



BBC SCOTTISH SYMPHONY CLUB

Spring 2016

Newsletter

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Christmas Surprise – the alternative BBC

by Martin D Armstrong

It was just another winter's day. Well not quite, it was the last Sunday before Christmas – the 20th of December to be precise. More importantly, it was the date that the BBC SSO's annual 'Christmas at the Movies' concert made a welcome return to City Halls, Glasgow, after an absence in 2014 due to the orchestra's other commitments. The city centre was overflowing with Christmas shoppers, so it was good to escape from the frenetic masses!

As always, the Grand Hall was virtually full for this warmly awaited event.

A good concert is always guaranteed when the talents of the SSO players are combined with many memorable theme tunes. Film music is usually excellent, as it has to "sell" the film.

'Christmas at the Movies' has a quite different audience from the SSO's usual Thursday evening audience, although a few of the latter were in attendance. This was an afternoon of pure magic for lovers of good music, which ended all too soon.

I left City Halls and made my way round to Blackfriars on the corner of Albion Street and Bell Street for a wee refreshment before catching the bus home. Stepping into the pub, a few members of the orchestra were already relaxing and chatting with a post-concert drink.

Having made my choice from the five or six real ales on tap, I had just started to sample my pint when out of the corner of my eye I noticed that some of the brass section had arrived. As well as carrying their instrument cases, they were also clutching music stands. Something was afoot! All was soon revealed when Alan Mathison (bass trombone), Etienne Cutajar (horn), Andrew Duncan (tuba), Hedley Benson (trumpet) and Neil Galley (trombone with the Ulster Orchestra) set-up in the performance area and proceeded for the next two hours or so to entertain everyone with a succession of Christmas carols. They



Left to right: Alan Mathison (bass trombone), Etienne Cutajar (horn), Andrew Duncan (sitting and hidden behind his tuba!), Hedley Benson (trumpet) and Neil Galley (trombone).

played all the well-known tunes and their excellent renditions were warmly applauded by everyone. The quality of the real ale was up to Blackfriars' usual high standard and the atmosphere in the pub could not have been bettered.

Standing at the bar, I was asked more than once by people arriving in the pub who were the players. My reply was unequivocal – I told them that they were very privileged to be listening to members of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. As I finished my pint, I thought "this is too good to miss, my dinner can wait". In fact after a few more pints I eventually left for home about 2030 hours, happy that I had witnessed and thoroughly enjoyed a very special event. A perfect Sunday, I almost forgot that it was still raining!

So a big thank-you goes to Alan, Etienne, Andrew, Hedley and Neil for a splendid coda to 'Christmas at the Movies'. Here's hoping for a repeat event in 2016!

This was indeed a lovely *Christmas Surprise* from the alternative BBC – *Blackfriars, Brass and Carols*!

Forever Changes

This is my first Newsletter since taking over the editorship from Martin Armstrong. He will be a hard act to follow and I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the debt we in the Club owe him. The Newsletter boasts a high standard of presentation and I hope to build on the legacy he left. A Newsletter can only be as good as the articles provided by Club members, by players and other colleagues in the BBC, and I trust we will continue to see a wide and interesting selection of subjects being covered by as wide a range of contributors as possible.

I aim to produce a Newsletter every 6 months. In this issue you will find the customary reviews of Club concerts and news from the Orchestra. You will also see an article that celebrates the BBC SSO's 80 years of music-making, and another which looks ahead to the forthcoming BBC SSO series in Glasgow. It will be the first under the baton of Thomas Dausgaard. We wish Maestro Runnicles a fond farewell and record our gratitude for curating so many brilliant programmes during his tenure. And, of course, we also extend a warm welcome to Thomas Dausgaard, his successor, and wish him every success in his new rôle.

A word about Club concert reviews: for some time there has been quite a long lag time between concerts and reviews appearing, and though this Newsletter brings us up to date with

the Xmas 2015 concert, readers should be aware that what you see here are edited versions of sometimes fuller reviews which are now appearing on the Club's website, usually within a month of the recital. As I write this, the review for the February 2016 concert is already on the website and I expect that the March concert will also be available there by the time this 'hard-copy' Newsletter reaches you. The web presence also has many more photos accompanying the reviews than there is space for here. Even more up-to-date is the Club's Facebook page (search as 'BBC Scottish Symphony Club') which now has photos of recitals uploaded within 48 hours, sometimes sooner.

Sir Peter Maxwell Davies CBE was the Club's Honorary President (from 2010). He died on 14 March. In his honour, he is pictured on our front cover. Such an important figure in the music world deserved and received many obituaries. Instead of repeating what has already been written, I have opted for some of his observations, some serious and some not so serious.

I am very grateful to my predecessor for the article on the facing page about an impromptu Christmas gig in Blackfriars by members of the brass section and to Graeme Taylor for his illuminating piece about what goes on to allow our wonderful Orchestra to be heard nationwide.

One article deserves special mention. Those who attended Andrew Manze's pre-concert talks during his superb Vaughan Williams' cycle may remember a contribution from one of the audience who had been a BBC sound engineer during the war. She had been present at the premiere of RVW's 5th Symphony on 24 June 1943 at the London Proms. This was Mary Lawson, now in her late 90s, who recounted how this serene music was as a balm at a time when victory over Nazi Germany was by no means assured. She has since begun writing her memoirs and they make fascinating reading. They are too large to be included in full, but I hope readers will find the edited version I intend to serialise over coming editions of the Newsletter as interesting as I did. The articles will be part autobiography, part reminder of the crucial part the BBC played, and continues to play, in the musical life of the nation.

One last thing – we don't have a letters page. I think such a thing would be a welcome addition, and enliven our pages. Any takers?

Jim McGrath

FRONT COVER: **Martyn Brabbins and Sir Peter Maxwell Davies in Glasgow City Halls, November 2009** (John Wood, by courtesy of the BBC SSO)

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CLUB CONCERT REVIEW – THE LAST OF SEASON 2014-2015

Monday 11 May 2015 (following the Club's AGM): Gent Kocho (violin), Andrew Berridge (viola), Laura Baxter (piano)

The advertised artist was indisposed and this concert had to be arranged at extremely short notice by Gent Kocho who is now the Orchestra Liaison Member for the Club. A totally new programme was devised and what a programme it was!

Gent and Andrew began the evening, delivering a fantastically fluent performance of Mozart's String Duo No. 1 in G Major. This work is notable for many passages that have the viola playing in sixteenths almost on a par with the violin and also like Haydn with lots of double stops.

The second item was unknown to me, a solo for viola by Max Reger (1873-1916), a composer much influenced by the major German composers and with a huge repertoire of music to his name. This solo, his Opus 131d, took me by surprise by its power and directness with very rich melodies reaching out to the audience. I have put this on my shopping list, but would a recording attain the brilliancy of these two? Andrew and Gent, give yourselves a pat on the back - well done!

