsman. In my late twenties I tore my cruciate ligament in my left knee while I was bowling, and after a year or so, tried to play again. It was immediately obvious that my knee would not stand quick bowling so I became a spinner and developed my batting. I struggled on for another half dozen seasons, until a couple of more operations later, and already advancing arthritis in my knee it became obvious I would have to hang up my boots. Since then I have played once this century.

Parte the Seconde: I was at the RAM with a percussionist called Mick Doran. Mick was and still is a keen cricketer. I played many times against and even sometimes for him, as he is in the ENO (English National Opera) and helps run their team. Mick has a large tie up with the CO; he regularly comes in as an extra, and is married to our piccolo player Sophie Johnson. During the summer of 2011 while he was starting to arrange an inter-orchestra cricket competition, he had been feeling poorly for a little while, so went off for a quick check up, where he was shocked to be diagnosed with leukaemia. I am very glad to say he has fought it off and is in remission, but it gave him an idea to make it a far bigger competition and to try to raise as much money as possible to be split between the Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research and The Musicians' Benevolent Fund. He persuaded Sir Ian Botham to become the Patron, and arranged for it to be played at the Indoor Cricket School at Lords. The website was set up, facebook, twitter, donation page through Virgin Money. A bat was signed by the Sky Commentary team and auctioned on eBay, and he persuaded the ex umpire, England Cricket Coach, and player, and current Sky commentator David

“Bumble” Lloyd to be the ENO mentor, and then teams were invited, including us.

So, who to get in the team? I had no illusions about a world beating team, but thought it good to get a cross representation across the Orchestra, a team that would play in the right spirit at least. John Blackshaw, I had played with before and knew he still turned out occasionally. Andrew Connelly too, I had played with and against many times. Steve Whibley, Marcus Broome, and Brian Grogan were signed up. All extreme novices ( in Brian’s case he had never played –“is this what a cricket bat looks like?”, but I knew back in Ireland he Hurlled so he has a good eye for a ball) and Steve and Marcus had not played since junior school, but we would have a good time.



I arranged a first practise session out the back of the Mermaid to see how people could bat and bowl, and indeed teach them. The 4 tennis balls didn’t last long....ending up somehow in the car park, up on the roofs of the offices, but progress was being made. Another session arranged in Cassiobury Park in Watford with cricket training balls bore more fruit, and a tactics meeting was convened to explain the game (more later), even though the best tactic decided was not to drink too much beer while we were playing

Fund raising was started. We decided that, as we were having the “fun” we would split the £250 entrance fee between us, and then the Club very kindly sponsored us a very generous £150, a fantastic start. A whip round in the orchestra got the same amount, and various people, friends, relations, colleagues, sponsored us directly through the website. Although I cannot give a definite amount we raised, I believe it is in the four figures. The total all the teams raised by the start of the competition was a magnificent £18,500.

Our team resume was posted on the website, here it is:

**Team:** BBC Concert Orchestra

**Team mentor:** Michael Vaughan

**Team name:** BBC Calypso Collapsos

Captain: Dave “Old Spot” Wythe. RHB RHstart-off-medium-by-the-end-of-the-over-slow. Horn. Only captain as he is the sole player to have played indoor cricket before...25 years ago....An unbelievable cricketer, as in “I’ve never seen anyone play cricket like that.” Old spot as he loves pigs, especially the produce.

**Players:**

John “Iron” Blackshaw. LHB RM. Trumpet. Village cricketer, especially in the pub afterwards. Iron, not because of the metal but as in “I do know how to iron a shirt, honest. In fact I’m sure I’ve got one somewhere”.

Marcus “Mo” Broome: RHB RMight-get-it-near-the-stumps-occasionally. Violin. Welcomes a return to his school day cricket. Yes, day in the singular. Called Mo because he can run. And run and run.

