

SOIRÉES MUSICALES

Spring 2009 - 25th Anniversary - Edition 39

B B C *Concert Orchestra Club*



President:

Richard Baker OBE

Vice Presidents:

Nigel Blomiley, Cynthia Fleming and Martin Loveday

Editor/ Chairman:

Brian Crouch
57A Chilvers Bank
Baldock Herts
SG7 6HT
01462 892 670

Other Ed and Photos:

Jenny Thomas

Treasurer:

Barry Shannon

Accounts:

Jenny Thomas

Minute Secretary:

James Connelly

Membership Secretary

Jenny Thomas

Tour/Visits Co-ordinator:

Douglas French

Committee:

Donald Dean, Elizabeth DeLeiros, Esther Lawrence,
Vivien Shannon, Paul Taylor
and representing the Orchestra Marcus Broome

Disclaimer: the views expressed by the contributors to this magazine are not necessarily the views of the Editor, Orchestra or BBC.

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Copy for the next edition to be submitted by 31st August 2009

ED Lines.....Chairman Brian says....



As you no doubt gather from the elaborate cover of this edition of the Magazine our Club is celebrating the 25th Anniversary of its formation.

Started by 3 or 4 Members of the orchestra all those years ago, few would have visualised that 25 years later the Club would still be going strong and consist of nearly 750 members.

(In fact 9 of the 57 members who joined in July 1984 are still regulars at FN. How's that for dedication!)

I know many of you were able to attend the Saturday evening of music and mirth which started our year off last June and I also hope that you will soon receive the free “Anniversary CD” which Andrew Connolly has kindly arranged with the Orchestra to make for Club Members. If you enjoy the selection on the CD then you can buy me a drink sometime, if you don't enjoy them you can blame Andrew!! Either way you should receive your copy of this special CD before Christmas.

Jenny and I have made many lasting friendships as a result of being involved with and helping to run the Club for all of those 25 years – as have many of our members. We enjoy doing it and hope to be involved for some time yet to come, and who knows we may manage to get the Membership up to an all time high of 800!

Brian Crouch
Chairman BBC CO.Club

Changes in the Orchestra and other news.

Welcome to:

Dominic Worsley who joined the Orchestra on 11th November, as the Section Principal double bass

Also to Jenny Ricotti, who joined the team on a freelance basis in June as Assistant Music Associate.

Welcome Back Wishes to:

Leader Cynthia Fleming following surgery on her hand.

Also Jayne Ross, of the 2nd violins, she fractured her wrist in a fall in October 2007.

Good to see you both!

Wedding Congratulations to:

Iain McLeod of the 1st violins who married Kim Murphy, a “regular extra” bassoonist on 17th January at the West Lodge Park, Cockfosters.



Iain and Kim

Belated Congratulations:-

To Matthew Lee (cello No2) and his partner of 12 years, Patrick O’Dwyer, who celebrated their Civil Partnership Ceremony on 6th June 2008 at Chelsea Town Hall. Several members of the Orchestra played at the event.

Goodbye to:-

Christopher Green of the flute and piccolo section who left on 19th December for the Royal Opera. Christopher had been with the Orchestra for 11 years.

Also to Graham Warren – again!

Graham retired from the French horns in January 2003, but came back as assistant librarian. He left again in September 2008 to work for Carl Davis.

*But have we finally seen the back of him?
Watch this space!*



Nathan

Next Generation in the violin section: - *continued.*

Congratulations to Dan Mullen on becoming the latest Dad in the 2nd violins.

Wife Claire gave birth to 7lb 1oz Nathan Joseph on Friday 10th October.

Caroline Bishop, a regular violin “extra”, underwent an emergency caesarean following a mammoth 47 hour labour.

Baby Mirabelle Anna tipped the scales at 7lb 15½ozs, on Sunday 12th October. Understandably mum was rather exhausted!



Mirabelle

First for 2009 came Chereene Allen from the 1st violins, who gave birth to 6lb 11½ oz Harry Christopher at 13.03 on Saturday January 24th.



Harry



However that is NOT the end of the story, as a former member and regular extra Antonia Azoitei (formerly Beattie in the 2nd violins) is expecting Baby Azoitei in late June!
OK you violinists – who's next??

Congratulations to Claire and Dylan Barnes on the birth of their twin sons. Oliver Henry 5lb 8oz and William Thomas 5lb 1oz were delivered at 10.25 a n d 1 0 . 2 6 p m respectively, on Tuesday 4th November by caesarean section.

Claire is the Assistant Orchestra Manager. She assures me she has never played the violin!



Claire with her boys

Management changes:-

Welcome to:-

Marketing Assistant Mark Lewis who joined Lisa in the Marketing Department on 15th September, replacing Emma .

Mark joined the BBC Concert Orchestra after working in marketing at the concert promoter Music at Oxford, and after 2 years running the website and publications for Wigmore Hall. A keen trumpeter, and former pupil of Kate Moore, he's already enjoying working with a full orchestra again – especially one with such a good brass section! Mark has just finished a Chartered Institute of Marketing Professional Diploma so is now thoroughly enjoying his free time. Outside of work, Mark enjoys playing the trumpet with a number of amateur orchestras (including one with former Marketing Officer, Jo Johnson), is a keen squash player and attends as many concert and theatre productions as possible. He's also getting married later this year.



Mark



Alex

Alex Walden the new Orchestra Manager from 24th November, replacing Sally Mitchell who left in September for the Royal Opera House.