Paul Hindemith's *Trauermusik* ("Mourning Music") followed, in an arrangement for piano and viola instead of the usual version for viola and string orchestra. The story of this piece's inception bears repeating. Hindemith had travelled to London on 19 January 1936 to play his Viola Concerto later that week with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Adrian Boult conducting. But George V died the following night. The original concert was cancelled. Hindemith composed this homage to the dead king on 21 January and it was broadcast live that same evening! For this piece, Andrew was joined by Laura and their playing was breath-taking. *Trauermusik* consists of four very short movements. No joyful tones here but, as the title suggests, a rather sad rhythmic piece. Again, it was new to me but I enjoyed it immensely, as I believe did the rest of the audience.

But this peak of achievement was surpassed by a magnificent rendition of Massenet's *Meditation* (from *Thais*), played with such virtuosity by Gent on his violin and again, instead of an orchestra, with the piano in support, played ever so elegantly by Laura. Together, they painted a magical soundscape with this well-known

Intermezzo. Nothing more can be added here, a performance better appreciated by the ear than described in words.

Lastly came Tchaikovsky's *Valse Scherzo*, written originally for violin and orchestra but in an arrangement by its composer for violin and piano published in 1878. If I can use a well-known cliché, this was the icing on the cake. It lasts only about six minutes but one could see the great technical demands made on the performers, the violin being played with the utmost focus and concentration, a testament to many years of practice to attain such skill and dexterity.

To suffer another well-worn cliché as the whole programme was short (as post-AGM programmes have to be), "it is not the quantity that counts but the quality" and tonight we had quality in abundance by all three players. Would we listen to this again? Of course we would...encore!

Ronald Gray



Laura Baxter, Gent Kocho and Andrew Berridge
(Jim McGrath)

On family

"I remember listening from upstairs to an argument my uncle had with my parents. He was saying, 'Surely you aren't going to let that lad of yours do music when I can offer him a bricklaying apprenticeship.' My parents were saying that I had a scholarship and had to have a chance."

On monarchy and politicians

"I have come to realise that there is a lot to be said for the monarchy. It is a better system than having a president and frankly I have been disappointed so much with our dishonest politicians. They are not telling the truth, any of them."

Sir Peter Maxwell Davies (1934-2016)

CLUB CONCERT REVIEWS: SEASON 2015-2016

Monday 14 September 2015

Gent Kocho (violin), Jennifer Stephenson (clarinet), Chris Baxter (piano) and Ross Wilson (guitar)

A programme comprising a great variety in style and mood, in date of composition and in combination of instruments, resulted in almost 2 hours of fantastic and virtuoso playing. The thread which ran through the evening was trios for the combination of violin, clarinet and piano.

The programme began with such a trio, by Khachaturian (1932), a substantial work lasting almost 30 minutes. The bell-like opening on the piano and the slow tempo suggested a pastoral landscape of birds and water. The second movement (*prestissimo*) was a dialogue between violin and clarinet, with piano (bell-like) in the background. Then followed a movement where the sensitive playing suggested the tuneful and haunting sounds of the Songs of the Auvergne. Finally, the opening fast dance rhythms, played with mighty energy and commitment, came to a peaceful end with an atmosphere of rustic pipes fading into the far distance. This was wonderful ensemble work.



Gent Kocho, Chris Baxter and Jennifer Stephenson
(Ian Duthie)

The two Sonatas from Paganini's Six Sonatas for Violin and Guitar from the first decade of the 19th century offered Gent and Ross the opportunity to display their dazzling techniques and their delight in playing together (as evidenced by their frequent smiles). One would expect virtuoso violin music from a work by Paganini but what was unexpected was the demand for similar virtuoso playing from the guitarist. Violin and guitar were equal partners and the music itself could only be Italian.

The first half concluded with a trio composed in 1936 by Darius Milhaud, himself a violinist. Gent, Jennifer and Chris made the sparks fly in the first two movements in which the sounds of factory machines, sometimes heavy, sometimes less strident, were prominent. By contrast, the third movement was gentle and even tuneful with all three

players combining to produce a beautiful story in sound. The finale, with a grand orchestral opening, was transformed into a gentle, subtle interplay between violin and clarinet.



Ross Wilson and Gent Kocho (Jim McGrath)

After the interval, Ross quietly played the slow and sexy tune that begins Piazzolla's 'Café' movement from his *Histoire de Tango*. By contrast, Gent introduced a darker mood, which alternated with one more lively, and then beguiled his audience with a sensual serenade. The 'Bordello' section began with Ross knocking on the body of his guitar which might be interpreted as knocking on the door of the bordello (the audience laughed nervously) or the sound of castanets. As the tempo increased, both players showed their delight in the witty, boisterous ending.

In an addition to the published programme, Ross played a virtuoso piece by Dionisio Aguado y García (1784-1849). And what a virtuoso performance by Ross, one that evoked the sound-world of Chopin, but on guitar.

Vasil Tole's Suite for Violin and Piano (1963) was a work which suggested an affinity between Albanian music and the traditional music of Scotland by its modal nature. There were driving rhythms on the piano and wild *accelerandi* on the violin – not out of place in a 'Strip the Willow'. The vigorous whistling tune in the finale was a clear indication of men (and women) dancing.

The third trio and finale to the evening (like most, if not all of the programme, a completely new experience for the audience) was that by Gian Carlo Menotti, composed in 1996. Violin, clarinet and piano each displayed its range and colour in mostly playful mood in the first movement. Gent, Jennifer and Chris produced some truly stunning ensemble work. The adagio second movement contained a highly emotional climax in the lower registers of violin and clarinet. The last movement (*vivace*) was reminiscent of bird call and ended with all three instruments playing a quirky tune of Til Eulenspiegel's genre.

Alistair Laird

Monday 5 October 2015

Tom Rathbone (cello) and Alastair Savage (violin)

The first half of the concert had a dance theme and incorporated dance music of the 18th century. Tom Rathbone started proceedings by playing J S Bach's Cello Suite No 4 in E flat (BWV 1010) from memory. Tom's wonderful playing made us forget the mental and physical challenges this work holds for the performer. As for the audience, it was a great experience and pleasure to listen to this wonderful music played so well in such intimate surroundings. Thank you again Tom for this lovely performance which was appreciated by all the audience.

Next was a selection of 18th century Scottish fiddle music arranged for violin and cello. Alastair showed his great skill and feeling for this music and along with Tom's sympathetic cello accompaniment sent us back to the days of Neil Gow and others, reminding us that great music was being played and composed in Scotland at this time.