Andrew “The Don” Connolly. RHB RM. Orchestra General Manager. A true veteran of the game, well he sometimes turns up for the Veterans XI. Called the Don for two reasons. He is the General Manager, and his cricket has no similarity whatsoever to Bradman

Brian “Morgs” Grogan. LHB RHB (he’s not sure) RMay-sometimes-not-hit-the-side-netting. Stage Manager. Called Morgs as every successful short form cricket side needs an Irishman who played hurling. Our secret weapon. He doesn’t know what’s going to happen when he bowls, so how can the opposition? Looking forward to playing...for the first time.

Steve “The Hammer” Whibley. RHB RMay-make-it-bounce-possibly-even-twice. Percussion. The Hammer because he has one.....and uses it at work. Looking forward to trying to hit the ball over the pavilion.

The whole team is looking forward enormously to playing the game in the right spirit....and beer....and wine.....crisps anyone?

We had arranged for Michael Vaughan the ex England Captain to be our mentor, and he kindly sent this message. *“I am delighted to have taken on*

*the role of mentor for the BBC Concert Orchestra cricket team. Although I'm more familiar with brass bands and now learning the cha cha cha of Strictly Come Dancing, I understand the BBCCO is a fantastic, versatile and thoroughly professional outfit. Sadly this doesn't seem to have extended to their cricketers. I look forward to passing on a word or two of wisdom to them in advance of Sunday, 21 October 2012, when they join 7 other teams of cricketers comprising of orchestral and session musicians to play an indoor cricket tournament at Lord's, the home of cricket, in aid of the wonderful work of Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research and The Musicians' Benevolent Fund", also posted on the website. So, we were ready for battle to begin.....*

Sadly though, a couple of days before the tournament, Brian had a family bereavement so had to withdraw. I had already invited (after discussion with the others) a trombone playing friend of mine, and, like me a retired cricketer, Mark Walters, to come along and spectate, but kindly bring his gear just in case one of us pulled a fetlock, so he kindly agreed to play in all matches.

Walking the familiar route from Paddington to Lords (I have been a member of Middlesex CCC for over twenty years) I wonder if my knee will stand up? Will John remember all his kit? Will Steve land it on the cut bit? Have I enough money for the bar? Is our name already on the wooden spoon?

The teams are: Us, ENO, BBCSO, CBSO, RPO, Bournemouth SO, a freelance team, and session musician's team. 2 leagues of 4, the top two going through to the semi finals.

Indoor Cricket basic rules: one run for the ball hitting the side netting, ceiling, or net behind the keeper, 4 or 6 for the wall behind the bowler. 3 runs for no balls or wides, if you run that scores 2 extra to any netting score, 8 overs an innings. Dismissals in the usual fashion, but you can be caught off the netting. The playing area is about 25 yards x 50.

We arrived at 1130, registered the players, picked up our team colours (light blue) and went to the bar....no, not for beer yet, but for bacon rolls and coffee and to have the teams' briefing, where any questions about rules were answered, and for the draw. We were last out of the hat, so therefore in league B and our opponent were RPO, CBSO and the BSO.

Although we gave it a good go, actually playing above my expectations really as we were close in every game (one very close!), but our inexperience told and we came second in every game, but good runs were scored, wickets taken, catches held.



Our results:

VBSO. We scored 81 and lost on the penultimate ball

VRPO chasing 71 to win came up short, scoring 65

V CBSO we scored 73 losing in the final over.

The final was between the RPO and the Freelancers, the champions being the Freelancers.



The Team Cheers Lads

After our matches we retired to the bar for welcome (though not the first!) beers and a cream tea, agreed we all had a great time, and enjoyed watching the semi finals and final.

All the matches were extremely competitive but played in the right spirit with some remarkable catches, wild run outs, some very tense finishes – such as our first game- and some fine exhibitions of batting skills. The final started at 8, so it was a long day, the two teams being played onto the pitch



by a specially written fanfare for the occasion for 8 trumpets (one from each team, ours of course being John) by Billy Cooper, the “ Barmy Army” trumpeter who played for the Session team.