I live in Cambridgeshire, I'm married and have two small children. I have worked in the music industry for 15 years. I have a background in production, working with many different orchestras in the UK and abroad. I had worked with the BBC Concert Orchestra before and really liked everybody here. When the opportunity to work with them on a full time basis came up I jumped at the chance. I believe that no other orchestra is as versatile as this one and its exciting coming into work every day. The projects we work on are so varied and wide ranging that we are really kept on our toes!

In my spare time I am also a Superintendent in the Special Constabulary in Cambs. I have been a special for 8 years and I manage a division of 75 officers. I enjoy volunteering (specials aren't paid) and like to help make a difference in my community.

Alex

And finally to Patrick Bailey who is the new CO Learning Manager from 12th January, replacing Peter Hayward who left in September for the London Borough of Lewisham.

Patrick studied at the Royal College of Music and worked between 1994 and 2008 as a freelance conductor and workshop leader. As a conductor he conducted opera, new music, youth orchestras and choirs and even had a stint in variety as Music Director of the Thursford Christmas Spectacular for 5 seasons. His opera work included last year's production of Street Scene at the Young Vic which won the Evening Standard Awards' Best Musical and his concert work saw him conduct orchestras from the RPO to concerts in Mumbai and Muscat.

He has also worked extensively with young people and adult learners, particularly in Hertfordshire but also as far afield as Los Angeles and this

enthusiasm for the role of music in education and the development of audiences young and old led him on a search to find one place to put his energies. Happily he has found a home at the BBC Concert Orchestra and is thrilled to have joined the team. He lives in London with his wife Helen, and their 5 month old son, Seth.

FREE PRIZE DRAW

As announced at the AGM, there will be two prize draws held in Spring and Autumn. All paid up members will automatically be included. Winners picked at random will each receive a pair of tickets for an “Own Promotion” Concert on the South Bank, absolutely FREE.

Using the computer membership database, we asked one committee member for a number, to identify the sheet, and another for a number to identify the line.

Our fourth lucky winner was Member S 4605 Alistair Wills. For his prize he chose the “Ultimate Classics” Concert at Fairfield Hall Croydon.

Alistair writes:-

What a wonderful evening was had in Croydon! I took a friend with me following my lucky win in the prize draw. It was his first experience of this excellent Orchestra.

Thank you for organising it.

With best wishes, yours sincerely.

Alistair Wills.

St Albans.

Don't forget that even if you are not a prize winner, you can still enjoy these concerts.

Contact Mark on 020 8752 7087. Have your membership number to hand when you ring him up

POSTBAG..... What you write about.

Dear Brian and Jenny

Once again thank you for organising the renowned "Afternoon Out". It should be renamed "A Wonderful Afternoon Out".

My friend Eileen was ecstatic about the whole day, and thoroughly enjoyed herself. In fact may I book two tickets for the next one!

Thanks again

Ken Smith

Redbourn.

Dear Brian

Enclosing our proforma for the next season of concerts. Our Daughter-in-law's parents Mr and Mrs Charlett of Southampton, have been enjoying the broadcasts they have attended and are pleased that we told them about the Club.

You may remember that I sent you for information a copy of the letter I sent to the Controller of Radio2 dated 28th May. Well just to let you know that at present I have received no reply, not even an acknowledgement! So much for the senior management of the Nation's public service broadcaster! However I did think that the concert from Blackpool on Veteran's Day was excellent, the Concert Orchestra at it's best!

Best wishes

John Day

Winchester.

(Yes, we get a number of similar letters regarding the lack of response to emails, faxes and correspondence addressed to the Controller. We can only suggest you keep trying...)

Dear Jenny and Brian,

Subs enclosed and a few more envelopes. Thanks for all your hard work. The concerts are an absolute joy to go to.

Best wishes,

Frances and Ted Atkins

Swanley, Kent.

From a NON-member, handed to Brian on her FNIMN concert ticket:

A tremendous performance by all. Well worth the special journey from the north. Barbara (Perfect)

Dear Sir

I am sorry to inform you that we will not be renewing our membership as you do not use the North Finchley Arts Depot any more and other venues are a real pain for us.

My wife is disabled and I work nights, so the local theatre was an easy venue for us as we live on the same complex.

We very much enjoyed the concerts that we attended over the last couple of years, so thanks for allowing us to have some well earned entertainment.

Alan Burt

North Finchley London N12.

(A good place to point out that this Club was founded and exists solely to support the Concert Orchestra, not the convenient venue!!!)

And from a new member:-

Dear Brian

Thank you for your "Welcome to the Club". Please find enclosed the concerts form, and I apologise for the poor response, but Maldon does not have a train station, which is a great disadvantage when coming to London etc.

My Grandson is delighted that he has been accepted, and always tunes in Friday evenings.

I do hope you and Jenny are well, and look forward to seeing you both at the forthcoming concerts With best wishes

Valerie Eve

Maldon Essex

Dear Jenny and Brian

After the sudden, sad and traumatic death of my wife I would just like to thank you for your warmth, kindness and deep understanding. After my initial thought of resigning, your encouragement to me in suggesting I continue with the BBC CO Club, and your kind words on many an occasion have meant so much to me. The enjoyment I still feel every time I attend a concert, which we both loved, has been a lifeline to me.

I am deeply grateful to you both.

My very best wishes

Graham Cowell

Dagenham, Essex.

(Sadly many of our members find themselves in similar circumstances, and we are always pleased to see you. Enjoying the music and seeing familiar faces can be the first step in the long return to normality).

Dear Brian.

Wow! The 30th January concert was sheer magic! Bravo!! (Tony Hatch “Special”) Alan and I shared each and every enjoyable moment via Skype and could not escape feeling elevated to a high level of amazement, high energy and having great fun. What an entertaining evening, what an exceptional composer, lively conductor and fun-loving talented musicians. Thank you.