Alastair Savage and Tom Rathbone (Jim McGrath)

The pieces played were: 'Coilsfield House', 'Countess of Selkirk's Favourite' and 'Largo's Fairy Dance' by Nathan Gow; 'Major Molle' by Andrew Gow; 'Chapel Keithack' by William Marshall; and 'Miss Charlotte Campbell' and 'Miss Elanora Robertson' by Robert MacIntosh.

The second half of the concert concentrated on music of war and remembrance. It began with the 2nd and 3rd movements of a Duo for Violin and Cello composed in 1925 by Erwin Schulhoff (1894-1942), a composer I did not know. I was very pleased to be introduced to him by this piece. A Gypsy dance started this selection and was full of the vitality and excitement you would associate with this style. This was conveyed by the great playing and the obvious enjoyment displayed by Alastair and Tom. The 3rd movement was a more reflective piece requiring thoughtful and sensitive playing. We were not disappointed as both Alastair and Tom provided this and more to make us want to find out more about this composer.

It was a privilege to be present for the final work, the premier of 'Scenes of Liberation' composed by Alastair Savage. He had been inspired by a recent visit to France and some incidents or battles that had taken place there in the Second World War. Wonderful playing by Alastair and Tom showed their skills in both fast reels and more reflective pieces. At this point in the concert I have to confess I just let the music sweep over me and I blame Alastair for composing so many good tunes! Alastair had also produced very informative programme notes for this piece.

Thank you again, Alastair and Tom for a very enjoyable concert which was greatly appreciated by the audience and which was dedicated by the players to former Club chairman Malcolm Flemington who was unable to be present because of ill health.

Jim Prentice

Monday 2 November 2015

Amy Cardigan (violin), Laura Baxter (piano) and Barry Deacon (clarinet)

These players presented a varied programme of music by European composers from the first half of 20th century. Amy Cardigan and Barry Deacon began with three of the duos (Dancing Song, Ruthenian Song and Bagpipe) from Bela Bartok's 44 duos for violin, on this occasion arranged for violin and clarinet. From Hungary we moved to Russia, with the Sonata for Solo Violin, Op.115, by Prokofiev, a demanding, vigorous and yet melodic piece, as might be expected from this composer, and quite brilliantly played by Amy. In an addition to the advertised programme, the first half ended with the 'Five Bagatelles' for clarinet and piano by that quintessentially English composer Gerald Finzi. These were delightful miniatures, beautifully played by Barry and Laura.

After a short break, the second half was devoted to Hans Gal's Trio for Violin, Clarinet and Piano, Op.97. Gal (1890-1987) was Austrian born but fled his homeland after the Anschluss in 1938. He came to the UK, was interned during the war and then settled in Edinburgh, becoming a much respected member of the classical music scene in that city. The BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra has recently been featuring some of his symphonic music and it was therefore doubly interesting to hear this chamber piece being performed by this talented group of musicians drawn from the Orchestra. Overall it was a very enjoyable evening which introduced me to the composers Finzi and Hans Gal.

Graham Skellern



Amy Cardigan, Laura Baxter and Barry Deacon, playing Hans Gal in November's concert. (Jim McGrath)



The Christmas concert - Emily Paterson, Flora Tzanetaki and Mark O'Keeffe during 'Little Red Cap'. (Jim McGrath)

Monday 7 December 2015

Mark O'Keeffe (trumpet) and Flora Tzanetaki (piano) with Emily Paterson (narrator)

A near capacity audience filled the Recital Room at the City Halls for this year's annual Christmas concert – which was no less than the performers deserved for giving us an evening of beautiful, exciting and fun music. The artistes were Mark O'Keeffe, well known to us as principal trumpet with the Orchestra (and a distinguished guest soloist elsewhere) and Flora Tzanetaki. Flora hails from Heraklion in Crete but is now a Glasgow resident. She teaches piano at St Aloysius College and is becoming increasingly well-known on the Glasgow music scene. Our concert was something of a celebration, since we were close to the 80th birthday of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra (which had been marked in Glasgow at the Orchestra's concert the previous week). And, as Mark O'Keeffe told us, we were close to another not insignificant milestone, the 19th anniversary of his arrival at the BBC SSO - still further cause for celebration!

We were treated to an evening of music of great variety, from the 18th century to the present and varying on mood from the sombre and elegiac to the dramatic: from Charpentier (the famous introduction to his *Te Deum*) and Handel (extracts from the *Water Music*, 'Semele' and 'Xerxes'), by way of Dvorak (Songs my Mother taught me), Fritz Kreisler (Liebeslied) and Elgar (Salut d'Amour) to Gershwin (Someone to Watch Over Me), Piazzolla ('Oblivion' from the film 'Heinrich IV') and Katherine Kennicott Davis (The Little Drummer Boy). And much else besides!

A review of each piece would result in an overlong piece so I'll concentrate on what were for me the highlights. Of course, everything was exquisitely played by both artists. The versatility of Mark's trumpet was a revelation, but so too was my conclusion that many familiar pieces ('Salut D'Amour', 'The Little Drummer Boy', 'Liebeslied', Handel's 'Largo', 'The Last Rose of Summer') were more moving

and haunting performed by a trumpet and piano than by the instruments originally intended.

A special highlight was 'Little Red Cap' a piece with echoes of Prokofiev's 'Peter and the Wolf' written by Paul Harris, the music educationalist. He has written this with young trumpet players in mind (though it is by no means straightforward) and claims it is the first opera for trumpet, piano and narrator. Mark and Flora were joined by actress Emily Paterson, a narrator with a distinctly Glaswegian accent. She told a story of Little Red Riding Hood with a twist (granny survives to be looked after by the woodcutter and Little Red Cap!). I enjoyed the humour in the music as much as that in the narration.

I also much enjoyed being introduced to the Greek composer Yannis Konstantinides (1903-1984) through the 'Eight Dances' for solo piano played by Flora Tzanetaki. This was most interesting, dynamic music characterised by sudden and exciting mood swings and pulsating Greek rhythms.

We were even treated to a premiere! 'Silent Away' is a piece for solo trumpet by Hedley Benson. Hedley is well known to us as a Principal alongside Mark in the trumpet section of the BBC SSO. This piece made the trumpet and the strings of the piano sing. I am not quite sure how Hedley (and Mark) did the latter but the sound was truly ethereal. This was haunting music which made me think of echoing spaces in vast landscapes, taking us far away from Glasgow on a wet Monday but certainly in the winter spirit. Hedley was at the concert to hear our enthusiastic response to his music.

The Gershwin was an appropriate romantic end to a Christmas concert. A final point – this must be one of the most sartorially elegant concerts we have had. Mark was resplendent in a red shirt which was complemented by the elegance of the stunning red dresses worn by Flora and Emily. Many thanks to all three (and Hedley) for a really memorable evening.