After the speeches and presentations there was a good party.....and if you're interested, 63 cricketing musicians and their supporters got through more pedigree bitter than the entire grandstand on a test match day!

Having my breakfast the next morning and reflecting on the games and the “what ifs” and “but onlys”, I found myself thinking you know, next time? We might, we just might.....

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*Sadly the Club was not invited to send a representative along on the day, but we were happy to sponsor the BBCCO team for this worthwhile cause, and are extremely grateful to David for telling us what we missed! It sounds like quite a fun day! Will it be an Annual event we wonder? Watch this space!!*



## Calling all BIG BAND fans.

Join the BBC Big Band Club and get up to the minute details of all the BBC Big Band's appearances and recordings packed into their interesting magazine. For full details contact the Honorary Secretary: Sylvia Ritchie, 5 Osborne Terrace, Crail, Fife KY10 3RR  
Telephone 0133 345 0941

## TICKETS ~ TICKETS ~ TICKETS

If you receive tickets which you are unable to use please PHONE Brian on 01462 892 670, and you will be given the name & address of another member who would be delighted to attend in your place.

Tickets returned in the post invariably arrive too late to be reissued.

## COME AGAIN?

A member rang to express disappointment in the lack of tickets to attend FNIMN. Brian explained that it was not the lack of tickets, but the lack of concerts, as there had been many repeats of previously transmitted concerts. "Oh", came the answer, "I don't mind going to repeats."

Could the BBC *Please* omit the "Tonight, Live from....." on repeats, as before the first piece is halfway over the phone is ringing with disgruntled members demanding to know why they haven't had tickets for it!! . Though why would they expect to find Brian at home if it was a live show.....?

Yet another member rang up to say the FN he was listening to sounded rather like one he had attended some months earlier and wasn't it a shame the BBC could not vary the programme more!!

## The ideal gifts for a friend.

A years subscription to the BBC Concert Orchestra's Supporters Club  
or The Orchestra's "Showtime" CD recorded to celebrate  
the 25th Anniversary of the Club  
For details Contact Brian on 01462 892670.

## Can anyone beat this?

It was reported in Metro on November 15th that Scientists had conducted a global study to find the quickest man on the planet. Unlikely as it may seem in view of the competition including base jumpers, shooters and "motor mouths", the title had been awarded to a violinist.

Ben Lee, who with partner Linzi Stoppard are the electric string duo "Fuse", played Rimsky-Korsakov's "Flight of the Bumble Bee" note perfect in 58.05 seconds. That's 15 notes per second! Ben already holds four world records and is in the Guinness Book of Records.

His achievement was rewarded on the "Superhuman Showdown" broadcast on the Discovery Channel on 14th November.

*Seen at a*

*London Underground station recently  
"Due to budgetary constraints the light at the  
end of the tunnel has been switched off"*



*A copy of our last magazine was taken to a keep fit class by one of our Club members. Another member of the same class just happened to be Anthony Wills, a former producer within Radio2. Anthony has kindly written this article which will be of particular interest to members from the Golders Green era!*

## **GOLDERS GREEN HIPPODROME 100 NOT OUT!**



The dear old Hippodrome – which we all miss so much – has a very special birthday this year. Designed by Bertie Crewe it opened on Boxing Day 1913 as a music hall. Its arrival on the scene was a direct result of the extension of the Northern line to Golders Green earlier that year. The Hip held more than 3,000 people at its inception but, thanks to local pressure, had no bar! Variety bills were the order of the day and it was not until much

later that it was fitted out with proper stage facilities, reducing the audience capacity to 2,485. In due course it became a West End “try-out” venue as part of a circuit that included the Streatham Hill Empire and the Wimbledon Theatre. Many famous stars such as Marlene Dietrich played one-night stands on its boards. It was also home to the Carl Rosa Opera Company and Ralph Reader’s celebrated Gang Shows. Audiences however began to decline after the war (apart from the lavish pantomime productions, the last of which starred Danny La Rue) and eventually the lease passed into the hands of the Mecca organisation which turned it into a Bingo Hall.