Very best wishes from your ardent fan in South Africa! Mara. De Villiers

Dear Brian and Jenny

Let me introduce myself, I am the older brother of one of your members – Ken Smith who lives in the village of Redbourn near St Albans.

Until 1961 I lived with my wife and family at 5, Brookside Road Golders Green, and sang in the choir of St Ninian’s Presbyterian Church, Hodford Road, under the musical director John Jawes FRCO the blind musician. I also played the guitar with him on piano.

I loved London, particularly Golders Green, which had many musicians living there, and The Hippodrome which had wonderful pantomimes and live shows. Also the Lido Cinema, which had a Saturday Morning Micky Mouse Club, with talent competitions - which I often won.

Brother Ken sends me regular news of the Club, including Soirées Musicales, with its wonderful pictures and memories for me of days past.

I presently live in an “Aged Care Facility” and I am pleased to say we have a good concert party, “The Vasey Gang”, and plenty of music. I am aged 85 and play piano keyboard, guitar and sing.

Love to you all

John Smith

Bundoora, Victoria. Australia.

Thanks for writing to us John, We’re glad you like the Magazine and hope you continue to enjoy life “down under”



John Smith

Think “Librarian” and it is likely you conjour up an image of a bespectacled lady in twin set and brogues, her iron grey hair in a demure bun, and with a permanently disapproving expression. Yes?

Well that image is certainly dispelled when it comes to the BBC CO Librarians, who now go by the title of “Music Associates”. Well see for yourselves!



Jenny



Eunice

Jenny Ricotti introduces herself:-

I must admit that my first introduction to the BBC Concert Orchestra was a little confusing. I was introduced to everybody as ‘the new bunny’. At first I wondered if looking like a rabbit was a prerequisite for the job – though I soon came to realise that this referred to the previous orchestral librarian, Graham Warren, affectionately nicknamed Bunny. In fact Charles Hazlewood asked which animal I was, (if not a bunny) and I have since decided that I will be a hamster. The reason is that the job of orchestral librarian for the Concert Orchestra is like being a hamster scampering on a wheel – it is never ending! It’s a far bigger job than it outwardly appears, and one in which one never has the satisfaction of a clear desk, and all jobs done. Various programmes past and present need to be juggled – in boxes, on couriers, in dressing rooms, broom cupboards – in fact finding a place to work where the orchestra is, presents its own challenges.

My very first job after University was as orchestral librarian at BBC TV Centre where I worked on light entertainment shows, like the Generation Game, Royal Variety Show and was a run-around for Ronnie Hazlehurst. I remember working on a series with the RPO and Andre Previn working alongside the RPO's rookie librarian Andrew Connolly! After that I was a radio studio manager and worked in production on TV and Radio shows, including a stint on Jim'll Fix It. (I read the letters, chose the subjects, did the filming all over the UK and abroad – and managed not to sit on Jimmy Savile's knee!)

After leaving Fix It I started a family, and got involved in music promoting. I looked after various classical ensembles, soloists, composers, a jazz trio, (with Kenny Wheeler, Stan Sulzman and John Parricelli) and a Big Band. I also had a lot of fun promoting an educational project called Mbawula, an infusion of South African Music and Big Band performed with choirs of several hundred children. In what can only be described as a portfolio career I also worked as assistant to various celebrities – including Twiggy and Sir Ian McKellen.

So now I have come full circle, back behind the scenes, working with music and musicians in an environment which is very comfortable for me. I have to say that it is probably the most demanding orchestral librarian job in the country! The sheer amount of music, the fast turn arounds and the lack of a base add to the challenges but I really enjoy it. Particular highlights for me have been the Britten programme with the choristers of St Paul's Cathedral at Lancing College, the celebration of Saturday Night Fever at the Electric Proms, the George Fenton and the Ronnie Scott Big Band Friday Nights.

And if I ever should start to resemble a hamster, you'd better let me know before I start shredding all the music for bedding!

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A HOLIDAY WITH A DIFFERENCE?

Eunice Brushfield-Hodges shares her holiday experience.

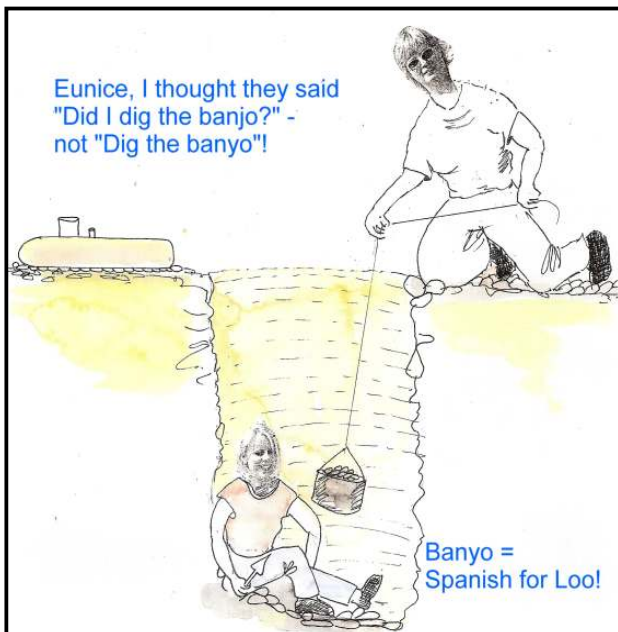
“What did you do in the war Daddy?” – a common question not so long ago (well, for those of a certain age!) but let’s change it a little – “What did you do in the CO Summer Holiday?”