Susan Shaw

BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra Profile: Graeme Brown – Principal Bassoon



Graeme Brown grew up in the distillery village of Windygates in Fife and began playing the bassoon at the age of 12. He studied at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (now the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland) under the tutelage of David Hubbard and Peter Whelan.

During his time at the RSAMD, Graeme concentrated on becoming an orchestral bassoonist and began to freelance at the age of 19. He also took part in a short exchange to the Rostov State Rachmaninov Conservatoire in Russia and was fortunate enough to feature as soloist with both the Royal Scottish National and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestras as part of his studies.

After completing his studies, Graeme worked with orchestras throughout the UK and established himself as a busy freelance orchestral bassoonist. In March 2015 he was appointed Bassoon Principal No. 2 with the BBC SSO. Graeme is also the double reed tutor at Dollar Academy.

Outside of music, Graeme pursues varied hobbies. He enjoys running and swimming and would, one day, love to take part in a triathlon. When not feeling quite so energetic, Graeme also has a keen interest in ancestry.

(Graeme and some of his friends in the Orchestra treated members to a superb recital on 14 March. The review will appear in the next Newsletter.)

On audiences, players and the composer

"You can't pander to your audience. You might in the short term but ultimately you can't hoodwink them either".

"If you don't get feedback from your performers and audience you're going to be working in a vacuum."

"You don't underestimate either players or audience in any circumstances"

"I know what I want at least, and the older I get I think I'm better at getting it out of players and singers."

On not 'writing down'

"I recently did a piece for the Boston Pops and John Williams and I hope that it's as well a composed piece as I've ever done for any other medium or occasion"

On keeping music alive

"The roots of a thriving classical music scene need three nutrients. The first is music education, and the second, resources... The third nutrient is new music. Classical music cannot become a museum culture."

On TV and the media

On television: "I experimented with it for a year but found it intrusive, especially the BBC News presentation. The signature tune was in E major. Such a special key [is] reserved for works like Bruckner's Seventh Symphony and Beethoven's Opus 109 Sonata."

"Recently I've been participating in radio and television talk programmes, doing broadcasts and conferences and shooting my mouth off – and really going to town".

Sir Peter Maxwell Davies (1934-2016)

BBC SSO celebrates its first 80 years!

Last December, the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra celebrated its 80th birthday with a concert conducted by Artist-in-Association Matthias Pintscher. The typically wide-ranging programme encompassed a wide overview of Western classical music, from Mozart's Oboe Concerto by way of Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* to Pintscher's own *Idyll* (receiving its UK premiere). A five star review in *The Herald* – "a wonderful programme, beautifully executed". And it was.

The BBC SSO is the oldest full-time professional orchestra in Scotland and made its first broadcast in December 1935. While its primary focus remains recording and broadcasting for the BBC, the Orchestra's profile on the concert stage has increased immensely with regular concert series in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Perth which are now fixtures in the Scottish musical calendar. A recipient of the Royal Philharmonic Society Award for best orchestra (in 2002), the BBC SSO also tours extensively and has made over 120 commercial recordings, many of which have received prizes, including four *Gramophone* Awards.

Here are some of the highlights of those 80 years.

1935

Founded by Ian Whyte, the BBC's 'Director of Scottish Music', as the BBC Scottish Orchestra it was the first fully-salaried orchestra in Scotland and joined a family of BBC ensembles across the UK. Its first broadcast was on 3rd December 1935 on the BBC's National Network, conducted by its founder. The one-hour programme included music by Cyril Scott, Saint-Saens, Svendsen, Elgar and De Falla.

1937

The BBC Scottish Orchestra moved from Edinburgh to a purpose-built studio at the BBC's new Scottish HQ at Queen Margaret Drive in Glasgow (its principal recording and broadcasting base until 2006).

1946

Founder Ian Whyte succeeded Guy Warrack as principal conductor and remained at the helm until his death in 1960. Robert Irving was appointed the first in a long line of Assistant, Associate and Guest Conductors that would include such illustrious names as Alexander Gibson, Colin Davis, Bryden Thomson, Andrew Davis, Simon Rattle, Sir Charles Groves, Vernon Handley, George Hurst, Martyn Brabbins and Andrew Manze.

1948

The BBC Scottish Orchestra's first appearance at the Edinburgh International Festival, then in its second year. The programme included Beethoven's *Violin Concerto* and soloist Yehudi Menuhin.



Ian Whyte and the BBC Scottish Orchestra (by courtesy of the BBC SSO)

1961

On 1 May at the St Andrew's Hall in Glasgow, and broadcast live on the BBC's Third Programme, the BBC Scottish Orchestra and Scottish National Orchestra gave the UK premiere of Stockhausen's *Gruppen für drei Orchester*, a massive work requiring three conductors (Alexander Gibson, Norman Del Mar and John Carewe did the honours).

1962

The BBC Scottish Orchestra, conducted by Norman Del Mar (principal conductor 1960-1965), made its first appearance at the BBC London Proms in a programme that included the World premiere of Thea Musgrave's *The Phoenix and the Turtle*.

1967

During James Loughran's tenure as Principal Conductor (1965-1971), the Orchestra was renamed the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra (BBC SSO).



James Loughran and the BBC SSO (by courtesy of the BBC SSO)

1977

The BBC SSO's first tour abroad, to the Hong Kong Arts Festival. The featured soloists were Victoria de los Angeles, soprano, and Thea King, clarinet; the conductors were Christopher Seaman (Principal Conductor, 1971-1977) and Alun Francis.

1980

Musicians' Union Strike – not for the first time, the future of the BBC SSO (and other ensembles) was threatened as the BBC sought savings. Strike action by the Musicians' Union ensued across the UK, prompting the cancellation of about 2 weeks of that summer's BBC Proms. When the strike was called off the BBC SSO had been reprieved, but some other BBC ensembles were axed. It was during this crisis that the **BBC Scottish Symphony Club** was established to support the Orchestra. There have been periods of uncertainty again, in the 1990s and again in the lead up to the 2014 independence referendum, but the Orchestra has taken each perturbation, small and large, in its stride.

1984

With the appointment of Jerzy Maksymiuk as principal conductor (1983-1993), the BBC SSO made the first of three tours of Poland. The programme in 1984 included Mozart's *Symphony No.40* and *Mass in C minor* (with vocal soloists and the Scottish Philharmonic Singers), while John Ogdon was soloist in Rachmaninov's Second Piano Concerto.

1990

On 7 January, the BBC SSO, conducted by Takuo Yuasa, performed Berlioz's *Te Deum* at the Kelvingrove Art Gallery in Glasgow as one of the main opening events of Glasgow's year as European City of Culture. The World Premiere of James MacMillan's, *The Confession of Isobel Gowdie* conducted by Jerzy Maksymiuk, followed in August at the Royal Albert Hall, London (a BBC Commission for the BBC Proms). The concert was televised.