In 1969 the BBC were looking for a temporary London television studio while those at Television Centre were being adapted for colour transmissions. Many rock bands were recorded in concert there in the early ‘70s and the majority of these tapes survive and are frequently shown on BBC4.

From its inception in 1952 the BBC Concert Orchestra had been based at the Camden Theatre (now Koko’s nightclub and still worth looking inside if you can persuade the management to let you in when there’s no show on) and it was there that it began playing for *Friday Night Is Music Night* under

the batons of Gilbert Vinter and Sidney Torch. In due course it was decided to move the orchestra's base to Golders Green and the Hippodrome became the home of FNIMN although there were many outside broadcasts all over Britain.

When I joined the BBC in 1979 I took many roles including being part of a small division within Radio 2 known as the "Light Music Unit" whose members included Robert Bowman, Monica Cockburn, Charles Clark Maxwell and Alan Owen. Apart from auditioning hopeful singers we also produced *Matinee Musicale* for Radio 3 which included a lot of Light Music, including the compositions of various composers not heard elsewhere on the BBC. The Concert Orchestra for "*Mat Mus*" (as we called it) was normally conducted by their Principal Conductor of the time, the softly spoken Ashley Lawrence. The first specialist programme of which I took charge was Listen To The Band introduced by Charlie Chester, whose scripts were written by Brian Matthew (a well kept secret!). Apart from commissioning brass band recordings from the regions for this series I personally recorded London area bands such as the Hendon Band in session at the Hippodrome. Every so often (when the budget allowed, for they charged MU rates) I would book a full military band, which was always an exhilarating occasion. I trailed *Friday Night Is Music Night* under the tutelage of John Bussell and David Rayvern Allen but never actually took charge of it. As readers will know there was a small group of stalwarts appearing on the show including Cynthia Glover, John Lawrenson, Vernon & Maryetta Midgley and the then recently discovered Marilyn Hill Smith (who we were delighted to hear on the Remembrance Day edition of the programme last November, after an absence of seven years). The Ambrosian Singers were usually present and took a prominent part in the closing medleys brilliantly arranged by Sidney Torch, Robert (Bob) Docker and Gordon Langford.

It's important to note that there was plenty of other activity going on in the Hip, even if it was the Concert Orchestra's base. Apart from the brass and military band sessions mentioned above I also produced specially assembled ensembles, often conducted by Stanley Black, for the waltzing part of *Marching & Waltzing*, presented on Sunday evenings by the eccentric Paddy O'Byrne. And the BBC Radio Orchestra often decamped there, as the Maida Vale studios were too small for its largest configuration (the 'A' Orchestra), especially for invited audience events. Among the most

memorable of these were the brilliant concert performances of major musicals for which producer John Langridge flew in leading stars from the USA. Undoubtedly the most fulfilling part of my live music work (I was simultaneously co-producing sequences such as *The John Dunn Show* and *Round Midnight* as well as many documentary series) were the monthly concerts for the David Jacobs lunchtime programme: these usually took the form of tributes to one particular composer such as Cole Porter or Frank Loesser. They featured the full Radio Orchestra under its Principal Conductor Iain Sutherland plus the Stephen Hill Singers, sixteen extremely versatile session singers who could read anything on sight and whose members took on solo passages as well. The singers would rehearse upstairs in the former ballet room and then join the orchestra for a quick run-through while David Jacobs practised the script I had written for him. I loved working in the Hippodrome as unlike the Maida Vale studios you had the run of the whole building and it was a proper theatre rather than a converted roller skating rink! On one occasion for a Christmas show I had Father Christmas welcome the audience in the foyer while on another I hired some Can Can costumes and persuaded four Radio 2 production secretaries to pose in them! I still have all of those concerts on tape and perhaps the Club would like to listen to one on a future occasion.