Well, my husband and I were part of a STEP Team (Short Term Experience Programme) – eight of us doing a voluntary work programme sponsored by our church, to “kick-start” a building project which, when finished, will feed some 150-300 children a square meal each day. This is a very real need in the small Quechuan shanty town in Peru.

The small town of La Florida is largely occupied by people from this very poor tribe, who just manage to eke out a living in a very barren land; hard brown volcanic rock, dusty and unforgiving. This is part of the desert strip which runs down the coastline of Peru, one of the driest places in the world. The only redeeming factor is the river nearby, thus providing all their water for washing, cooking, drinking etc. Their houses are generally constructed from thin “rush-matting” with the earth as the floor, or maybe a cloth rug if you’re lucky.

The toilet is just a “long drop” – a hole in the ground with no running



water. Some houses were built of rough brick, or wood (like a



August 2007) in getting Stage 1 of the Feeding Centre Project going.

Since returning, thanks to e-mails we have seen photos and received news



of how it has been progressing, and we have now heard that Stage 1 is almost completed!

We really developed an affinity with these people and would love to (and may well) go back to help with further stages in this building project.

© 2009 Eunice Brushfield-Hodges.

(We
Beth



Who says that Librarians don't get their five minutes of fame...?! (Even if incredulous Orchestra Managers were heard to say "*They* wanted their photo taken with YOU?????")

TICKETS tickets TICKETS tickets TICKETS tickets TICKETS

ENTITLEMENT.

The Club can only offer ONE ticket to single members and TWO to joint members – when available PLEASE do not ask for more, as it only deprives other members from attending .

REMINDER..

If tickets for concerts are not used then this Club will have its allocation reduced.

CANNOT USE YOUR TICKET?

Thanks to those of you who return tickets, but sometimes they arrive too late to be posted out again. So instead could you please RING BRIAN on 01462 892670. He will give you the address of another member who can use them, and so save three days. Thank you.

FALSE ECONOMY...

Although we have said it time and again, there are still some members who continue to use 2nd Class stamps on their envelopes. To be sure of attending a concert, please use a 1st class stamp. We cannot be held responsible for missed concerts due to 2nd class delays.

WISHFUL THINKING?

From time to time we send everyone a form to apply for tickets for concerts. If you do not complete and send back the application form, then tickets will not be sent to you. Don't forget to enclose stamped addressed envelopes for concerts applied for. In the event of a concert being cancelled, we will keep your envelopes for use when an extra concert is arranged.

BE EARLY

We have heard from several members who, despite having tickets, were unable to get into the Mermaid Theatre for FNIMN. Please remember that having a ticket does not guarantee entry, particularly when there are “superstars” appearing. Get there early to avoid disappointment. Bar is open from 6.30 pm.

“SPECIALS”

From time to time some FNIMN are re-classified as “Specials” – when a pop-star is appearing. When this happens, the Club does NOT receive ANY tickets, neither is the Ticket Unit involved. The audience is invited – usually recording studios, members of the star's fan club and winners of Ken Bruce's Radio competition. It's no use ringing Brian!

MISUSE OF TICKETS

Members are reminded that tickets are ONLY valid for the concert printed on them. As all Club tickets are issued in Chairman Brian's name, any tickets presented for the wrong concert are reported to him by Audience Services. Further incidences of misuse will result in EVERY ticket being checked at the door, which can only cause considerable delays to everyone.

TICKETS tickets TICKETS tickets TICKETS tickets TICKETS

CLUB OUTINGS

1)Afternoons in Letchworth: Carvery lunch and Benslow Music recitals. Our first of the Season was on 8th September when 30 members enjoyed yet another fine Monday – we do seem to be lucky with the weather! The Broadway Carvery lunch, served as always by Chef David, was well up to the usual standard. The Benslow gardens were resplendent with colour, and the concert featuring The Arelia Strings, was enjoyed by all. Before the day was out, we had had 20 bookings for the November one!

Our last for the year was on 10th November, when our run of fine Mondays ended with a heavy downpour all morning. Nevertheless 30 members braved the elements and fortified with the usual excellent lunch, by which time the rain had subsided to drizzle, formed the usual balloon decked convoy to Benslow. The advertised programme of Baritone and Piano belied an excellent concert featuring Schubert's "Winterreise" sung in the original German by Francis Brett who is a Lay Preacher accompanied by Nicholas Chalmers.

To round off the afternoon there were mouth-watering scones and ginger cake for tea.

Everyone agreed it was another successful day.



Nicholas and Francis

We have now arranged 27 Afternoons Out at Letchworth and the Broadway has served over 1000 meals to Club Members, but the hunger for music and food is still very strong out there!

For the benefit of our newer members who do not know about it, an "Afternoon Out" consists of a visit to North Hertfordshire for a Carvery lunch, dessert and coffee served in the ballroom, followed by a visit to a music college for a concert and home-made cakes and tea. The whole function lasts from 12 noon to 5pm and costs £20.50 per head. The next outing has been arranged for Monday MAY 11th.

If you would like to join us on this date then act quickly as places are restricted.

Cheques payable to BBC Concert Orchestra Club should be sent to PO Box 213 Baldock Herts SG7 6ZP

Letchworth station is on the Kings Cross-Cambridge line via Stevenage or Moorgate-Letchworth line via Hertford North. Drivers should take the left turn at Junction 9 of A1(M) and follow signs to Town Centre.

For further information, and to book for this event, contact Chairman Brian on 01462 892 670.

Visit to the Emirates Stadium.

We are still working our way through the long waiting list of members wishing to make this tour, which despite lots of stairs, is proving to be very rewarding.