1993

The BBC SSO, conducted by Martyn Brabbins, made 2 series of *Soundbites* for BBC2 TV, presented by percussionist Evelyn Glennie, one recorded at Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, the other at Edinburgh's Usher Hall.

1995

As part of Glasgow's *Mayfest*, the BBC SSO, conducted by Martyn Brabbins, performed Britten's *War Requiem* in The Shed (the disused Harland and Wolff Shipyard). The performance was subsequently released on a commercial CD.

1997

From February to May, the BBC SSO promoted *The Sibelius Experience*, a 5-concert symphony cycle conducted by leading Sibelius expert and the BBC SSO's chief conductor, Osmo Vänskä (1996-2002). The series attracted capacity houses at the City Hall.

2000

In November the BBC SSO made its first tour of China (and Taiwan) to huge and appreciative audiences. Further visits to China would follow in 2008 and 2014.

2001

The BBC SSO made its first tour of the USA, with chief conductor Osmo Vänskä and pianist Stephen Hough, 11 concerts including Boston, Philadelphia, West Point and Orlando, Florida. Also, Donald Runnicles made his BBC SSO debut at the Edinburgh International Festival

in a concert performance of *The Trojans* by Berlioz, to enthusiastic reviews in the national press.

2003

In January, Ilan Volkov became chief conductor (2003-2009). At 26, he was the youngest ever chief conductor of any BBC orchestra. He is currently Principal Guest Conductor. In August, the BBC SSO gave a concert performance of Wagner's *Lohengrin* as part of the Edinburgh International Festival, conducted by Donald Runnicles, the first of a number of Wagner operas to be performed in concert by the BBC SSO/Runnicles partnership. In September the BBC SSO performed at the Prague Autumn Festival.

2004

The BBC SSO toured Latvia and Estonia with chief conductor Ilan Volkov. In May, the BBC SSO was the accompanying ensemble for the final of 2004's *BBC Young Musician of the Year*, held at the Usher Hall, Edinburgh and televised on BBC2 TV. Ilan Volkov was awarded Best Young Artist by the Royal Philharmonic Society.

2006

In January the Orchestra moved from Studio One at Broadcasting House in Glasgow (its home since 1937) to the newly-rebuilt City Halls in Glasgow's Merchant City.

2007

The BBC SSO gave an acclaimed concert performance of Leonard Bernstein's comic operetta *Candide*, as part of that year's Edinburgh International Festival and in September made its second visit to Prague.

2008

A tour of Holland with concerts in Utrecht, Eindhoven and Rotterdam is followed in late spring by a second tour of China, this time with Nicola Benedetti, violin and Christoph König, conductor.

2009

Hailing from the world of, principally, opera, Maestro Donald Runnicles became chief conductor (2009-2016), initiating a glorious period marked by, inter alia, semi-staged performances of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* and Berg's *Wozzeck*.



Donald Runnicles and the BBC SSO (John Wood, by courtesy of the BBC SSO)

2013

The BBC SSO confirmed its reputation as one of the world's most adventurous orchestras, with the first *Tectonics Glasgow* festival, curated by Ilan Volkov and bringing together music and musicians spanning a broad spectrum of contemporary music. Subsequent *Tectonics Glasgow* festivals followed in 2014 and 2015 (and another is scheduled for May 2016). Similarly adventurous 'seasons' have included extensive surveys of the likes of Elliott Carter.

2014

A first tour of India with Nicola Benedetti, violin and James MacMillan, conductor.

2015

Danish conductor Thomas Dausgaard is appointed the Orchestra's next chief conductor, and will take up his new role in season 2016-2017.

BBC SSO's 2016-2017 Glasgow Season

The Orchestra's new season will soon be upon us. We bid farewell to Maestro Donald Runnicles and welcome Thomas Dausgaard to his first season as Principal Conductor. And a very interesting season it promises to be.



Thomas Dausgaard (by Thomas Grøndahl)

First up – on Thursday 22 September, Bruckner's magnificent three-movement Ninth Symphony in a new version which adds the 'missing' fourth movement. The completion (which, coincidentally, has been recorded by former BBC SSO assistant conductor Sir Simon Rattle and the Berlin Philharmonic) has divided critics. It will be fascinating to hear it live.

Unusually, the next concert is on a Sunday, 2 October. No ordinary concert this, but a recreation of the famous (or even infamous) 'Akademie' concert of 22 December 1808 which saw the premieres of Beethoven's 5th and 6th symphonies, his 4th Piano Concerto and the Choral Fantasy. Plus the reprise of several earlier pieces. Beethoven was the piano soloist in the concerto. Not all went smoothly, the orchestra was under-rehearsed and the hall was bitterly cold. None of these problems should beset us on 2 October with the BBC SSO and Dausgaard, and the City Halls, providing the ideal environment for a concert to remember.

Thomas Dausgaard will also be introducing most (if not all) of us to the music of the Danish late-Romantic, Rued Langgaard, (1893-1952). It is this type of programming that is particularly to be welcomed and it is to be hoped that Scottish audiences will be introduced to many more unfamiliar composers during Dausgaard's tenure.

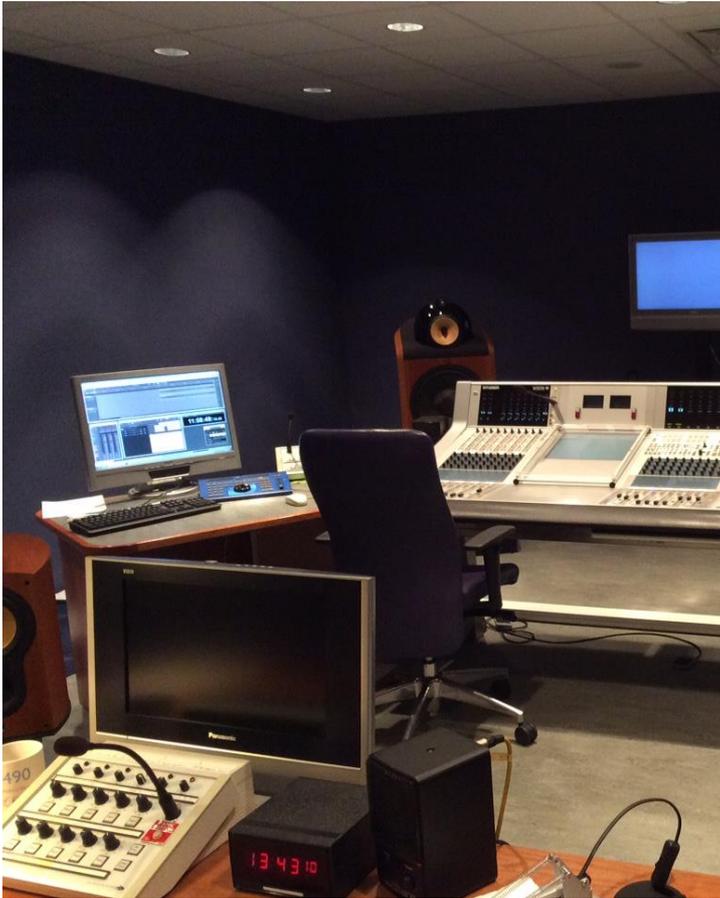
So many more highlights to mention and it seems invidious to single out some at the expense of others – but a concert of Busoni plus Kurt Weill's 'Seven Deadly Sins' is an inspired combination. It is good to be challenged too. A concert performance of Sir Harrison Birtwistle's 'The Last Supper' is promised in January, confirming (as if it needed confirming) this Orchestra's commitment to contemporary British music. Still more up-to-date, the season sees the launch of *Scottish Inspirations* - five new BBC commissions from four composers (Grime, Beamish, Capperauld and Finnis) inspired by Scottish culture. These cannot but be valued by anyone who wants the Western classical tradition to be not simply a celebration of past achievements but a living, thriving and ever-developing part of the Arts.