In the early 1990s the live music scene began to change, as the BBC now had unrestricted needletime and did not require so many studio sessions. The Radio Orchestra was axed in 1991 though its Big Band section was retained. The Midland and Scottish Radio Orchestras also got the chop. The Concert Orchestra under its energetic manager Ian Maclay realized it had to supplement its income outside of its BBC duties and began to undercut the freelance London orchestras, for example playing *Coppelia* for a ballet company at the Royal Albert Hall. This caused great resentment at the time. At the same time series such as *Melodies For You* became all-disc programmes resulting in a considerable loss of work. The last Concert Orchestra programme I produced was a 1994 New Year's Gala which also featured a military band and (in her broadcast debut) opera singer Rosemary Joshua, and was introduced from one of the Hippodrome's boxes by Ian Wallace. I also still have this on tape.

The story of the Hippodrome's demise is well known and we can only be thankful that no-one was killed or injured by either of the ceiling collapses which caused the Concert Orchestra to refuse to continue playing there.

For many years the orchestra became in effect homeless while there was grandiose talk of building a new Music Centre at White City to house both it and the BBC Symphony Orchestra. The Mermaid Theatre, which has been the home of *FNIMN*, has for some time been under threat and presumably LSO St Lukes and the Watford Colosseum will succeed it. Certainly the Finchley Arts Depot, which was tried out a few times, was most unsuitable.

After the BBC left the Hippodrome the building deteriorated rapidly until, despite strong objections from local residents, it was sold in 2007 for a paltry £5 million to the El Shaddai International Christian Centre, which already owned premises in Birmingham, Bradford, Manchester, Nottingham, Sheffield and Cardiff. El Shaddai have done a magnificent restoration job, removing the clutter of the recording cubicle and painting the various tiers and ceilings in a beautiful blue colour whilst picking out the cherubs and other details in white. The original raked red seats remain underneath the flat floored stalls area where the bands and orchestras once performed and there is still a BBC Trades Union notice board in one of the corridors. The former star dressing room is now a children's crèche! Ask very nicely and they may let you have a peep inside. Great times, great memories.

© 2012 Anthony Wills



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<http://www.cosc.co.uk>

PLEASE DO VISIT & CONTRIBUTE TO IT.

# REFLECTIONS ON LIGHT MUSIC AT THE PROMS 2012.

It is good news to see a few more concerts set aside in the Proms season for quality lighter music, though of course it does tend to annoy the more snobbish musical establishment. The puzzle is why the BBC at a time of financial constraint should bring in outside ensembles for this repertoire when the obvious choice is within their own organisation. I think of the concert performance of “My Fair Lady” which used the splendid, but I would imagine, very expensive John Wilson orchestra when the Concert Orchestra who have played the music for years were available. More surprising still was the “Evening with Ivor Novello” a splendid idea – for this lovely music is sorely neglected, yet for this the Hallé Orchestra were hired. They are of course a top notch symphony orchestra but to me sounded ill at ease in this music not helped it must be said by poor arrangements (why not Gordon Langford or Peter Hope??) and less than ideal singers.

Gavin Sutherland writing as chairman of the light Music Society says “Poor singing and cold interpretations, at this time of BBC cuts surely we should have had the Concert Orchestra and the FNIMN singing guests written all over it!”

Ex BBC man Anthony Wills has written elsewhere that “The whole event was disappointing, and would not on this showing, lead to a revival in Novello’s music” and he should know being producer of those wonderful programmes of musical theatre put out on Radio2 in the 1990’s featuring the BBC Concert Orchestra who have the style and flair to bring off the lighter repertoire.

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# THE CONCERT GOERS.