Anyone who is interested in joining the Robert Farnon Society, or for a FREE sample of their Magazine "Journal into Melody" should contact the Secretary,
RFS, Stone Gables, Upton Lane,
Ilminster, Somerset,
TA19 0PZ,
or ring 01460 242226.

Don't forget to mention you are a member of the BBC CO Club!

It is true to say that an orchestra is only as good as its individual players, and as we all know when it comes to the Concert Orchestra they don't come any better! Those of you who attended the "Music and Chance" Concert on 17th February will have discovered they can even play in the dark! For this reason Brian and I are always happy to support any one of them when they do their own recitals and concerts, and discover how talented they really are. We report these concerts, and so give other members the opportunity to share some delightful informal evenings.

THE CONCERT GOERS.

It was no surprise then when Antonia, (formerly of the 2nd violins), asked me if we would be interested in attending a recital given by her new husband Remus Azoitei, at St Martin-in-the-Fields on 6th November. Of course we were!



Remus and Antonia

Now Remus is hailed by the Strad as "an uninhibited virtuoso with soul and fabulous technique". Having made his concert debut at just 8 years old, he has appeared on just about every major concert platform since. In 2001 Remus was appointed professor of violin at the Royal Academy of Music, becoming the youngest person to hold this position in the history of that institution. In 2006 he was awarded the title Associate of the Royal Academy of Music (ARAM).

His concert entitled "Bach by Candlelight" with the London Music Arts Ensemble consisted of Violin Concertos by Vivaldi and Bach "Air on the G String", and Pachelbel's Canon and Gigue. But it was the highlight of the evening, Remus' fantastic performance of Bach's Chaconne from "Partita" No2 in D Minor that brought the audience to its feet.

Watch out for his future performances, not to be missed!

Two days later we attended another delightful evening in the company of Peter Bussereau, with Winnie Wu at the piano. St Lukes Church in Watford was the venue for works by Beethoven, Prokofiev, Brahms, Kreisler, Faure,



Rachmaninov, Monti and Albeniz – all with the distant accompaniment of fireworks!

And finally for this edition, “Valentine’s Bouquet” a romantic evening of poetry and beautiful Music. Camerata Quartet at Barton – Le –Clay in Bedfordshire on Saturday 14th February. And so it was, with music by Piazzola, Mendelssohn, Gershwin, Rimsky-Korsakov, Golijov and Borodin. With Champagne and chocolate heart shaped honey cakes in the interval, a splendid celebration of St Valentine’s Day.

The next concert will be on Saturday 18th April at 8pm at Leighton Buzzard Theatre. The programme “The Classical Collection” performed by Symphonia Academica, Leader Peter Bussereau and conducted by David Beaman, consists of Haydn’s powerful “Trauer” Symphony, Mozart’s violin concerto in A, Handel’s “Arrival of the Queen of Sheba”, Barber’s “Adagio for Strings”, Boyce’s Symphony No2, and the Romanian Dances of Bela Bartok.

For tickets and further information about this splendid concert, phone 01582 818801.

A PLEA FOR OPERETTA.

By Geoff Bowden

Operetta lovers, and I certainly count myself as one, get a very raw deal in this country at present. Very few professional stage productions are mounted and if one of the main opera companies decides to let their hair down it usually means yet another production of *The Merry Widow* or *Die Fledermaus*. Now don't get me wrong, I love those two operetta classics but I do long for more unusual titles. After all, opera fans would soon cause a furore if all they were given was a diet of *Carmen* and *La Boheme*!

I am afraid to say that the BBC doesn't help matters either as for quite some time now that organisation certainly gives the impression that operetta no longer exists. In the dim and distant past I can remember various music programmes on BBC radio that provided the operetta lover with much to enjoy. The Saturday night Gala concerts occasionally focussed on the genre, Sam Costa had a long-running record programme devoted to operetta and in the nineteen nineties Nigel Douglas presented an excellent series called *Operetta Nights*, which featured songs from popular rarely heard operettas. Sadly in recent years all these programmes have faded from the airwaves and now, apart from the odd aria on *Friday Night Is Music Night* every few weeks there is a deafening silence.

Surely the BBC has a remit to provide all types of music for its licence payers. On Radio 3 one hears classical music, opera and jazz and on Radio 2 one hears show music, folk, brass band, blues and pop (some would say an over emphasis on the latter) but neither station plays operetta.

We have plenty of singers in this country who could sparkle in this art form (many of them have been guests on *Friday Night Is Music Night* although not heard anywhere near so frequently since the programme's artistic policy was changed to accommodate more "pop" acts) and of course we have the much loved BBC Concert Orchestra to supply the all important musical support.

Come on BBC, wake up to your responsibilities and provide the operetta lovers in this country with some gems from Lehar, Millocker, Fall, Stolz, Kalman, Abraham, Strauss and the like!

Geoff Bowden, October 2008.

Many readers will share Geoff's sentiment, but it's no use just nodding sagely in agreement. Action is required! There's over 700 of you out there and a barrage of suitably phrased letters to the Controllors of BBC might just strike the right chord.

“SPECIALS”

The Club did not receive any tickets for a scheduled FN which was reclassified as a “James Bond Special” presumably because the producer felt that the guest artists and music would not appeal to the regular Friday Night audience.

However the hard core Membership support the ORCHESTRA, not the programme, and for us the “stars” are the Orchestra – it’s their show after all, and has been for over half a century – whilst passing guests are just that.

Many of us feel that it is an insult to the fantastic Orchestra when the predominantly “fan club” audience at “Specials” cheer and whistle their enthusiasm for their idols, yet do not have the manners or decency to listen to the orchestral pieces, and barely bother to applaud them.