John Wilson will be taking his first concerts as Associate Guest Conductor (Elgar, Britten and Korngold), while Donald Runnicles will be returning as Chief Conductor Emeritus (Mahler). And there will be a crop of some of the world's leading artists, including tenor Ian Bostridge and soprano Measha Brueggergosman, pianists Jean-Efflam Bavouzet and Jan Lisiecki, and cellists Steven Isserlis and Johannes Moser.

Thomas Dausgaard has commented: "I am extremely excited at the prospect of beginning my first season as Chief Conductor with such a wonderful orchestra and a wonderful range of programmes, paying tribute to some of the greatest classical music ever written and also taking fresh inspiration from Scotland – and sharing all of this with the BBC SSO's wonderful audiences."

Broadcasting Excellence

When you've been sitting in the audience during a BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra concert at City Halls in Glasgow, the chances are you will have noticed microphones of all shapes and sizes hanging from the ceiling or on stands within the various sections of the Orchestra. You may well have wondered what they are all for. Equally, you may have listened to a BBC SSO concert being broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and pondered over how it gets there. Of course, the two are inextricably linked. The BBC SSO is a broadcasting orchestra and almost every concert performance it gives is recorded or broadcast 'live'. These broadcasts, together with recording sessions without an audience which are released on CD, ensure that the Orchestra reaches a far larger audience than could possibly fit into City Halls.



Directly beneath the stage at City Halls lies the Control Room for the BBC SSO's recording operation. This purpose built studio was constructed during the refurbishment of the hall and is sound-proofed from the rest of the building to ensure that no extraneous noise can interrupt the listening environment. State of the art digital recording equipment is used to balance the signals from the microphones, blending them together to produce the sound you hear from your radio.

The microphones themselves, and also the way they are set up, reflect technology and techniques both modern and dating back to the birth of stereo recording in the 1950s.

The microphone array pictured below is directly related to the 'Decca Tree' array pioneered, in the early days of high-fidelity stereo recording, by engineers working for Decca Records and still used widely by classical music recording engineers all over the world.



The large silver microphones mounted on this framework are modern recreations of the original 1950s design, even down to the use of valves similar to those found in radios and other audio equipment from the period. The sound produced by this array remains at the heart of the overall sound of the BBC SSO as heard by BBC Radio 3 listeners. There are, of course, many other microphones used to augment the sound of the 'Tree'. Despite their appearance, they are not, as is widely believed, in any way directional. They capture sound from all directions, ensuring that the wonderful, natural acoustic of City Halls is present in all BBC SSO broadcasts.

Within the past decade a revolution has occurred in the way the recordings made by the BBC's Orchestras are broadcast by BBC Radio 3. Gone are the days of making recordings on tape or, indeed, on CD. All recordings are made directly onto computer and, as a result, can be adjusted and edited to ensure that the final result is to the high standard demanded by the network. Clever software can be used to remove extraneous noises such as clicks, bumps and even coughs from the finished recording without damaging the music in any way. From this point on the recording remains as a computer file stored on a hard-drive until required for broadcast at which point it is sent, in much the same way as you would send an attachment with an e-mail, to the computer play-out system at BBC Radio 3 in London. As the original audio file remains unchanged throughout this entire process, the listener to the programme is guaranteed that the concert they are hearing is exactly as it was when recorded in City Halls.

Graeme Taylor
Programme Manager, Music
BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra

Mary Lawson's Musical Memories – Part 1



Mary Lawson, formerly of the National Engineering Laboratory in East Kilbride and who, in 2009, became the Open University's oldest graduate, was a Recording Engineer for the BBC in London during the war. In Part 1 of her memoirs, here edited for the Newsletter, she provides a vivid social history of musical life in the 1920s and early 1930s in the North East of England and pays tribute to the BBC's role in widening her musical education.

The 1920s

I was born in the North of England in February 1919. My father [was still] awaiting 'Demob' when I was born, and so it was a neighbour who discovered my mother, a victim of the flu pandemic, collapsed on the floor with a month old baby in her arms. Luckily unaffected, I spent my first months in the care of my grandmother... She rocked me to sleep nightly with "Blow the Wind Southerly", "Bobby Shafto" and, a particular favourite of hers, "White Wings", another song about a boat returning to port, which seems to have disappeared from all memory but mine...

My mother, a pre-war LRAM in Piano and Singing had a good soprano voice and was much in demand for solo parts in Choral and Operatic societies which proliferated in those pre-wireless days. There was an upright Broadwood piano in the 'front parlour' of even the most modest of homes, including ours. Every family get-together...would end up with a musical sing-song. We all joined in the choruses of traditional, folk and popular songs from all parts of the UK and the USA. Accompanied by my mother, Uncle Tom (a tenor) would show his prowess with "Passing By" or an aria from 'The Bohemian Girl'. Uncle Fred (a baritone) would evoke patriotic fervour with Kiplingesque songs such as "Boots" and "The Road to Mandalay". Every one of us children would have a party piece ready...

It is not perhaps realised today that our parents had wide contact with 'live' music. Most provincial towns were proud of their Albert or Victoria Hall, magnificent multi-purpose buildings which could provide a large audience not only for prospective Parliamentary candidates but to numbers of well-known musical celebrities who had to supplement a living by touring the northern industrial

towns. Opera and Operetta flourished, with regular visits by the Carl Rosa and Moody Manners companies and...the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company. Touring companies providing first class performances of the works of Lehar and Ivor Novello were regular visitors, so that every home piano stool housed its sheet music copies of the solos. When I was about 7 years old my parents introduced me to 'Carmen', 'The Yeomen of the Guard' and, best of all, 'Bitter Sweet' by Noel Coward and 'The White Horse Inn' [by Ralph Benatzky, Robert Stolz et al]. An added thrill was the journey home afterwards on the late night tram through the darkened town, long after my 7pm bedtime!