PETER BUSSEREAU & WING YUN WU

Sunday November 25th St Luke's Church Watford

This excellent Concert entitled "The Paris Collection" was given in aid of the Watford New Hope Trust. Programme was Claude Debussy: Violin Sonata, Gabriel Fauré Après un r?ve. Camille Saint-Saens Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, and César Franck Violin Sonata.



Peter & Winnie



# CAMERATA QUARTET

Saturday December 8th St Nicholas Church Barton Le Clay  
Regulars Peter Bussereau, Peter Randall & Paul Bennett were joined by  
Marcus Broome for an exhilarating – but exhausting for the players! –  
Christmas Concert.



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Divertimento in D major. Felix Mendelssohn String Quartet in A minor and William Walton String Quartet in A minor

But where was Juliet Kaufmann?  
In the kitchen brewing the Mulled Wine!!!



# **BARNET SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.**

SUNDAY DECEMBER 9th

St JOHN'S CHURCH, FRIERN BARNET.

This was another former BBC CO players reunion with Martin Loveday conducting Philip Gibson Leader, and Clive Hobday, Jayne & Andrew Ross, Peter Beament and Stacey-Ann Miller in attendance - although for an amateur Orchestra this group are really very talented.

The programme featured Beethoven's "Fidelio" Overture and Strauss' Horn Concerto No1 in E flat with soloist Charlie Ransley, a member of Barnet Symphony Orchestra who has just graduated from King's College London.

After the interval Johannes Brahms' Symphony No2 in D major Op 73 rounded off another enjoyable concert,

Their next concert will be at 7.30 on 24th March at St John's Church Friern Barnet when the programme will include Weber – Bassoon Concerto and Franck - Symphony No 1

*Don't forget Club members can claim a £2 reduction on the ticket price on production of membership cards. Programme & interval refreshments are included.*

## **Dates for Your Diary**

The next "Afternoon Out" will be on  
Monday, APRIL 8th 2013

As many of you know this outing consists of an unbeatable combination of a 2 course Carvery Lunch with coffee/tea served in the ballroom, an Afternoon Recital followed by home-made tea. The fully inclusive cost is just £21.50 per head. For further details and to book ring Brian on 01462 892670.

Over 1,000 lunches have been served to Club members over the years, but if you have not yet sampled the delights we advise you get in quick as numbers are strictly limited.

# More from BBC Concert Orchestra at

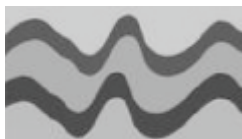
## *The Rest Is Noise*



### **Seven Deadly Sins: Berlin in the 1930s**

Sunday 3 March, 7.30pm

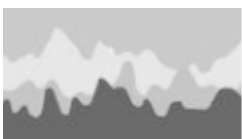
Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall



### **Hidden Voices: Emergence of American Sound**

Sunday 24 March, 7.30pm

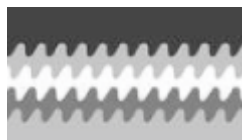
Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall



### **Kurt Weill: Berlin to Broadway**

Friday 12 April, 7.30pm

Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall



### **The Home Front: Broadcasting to the Nation**

Friday 7 June, 7.30pm

Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall

# The Annual General Meeting Notice

**The 31st Annual General Meeting of this Club will take place on Saturday April 6th at Finchley Methodist Church, Ballards Lane Finchley N3 1NB commencing at 7pm Doors open 6.30pm. Please be seated by 6.45pm.**

**It is important that all Club members attend. This is your Club so come along and have your say. Find out more about the aims & functions of the club and our future plans for member's entertainment. We normally have an audience of around 100 and we hope to see even more of you this year.**

**After the preliminaries there will be a short interval when refreshments will be available followed by the usual guest appearance. Anyone who has attended an AGM will know we have had a succession of well known personalities connected with the orchestra – members, presenters & conductors.**

**Who will it be this year? You will have to come along on the night to find out!**