Week after week Club Members support the Orchestra, but how many of the “fans” return – unless their idols are again appearing?

For this particular show, had the Club received its allocation of tickets, not only would the hundred plus empty seats have been filled, but the Orchestra would have got the rousing applause they so rightly deserved. This was in fact an excellent concert and full marks to the producer.

Jenny

“The Lighter Side”



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY.

Club AGM – 27th April – see back cover for details.

Ultimate Classics II – 2nd May – Fairfield Halls Croydon

Raga Mela – 6th May – Royal Festival Hall.

Afternoon Out -Food and Music-Monday May 11th Tel: 01462 892670

Kurt Weill - “Lost in the Stars” 23rd and 24th June, Queen Elizabeth Hall.

Family Fun Day in Watford will be held in JUNE , date and venues to be announced nearer the time.

Promenade Concert – Royal Albert Hall on Tuesday 11th August, featuring Gilbert and Sullivan’s “Patience”. Conducted by Sir Charles Mackerras.

For further information and details of how to book for the above concerts contact Mark Lewis on 020 8752 7032

ANNIVERSARY FLASHBACKS

Chairman Brian is still living in the past with his “Anniversary Flashbacks” recalling some of the artists and music featured in our year of foundation 1984.

Conductors:- Kenneth Alwyn, Stanley Black, Heinz Geese, Barry Wordsworth (oh yes, he’s not as young as he looks!) Jan Stulen, Robin Stapleton, Iain Sutherland, James Lockhart, and Nicholas Cleobury.

Singers:- Cynthia Glover, Joan Savage, John Lawrenson, Wynford Evans, Lindsay Benson, Maryetta and Vernon Midgley, Forbes Robinson Lorna Dallas and Geoffrey Chard.

Instrumentalists:- Henry Krein Quartet, Equale Brass, William Davies, Christine and Sandy Blair.

Orchestral Highlights:- Overture Pique Dame (Suppé), Intermezzo from “School For Fathers” (Wolf Ferrari), Jealousy (Jacob Gadé), Ring Of Kerry (Peter Hope), Danse Boheme from “Carmen” (Bizet), Ballet Music from “William Tell” (Rossini) and Dolores (Waldteufel).

Those were the days of proper “Friday Nights”

BAC

Feb 2009

CD REVIEWS

By Dave Daniels.

Whilst I know the name of RICHARD ARNELL I was not familiar with his music. A pupil of John Ireland he was stranded in New York at the outbreak of war and remained there working for the CBC with such people as the great film composer Bernard Herrmann. He has written Symphonies and Concertos, these being recorded by Martin Yates and the RSNO for the Dutton label, who have also recorded Martin conducting our Orchestra in two of Arnell's Ballet scores (Dutton CDLX 7208) "The Great Detective" written in 1953 is based on the Sherlock Holmes stories though listening to this delightful score might (as the "Gramophone" reviewer put it) suggest more Inspector Clouseau! The other Ballet score "The Angels" is a much more serious affair. First performed at Covent Garden in 1957 with choreography by John Cranko, it is very symphonic in nature. Indeed the sleeve notes remark that at the recording sessions they referred to it as the Symphony No 5 ½!



Dave Daniels

The LEROY ANDERSON series continues with Vol 4 (Naxos 8.559381) which contains the wonderful "Irish Suite" which we have heard parts of for many years on Friday nights. Also included is the less well known "Scottish Suite" from 1954 and this is a world premier recording and long overdue – super music. Three curiosities are vocal versions of "Belle Of The Ball", "Forgotten Dreams" and "Blue Tango" with Kim Criswell and William Dazeley. I have to say I prefer the instrumental originals but it is nice to hear these things.

The aforementioned singers also appear on Vol 5 (Naxos 8.559382) in a real find and treat in the shape of Anderson's only venture onto Broadway. The show "Goldilocks" opened in New York in October 1958, but only ran for 161 performances (It was up against "West Side Story" and "My Fair Lady"!) however whatever its failings it certainly wasn't the music. If you enjoy Gershwin, Cole Porter and Richard Rogers you are in for a treat. I loved it. Also included is yet another suite of Carols, this time for woodwind. Anderson must have loved Christmas, as I omitted to say that Vol 4 also includes the well known "Christmas Festival".

Finally those of you who enjoyed the appearance of Sir Willard White on FNIMN might like to know that his CD with Carl Davis and the CO entitled “My Way” is still available on Sony SK92943.

ONE FOR THE BOOKSHELF.

Some members enjoying our “Afternoon Out” will have seen a Benslow regular double bassist named Peter Neville, accompanying various guest ensembles. Peter has written a tongue in cheek book of short stories entitled “Tales From The Pit”, based on his experiences of playing in over 140 amateur operatic productions, and which he dedicates to everyone who has ever played in one. (Pit that is)

As the title suggests this is a wonderful insight into what goes on in the orchestra pit, out of sight of audiences – and indeed the casts – of amateur operatic productions and musicals. Each unrelated story unfolds from a different instrumentalist’s point of view, starting with a bunch of strangers of varying ability meeting up for a band call and progressing through the week – not without assorted hilarious crises and mishaps, - to the final curtain.

Whether you are a musician, a theatre goer, or just a bookworm – you’ll love this, it’s brilliant! Able publishers ISBN: I 903607 31 0 priced at £7.95 available from Benslow or your usual bookshop.

CD SALES.