Lacking for us was a professional symphony orchestra, such as the Halle in Manchester, but there were great brass bands. Living near the main road to Durham...every July I enjoyed the procession of works' bands as, with banners flying, they marched to their great Gala Day which ended in Durham Cathedral...

School and the coming of Radio

Please imagine a picture of twenty 5 year olds in late August 1924, lined up in a school yard by an austere lady in a starched white blouse and long black skirt, who were about to enter for the first time the building which, for the next three years, would alter their daily lives...

The morning began with the rhythmic chanting of "three times one is three". Eventually, this choral chanting would reach "Twelve times twelve is a hundred and forty-four"... Reading followed, each in the class standing up and reading aloud a paragraph from a Reader, a printed book of suitable difficulty, the only copy of which was handed in turn to the next to read...

Afternoons were enjoyed. A long roll of canvas was stuck to the blackboard and, sixty years before Julie Andrews, we followed the teacher's pointer and learned to sing "Doh Re Mi Fa So La Ti Doh". Gradually, we progressed to singing intervals such as Doh-Fa and Re-Ti. Then followed our first singing of simple nursery rhymes and little songs. A play break in the school yard was supervised by the teacher and singing games progressed from 'Ring a Ring' to simple folk songs and dances...

In 1925, my Dad was doing something with wire and a soldering iron which he heated in the fire. With a neighbour he perilously strung the piece of wire across the road between our chimney and that of the house opposite, an 'aerial'. Days later, a contraption appeared which had wires, a bit of glass called a 'crystal' and something called a 'cat's whisker', which was odd as we did not have a cat. When round things were pushed against my ears I heard a faint man's voice singing, then a distant man's voice said "This is the British Broadcasting Company". Little could I then know how vital a part that organisation would play in my life to come. Soon...my father progressed to one and two valve sets and a loudspeaker. I'm afraid I much preferred the tunes which came out of the horn of our wind-up gramophone when my mother pointed a steel needle on a black disc called a 'record'. Once a month, records with a picture of

a small dog on the label would appear. These introduced me to "Hear my prayer" sung by a choir boy, "On with the motley" sung by a tenor called Caruso, and the Overture to 'Tannhauser', a favourite of my father's.

Meanwhile, there was, at 8 years old, a move to the Junior School with long division, History and Geography, composition writing, poetry memorising and lots more singing. There were inter-school choral competitions in which I performed. Most of us who had piano lessons could read staff notation but many still found the tonic-solfa symbols which were always printed above the stave easier to learn...

[Another] vital part of our musical education [was] the result of our regular Sunday attendance at all denominations of church and chapel...standing up alongside my parents and joining in singing the great tunes of 'Hymns Ancient and Modern' with a congregation in full voice accompanied by the glorious sound of the organ, especially at the Harvest and Christmas festivals... Small boys, their white surplices hiding their threadbare Sunday best, many from the most impoverished families, were taught to sing the great hymns of Stanford, Parry and the Wesleys, and the ritual plainsong of the Responses and the Magnificat. My triumph was when I could follow...the rhythmic pointing of the Psalm for the day as printed in the Book of Common Prayer. Later in life, I realised that, without then any understanding of the doctrine, that early exposure to the text of what was essentially 'The Mass' was useful when, much later, I sang the great works of Bach, Mozart, Handel and Verdi... Sometimes we joined friends who were Methodists or Presbyterians in performances of 'Messiah' or 'Elijah' which were regularly given by their adult church choirs. When I was 8 years old, I heard my first Bach 'St Matthew Passion'.

In 1930, after a visit to a radio trade fair, a radio-gramophone was delivered to our house. It was a small cupboard-sized piece of walnut furniture. As well as the usual gramophone turntable and needle holder, there was a dial with strange names such as Hilversum, Fecamp or Normandy. On turning one of three black knobs...snatches of music and strange languages emerged from behind a carved wood panel. From that moment, the medium wave North Region and Scottish Region and long wave National Services of the British Broadcasting Corporation became essential parts of our family life. Home from school at teatime there was 'Children's Hour' with Uncle Mac, Uncle Eric and Auntie Kathleen and lovely stories and songs. For parents, the News at 9 pm and programmes such as 'In Town Tonight' were compulsory evening listening. In came the era of 'signature tunes' of which the popular light music composer Eric Coates became a master.

The 1930s

In 1930, having passed the 'eleven plus', I began the next part of my life at the local girls' grammar school [which] had central heating with radiators and indoor toilets with wash basins! Such luxury we did not have at home, having in fact no continuous supply of hot water and [only] an outdoor toilet. Only a year before had electric lightbulbs replaced our gas mantles...I remember [the 1930s] as a happy time, full of new interests and pleasures for us teenagers. Parents listened to political

talks by Vernon Bartlett on the BBC and we saw occasional pictures of Hitler on the Pathe News on our Saturday visits to the cinema, but much more important were the great Broadway musicals and the first Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire films with the music of Cole Porter and Irving Berlin and the big MGM orchestras...

There were still...performances given by the local Opera and Choral Societies in which the orchestral and choral sections of the works were provided by local amateur and semi-professional musicians, but solos were sung by national eminent soloists...basses such as Harold Williams and Roy Henderson, tenors such as Heddle Nash, sopranos, Isobel Baillie and Elsie Suddaby and the contralto Gladys Ripley. At one performance there was a young unknown contralto. At her first notes of "*Oh Thou that Tallest*"...a rich velvet sound filled the hall. It was the young Kathleen Ferrier, learning her trade on the circuit.

At school, apart from the hymn singing at morning assembly, music had to take a minor role in the extensive work load, but we did have a school choir of which I became a member. My report said that I had a strong voice and was a good sight reader. I also opted to do music in School Certificate but this had to be by private study at home. The set works were Mozart's Haffner Symphony and Beethoven's Symphony No 1. This was my first introduction to orchestral scoring and analysis. In an era still suffering from national poverty, there was no money available for musical instruments. A few girls learned the violin from relatives, as 'fiddle playing' was a traditional folk culture. The boys' school had a Brass Band and in rare moments of fraternisation some of their masters and senior boys were recruited to provide necessary parts in the yearly concert performed for our parents. Haydn's 'Creation' was a popular choice. We were fortunate too with our gym teacher. When the weather was not suitable for the compulsory hockey and netball, she taught us Country Dancing. She was associated with the national organisation founded by Cecil Sharp. I remember still the tunes played on her portable gramophone - "Strip the Willow", "Sellinger's Round", Scottish foursome and eightsome reels, and particularly a local dance called "Newcastle", the tune of which I heard years later sung by Peter Pears in an arrangement by Benjamin Britten. Another excellent English teacher started an after-school club to which she brought her own classical music records but most of all she recommended which BBC programmes we should listen to and this advice was very valuable.