Many thanks to Members who spent £1,775:00 in 2008 and £211.00 in 2009 on CDs and other items from the Club Stand. This means we have sold £3,511 worth since we started in 2005! (£210 in 05, £200 in 06 and £1,165 in 07) This money belongs to the BBC, and has been passed to Andrew. From 1st of April the Club will no longer have CD’s to sell but over 200 CO recordings will be available on Amazon including recent Dutton releases for £8.79 including postage.

The link for Amazon is:

http://www.amazon.co.uk/s/qid=1236011980/ref=sr_st?keywords=bbc+concert+orchestra&rs=229816&page=1&rh=n%3A229816%2Ck%3Abbc+concert+orchestra&sort=-releasedate

Jenny

SOAPBOX CORNER

I WILL GO THE EXTRA MILE

Concert reviews from the rather grumpy "Northerner".

One of the very best FNIMN programmes for some time was that given at the Mermaid last June. "A Celebration of Sidney Torch" really was a hark back to the traditional Friday Nights, even down to the "Song of Songs" intro for the singers – wonderful stuff. Robin Stapleton was in his element and the singers were excellent, so good to hear those Torch selections again, with a choir. Never was a 300 mile round trip more worthwhile!!

One small comment: whilst it was great to hear some vintage recordings of the great man on the organ, it would have been better to include those in the interval thus leaving more time in the live concert for more Torch originals, such as "Comic Cuts" or the "London Transport Suite"

Another trip south on 26th September to hear a FNIMN conducted by our splendid principal horn Stephen Bell. Featured instrumentalists were Roderick Elms and his wife Joanna Smith on piano plus guitarists Mitch Dalton and the young Danilo Borgerth who some might say were somewhat out of place in the context of this particular programme. Which brings me to another complaint: Whilst the pieces played were excellent they did not somehow add up to a satisfactory whole. The opening item, Walton's "Richard III prelude", would have made a great finale whilst the "Sleeping Beauty Waltz" a lovely piece which ended the concert, should have been the opener!!!

In a rare interview with David Rayvern Allen on the occasion of his 80th birthday, Torch said the success of Friday Night was due to (a) content and (b) the effect of that in terms of the arrangement – one piece running seamlessly into another. These days one gets the impression a piece is included merely because it is the right length regardless of its suitability within the programme.

Having been one of the many people pleading for more English Light Music on radio, in which the Orchestra excel, I was thrilled to see just such a concert in the striking new prospectus which you all will have received. I therefore headed to Watford on 29th October for a programme conducted by the gifted Gavin Sutherland with Tasmin Little as soloist in the rarely performed Haydn Wood Violin Concerto – though I enjoyed this, I felt it

was stretching it a bit to call it “light” music!! (hear hear!). I would have preferred to have heard something by say, Montague Phillips to open the concert, but the remainder of the programme featuring music by Coates, Tomlinson, Philip Lane, Ketelby, Charles Williams and finally Paul Patterson was great. Just one problem – the hall was little more than half full. *Where were you all??????????????** Our Club can fill the Colosseum on its own. Now I know the Mermaid is very convenient for many, but from where I am (Doncaster) Watford is just as much in the South-East as Blackfriars.

(Anyone who can get to Clapham Junction can get to Watford, as it's a straightforward interchange)

For my part I am in the BBC Concert Orchestra Club to support the Orchestra not just to get free tickets for FNIMN. That is a bonus. Enough of my moaning – or Jenny will sack me!

Dave Daniels

S 891

(Far from it. Talking to other Club Members it is fair to say that Dave's comments are echoed by a great many of you – unfortunately though Dave is preaching to the (mainly) converted.

** Incidentally I understand from Darren Kimpton that many Members did not receive the literature offering FREE tickets to the English Light Music Concert at Watford. The error on the BBC database has now been corrected. Apologies to all who missed out)*

GETTING TO THE MERMAID

Although Blackfriars underground station will be closed for refurbishment from March for 3 years, Thameslink & main line services will NOT be affected.

There are two underground stations within a short walk of the theatre, St Paul's on the Central line and Mansion House on the District & Circle lines (the next stop to Blackfriars and closer than Temple).

The following buses stop outside the station:-

45 Kings Cross or Clapham Park via Brixton.

63 Kings Cross or Honor Oak via Liverpool Street.

100 Elephant & Castle or Shadwell via Liverpool Street.

388 Hackney Wick to Blackfriars via Liverpool Street & Bethnal Green.

DOMINIC WORSLEY



Dominic Worsley

We welcome to The Orchestra, Dominic who was appointed as Principal Double Bass in November of 2008. He has spent the last eleven years with The Philharmonia Orchestra, so he is no stranger to a busy orchestral working life.

Dominic is originally from Manchester and comes from a family of Butchers in the Worsley area (I wonder which came first the family or the name!), and is the first professional musician from his clan. He trained at The Royal Northern College of Music and played the bass in both The National Children's Orchestra and The National Youth Orchestra.

Our congratulations are to be passed to him as well because on the 2nd of January this year, he was married to his fiancée Rebecca, who is a viola player with The Philharmonia. They spent their honeymoon in the Kerala region of Southern India.

Apart from his busy musical life, Dominic enjoys cooking (he even took some lessons while in India this year!), camping and walking. He and his wife particularly enjoy the Pembrokeshire coastline and the Cape Wrath area in Scotland. Dominic tells me that he also enjoys listening to film music so he should enjoy FNIMN when we include some of the scores of John Williams etc.

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Peter Bussereau.

It seems virtually every edition of this Magazine carries some mention of Peter Bussereau, Camerata Quartet or Symphonia Academica! So who is Peter and what is the connection? As Peter is one of the familiar faces in the first violin section, Marcus has kindly done a lunchtime interview between rehearsals.



Peter was born in Baldock in Hertfordshire and went to school in Luton, Bedfordshire. I asked him about the French family name and he told me that it is from several generations back and that his only connection with France is the occasional holiday there with his wife and daughter.

It was while he was a member of the Bedfordshire Youth Orchestra that he met his wife Sue. They were on an orchestral course together in

Edinburgh and Peter was fortunate enough to sit next to Sue on a coach journey- they have been travelling on the same road together ever since!

After sixth form, Peter joined the Commercial Union as an insurance clerk. He held this job for three years during which time he continued to have violin lessons with Max Morgan, a Professor at The Guildhall School of Music. Having had enough of working for the C.U. Peter returned to education and took a degree in Maths at Royal Holloway in London. Fellow students at this college included Andrew Connolly, now General manager of the Concert Orchestra and Susan Bullock who has sung with the orchestra on numerous occasions. (Former students at this illustrious institution also include Dame Felicity Lott and Roger Wright, director of the Proms)

During his time here, Peter was involved in many musical activities and this led him to consider a career in music. As a result he applied for and was accepted onto the post graduate orchestral study course at The Guildhall. However he only stayed for one term here, partly due to a lack of funding grant but mainly because he was offered a job with The Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra.

This was in January 1983 and Peter was a member of the second violin section until May 1986. The Principal conductors during this period were Rudolph Barshai and Andrew Litton. After this three year sojourn on the south coast, Peter made the move up to London to join the second violins of The BBC Concert Orchestra. This was 1986 and Ashley Lawrence was the Principal Conductor. He subsequently moved over to the firsts in 1989 and was later appointed no.4 first violin, a post which he occupies to this day.

In 1987, he and Sue were married in Bedford – she was none too pleased when only two weeks after the wedding Peter was off on tour with the Orchestra to Hong Kong- I think that she has forgiven him by now though! Peter and Sue still live in Bedfordshire with their 15 year old daughter and a veritable menagerie of pets- four cats, two rabbits and a couple of hamsters.

Apart from his musical life with the Concert Orchestra, Peter is a founder member of Quartet Camerata. This group was formed in 1991 and its players are also central to Peter's other creation, Symphonia Academica which came about in 1995. This is a chamber orchestra based in the Luton/Bedfordshire area and resident at The University of Bedfordshire since 1999. Peter works as a Director and Soloist alongside David Beaman (BBC C.O. violinist) who is the Principal Conductor. Another connection with the Concert Orchestra is that Richard Sisson (The pianist from Kit and the Widow, who have appeared regularly on FNIMN) has written several new pieces for Symphonia Academica.

Away from the world of music, Peter continues to have a keen interest in physics (a left over from his maths degree no doubt!), History, Archaeology, Aircraft and a penchant for collecting top notch fountain pens!

“LAST WORD”

**Andrew Connolly, General Manager of the BBC CO
has the last word**



I was recently sent a copy of the Robert Farnon Society magazine “Journal Into Melody” and in looking through the many articles and snippets of information I began to reflect upon where the BBC Concert Orchestra “2009” version sits in the context of light music.

On more than one occasion it has been brought to my attention that “the Concert Orchestra are the last guardians of large scale, live, light orchestral music and that it is my duty to protect that heritage”. As General Manager I am certainly very proud to be entrusted with this unique ensemble, its history, repertoire and magnificent players.

However, my first concern is to ensure that the Concert Orchestra remains relevant to the audiences who pay the licence fee and expect the BBC to provide them something for it. Fifty years on from the era of the BBC Light Music Festivals, it is clear to me that for many people the 1950s are close to being ancient history – and that events like the Saturday Night Fever Electric Prom last October, or collaborating with the Mercury award winning band Elbow for Radio 2 in February (and on red button digital TV and online) have become today’s version of those festival concerts.

The premise remains the same – to perform music that is popular and with the stars of the time. I admit that the graceful melodies and well crafted orchestrations of the purists’ version of light music are not always so prominent – but what these types of programmes provide are entry points into orchestral experiences for people not likely to listen to classics unless they are on an advertisement or film soundtrack.

At the moment we have a large number of projects proposed for the orchestra with a diverse mix of artists not just from Radio 2 and Radio 3, but other parts of the BBC and external partners from the commercial and community sectors too. The future of the Concert Orchestra is very rosy indeed as the BBC is encouraging me to create opportunities for live performances to as wide a range of audience members as possible. As such I

hope the orchestra will soon be able to play in many more towns and cities across the UK and in so doing find collaborations and repertoire that attracts new listeners whilst containing enough from the past to keep that tradition alive.

Finally, I look forward to developments with the Concert Orchestra's website to enable a sharing of all types of music with each other, recommending favourites and new discoveries in the way that social networking websites like Facebook and MySpace encourage.

Andrew
05 02 2009

Do make Jenny and Brian aware of anything you would like to ask me and I will do my best to answer in the next edition – due out in the Autumn!

Andrew

THE 27TH ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING OF THIS CLUB
WILL BE HELD ON
MONDAY APRIL 27TH 2009
AT TRINITY CHURCH,
HODFORD ROAD,
GOLDERS GREEN,
LONDON NW11,
COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM.
PLEASE BE SEATED BY 6.50 PM.

It is important that all Club Members attend. This is YOUR Club. Come along and have your say. And find out more about the running and functions of the Club. Last year the attendance exceeded 100, and we hope to see even more of you this year.

After the preliminaries, our guest speaker will entertain us. As anyone who has ever attended an AGM will know, we have had a succession of well known personalities connected with the Orchestra:- Members, Presenters and Conductors.

*So who will it be this year?
Come along and find out who it is!
You won't be disappointed.*