The BBC national and regional programmes provided...a wealth of music of all kinds. The universally popular 'Dance Music' was played nightly by musicians in orchestras of outstanding technical ability of which the BBC's own dance orchestra was one of the best. But it was the classical music provision which gave me an education and lifelong enjoyment, for which I owe eternal thanks to the BBC... Suddenly, I could listen to the sound of a full-sized professional orchestra, the BBC Symphony Orchestra. Our radiogram was probably as hi-fi as was possible then and reception of the national programme on the 1500 metre waveband could be variable, but listening to the weekly broadcast concert was for me a life-changing experience. There was also a weekly programme by the first 'DJ', Christopher Stone who, with his brother-in-law, the author Compton Mackenzie, had

newly founded the *Gramophone* magazine... His expert discussions introduced me to not only the great symphonies of Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn and Brahms but to concertos with renowned soloists. More importantly, he opened my ears to the role of the conductor and soloist and the problem of correctly interpreting the wishes of the composer as written in the score. One result was that with saved-up pocket money and birthday money I bought my first classical recording, Beethoven's 'Pastoral' Symphony played by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. My record buying had usually been the monthly trip to Woolworth's for a cheap disc of a pop tune played by a favourite dance band, Ambrose, Jack Hylton or Jack Payne and sung by its soloist or by the universally adored Bing Crosby. Creeping in too were records from the USA of Bennie Goodman, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington and my favourite, Artie Shaw. Parents were highly critical but eventually tolerant, a fact I recalled when years later my son made the while house vibrate to the sound of Jimi Hendrix!



Radio Times, 13 May 1932 (by courtesy BBC Genome)

...Every July we had a week in a boarding house at one of the popular resorts where [there would be] a 'Palm Court' Orchestra [and] daily concerts 'on the pier' if fine, and a Sunday evening Gala Concert in the magnificent Imperial Hotel. These concerts also had as a guest performer an eminent singer, pianist or violinist. The music played was the sort my parents loved, the whole range of Light Music, much by English composers. What surprised me was that printed in the programme as performers were familiar names which I had heard on the BBC – Paul Beard, Reginald Stead, Warwick Braithwaite are names that I vaguely remember, and I realised that these were the same musicians who were also members of the Symphony Orchestra who enthralled me 'on the air'. This now included concerts of a new BBC Northern Orchestra on medium wave. I'm afraid variable reception prevented us hearing the new BBC Scottish Orchestra satisfactorily.

The *Radio Times*, now bought every Thursday, allowed a family agreement on the coming week's listening [but] a

programme called 'Music and the Ordinary Listener' was sacrosanct. This was a weekly series given by Dr Walford Davies, at that time Master of the King's Music and composer of the RAF March and 'Solemn Melody' which is still played at the Cenotaph each November 11th. I was fascinated by Walford Davies' series on the Bach Cantatas in which he introduced me to the wonder of the harmony and counterpoint of Bach. One Sunday morning, parents at church, I discovered among my mother's music collection a book of Bach solos. Playing some of the chords in the piano accompaniments was a revelation - the simple movement of the middle finger of a C E G chord to the E flat was 'Happy to Sad' and it was all contained in some black dots on lines! Since then, music for me has been the complexity and wonder of all the possible permutations of 12 frequencies and the multiple combinations constructed by the geniuses who made the resulting sounds touch every human emotion.

In 1934, a school friend and fellow music lover was invited to bring a friend...for a week in London where her relatives owned a small boarding house. This was my first visit to London. Imagine our feelings when her aunt arranged that we should go to a Promenade concert at the Queen's Hall for an all-Beethoven concert and that we would be escorted for the first time in our lives by her cousin and his friend, two handsome 19 year old Marine cadets studying at the Nautical College for their First Mate Tickets. We wore our best dresses. We heard the real live BBC Symphony Orchestra we had listened to so often on the wireless and from our good seats we looked down on the arena fountain and the Prommers standing packed below us. This is one of my memories, made poignant when I heard in 1941 that both young men had been lost at sea, their ship torpedoed.

At school, our language teacher, back from an exchange spell at a school in Vienna, had a list of names of Austrian girls who would like 'pen friends'. Mine was a Viennese girl called Charlotte. ...We soon discovered we were both fans of Richard Tauber, a glorious tenor whose record of "You are my heart's delight" was top of the pops in the UK. I also saw him in the film musical 'Lilac Time', a dubious life of Schubert but with beautiful singing of his music. Charlotte told me that, as well as his operetta work, Tauber was revered in his own country as a renowned singer of the operas of Mozart...In 1937, Lotte (as I now called her) came to the UK and stayed with me and my parents for two memorably happy weeks. Arrangements were made for my return visit to her home in Vienna in summer 1938... In March was the Nazi Anschluss of Austria. My parents decided...should be postponed for the time being. Charlotte and I exchanged one more letter and I never heard from her again.

At school, this was our vital year of School Certificate. Thanks to excellent teaching by our Maths teacher and Chemistry teacher, I decided my future lay in studying Science...and in September 1937 [I enrolled] at Imperial College of technology, part of London University...for a BSc degree.

To be continued – Part 2 will cover the years 1937 to 1941, Mary's excitement attending concerts in London (including the 1938 Proms season celebrating Henry Wood's jubilee), the impact of the war on her studies and Mary's recruitment by the BBC.

Hellos/Goodbyes/Congratulations!

Arrivals - Welcome

We extend a Club welcome, in two cases somewhat belatedly, in one case before they have their foot in the door, to David Routledge (violin) who joined the orchestra last October, Martin Wiggins (viola) who joined the orchestra last December and Sarah Oliver (cello) who joins the orchestra in May.

Departures

Jacqui Penfold, viola, retired at the end of March. We wish her a long, healthy and happy retirement. Other

departures who have our best wishes are Andrew Neilson, the Orchestra's Communications Executive, and Jeremy Bushell (horn). Jeremy will leave the Orchestra in August to join the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

Congratulations

Warmest congratulations to Club concert regulars Stephanie Jones (horn) and Hedley Benson (trumpet) who have had a baby son named Arthur, and to Andrew Trinick (Senior Producer) and Anna who had twins on 1 April, a boy and a girl!

Club Concerts Galore!



There have been four Club concerts between summer and the New Year, rather than the customary three. The quality has been breath-taking. All the recitals are reviewed within but here, diffused in 'City Halls' Yuletide pink, is a capacity audience at our Christmas concert (reviewed on page 7) with Mark O'Keeffe and Flora Tzanetaki. (Jim McGrath)
