

The Nash

Newsletter of “The Friends of the National Youth Orchestra of Wales”

www.friendsofthenash.co.uk

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Message from Kevin Adams, the new Chair of the Friends

I feel privileged to have been invited to take on the role of Chair of the Friends and I look forward to undertaking the duties and responsibilities which that post entails. It was exactly fifty years ago that I first joined the ‘Nash’ myself and grappled with the second violin part of Stravinsky’s Firebird Suite. Nearly thirty years later, my elder daughter became a member, progressing to the position of principal oboist. Having experienced as member, parent, teacher and local authority music adviser what the ‘Nash’ offers to young musicians, I am determined to do all that I can to ensure that it continues to flourish and that young people from all backgrounds continue to be able to benefit.

While stating that I look forward to undertaking the role of Chair, I have to admit also to having mixed feelings as I am aware that the position only became vacant due to the sad and untimely death in August of Dr Brian Clarke. Brian was a good friend of mine for some fifty years, through youth orchestras, university and beyond. In his work for the Friends, he demonstrated a passion for youth music and a strong commitment to supporting and promoting the ‘Nash’. We are indebted to him for the significant contribution he made to the organisation.

As I am sure everyone is aware, the administration of the ‘Nash’ is now in the hands of National Youth Arts Wales (NYAW). While this new organisation was taking shape, our committee decided that this was an opportune moment to review the role of

the Friends, together with aspects of our working practice. In the last year, we have taken steps to strengthen our partnership with NYAW - through helpful meetings with Gillian Mitchell (Chief Executive Officer) and Matthew Jones (Senior Producer), and through agreement to share documentation and exchange information on a regular basis. We are currently working on increasing and refining our use of technology in order to raise our profile and, hopefully, secure increased membership. We have begun to consider a range of additional sources of funding so that we can increase the level of support that we provide for the orchestra. We realise that there is much more that can be done to refine our work and we will continue to address this in the coming year. In particular, we are keen to support NYAW in raising the profile of the ‘Nash’ and enhancing the opportunities provided for its members, for example by seeking to arrange performances at prestigious festivals and venues, as well as radio and television broadcasts.

My work as Chair is made considerably easier by the fact that my fellow committee members are equally dedicated to the ‘Nash’ and willing to devote time and effort to the work of supporting and promoting it. Of course, the organisation depends on the contribution of all its members and we are grateful to everyone for your support. In 2021 the orchestra will reach its 75th year and we look forward to celebrating that notable landmark in the development of the oldest national youth orchestra in the world. With your continued support, we set out to ensure that the ‘Nash’ is able to maintain its very high standards and continue to flourish well beyond that date.

Dr Brian Clarke

Kevin Adams

It was with great sadness that we learnt in August of the death of Brian Clarke who, for the last two years, had been a highly committed and passionate Chair of the Friends of the National Youth Orchestra of Wales.



Brian was born and brought up in Gowerton, attending Gowerton Boys' Grammar School where he began to learn the cello. He became a member of the Glamorgan Youth Orchestra and later the National Youth Orchestra of Wales, progressing to the position of principal cellist. He studied Chemistry at the University College of Wales, graduating with a B.Sc., and later M.Sc. and PhD degrees. Whilst at Aberystwyth, he was at the heart of music-making in the college and the town, and he subsequently maintained his connections with the area, frequently returning to lead the cello section in orchestral and choral concerts.

After leaving university, Brian worked in industry for a short period before being appointed Lecturer in Chemistry at Neath College, and later Assistant Principal at Merthyr Tydfil College. In 1994 he was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry and in the following year he accepted the post of Head of Science at Hong Kong Institute of Higher Education. On his return to Wales, Brian applied his experience in education and administration effectively in a range of positions, including University Registrar at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David's. After officially retiring in 2010, he continued to undertake consultancy work including a University of Wales project in Kuala Lumpur and, more recently, a senior position at the United International College in Zhuhai, China.

Despite having posts which demanded considerable amounts of his time and energy, Brian's love of music, and particularly the cello, ensured that he always found time for performing in orchestras and chamber ensembles. He was a very fine cellist and an extremely sensitive musician who enjoyed nothing better than performing with, and being in the company of, other musicians. He used the experience he had gained from performing works from the choral repertoire to good effect as conductor of Penclawdd Choral Society. As a musician he was highly respected by all those who worked with him.

Brian was an exceptionally amiable person who was able to establish an easy rapport with everyone he met. He loved being with and talking to people, and he was also a very good listener. Anyone who was fortunate enough to experience his hospitality will know that he was an excellent host, a fine cook, a great conversationalist and inevitably the 'last man standing' at the end of the night. He was known to, loved and respected by very many people, both in this country and beyond, and he will be sadly missed. We extend our condolences to Heledd, to Brian's son Owain and daughter Heledd, and to the rest of his family.

Nash Diary

Summer Course 2019

Steve Broom – Viola Tutor



Tuesday 23rd July.
Everyone arrives at Trinity St. David's, Lampeter for a one o'clock meeting when the orchestra, tutors and welfare staff get to meet each other

for the first time. After a welcome to all from Matt Jones, the Senior Producer for National Youth Arts Wales, the players go off into various groups with the welfare staff so that they can start getting to know each other and learn what will be happening during the course. The tutors gather with Matt for a short introductory meeting before setting off for the sectional rehearsal rooms to begin the process of preparing the players for the coming two weeks.

This year my section, the violas, has four guest players from the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland. For the last few years the Nash and the youth orchestras of Ulster and Ireland have had a reciprocal arrangement to occasionally share players and this year, as viola numbers were a bit short, we're hosting some Irish guests. I'm very pleased that three of them are pupils of Simon Aspell, an ex NYOW player who is now based in Ireland with the Vanburgh String Quartet. The first sectional is a bit of a "get to know you" session, both for the notes and for the individuals in the section. For this sectional I try to get through a lot of the pieces that we're playing (Grace Williams, Fantasia on Welsh Nursery Tunes; Copland, Suite from the opera Tender Land and Shostakovich, Symphony Number 10) so that we'll be prepared for the first full rehearsal later that evening. The evening rehearsal is taken by Adrian Dunn, who has the dual role of first-violin tutor and rehearsal conductor until Andrew Litton arrives. He plays through the whole of the Shostakovich Symphony and the Copland Suite and, though the tutors will have plenty of work to do, it's an excellent start to proceedings. While the players go off with the welfare staff to take part in the Nash Olympics (the players have a full schedule of social events as well as the music) the tutors, all of whom have tutored on the course in previous years, go into Lampeter to consult the Rev. James and to catch up with old

friends. While chatting with Graham King, the percussion tutor, I remember the first time I played the Shostakovich Symphony when I was a student at the RAM; the percussion player who played the prominent side drum part in the second movement was a young man with a distinctive shock of curly hair called Simon Rattle - I wonder what happened to him?

Day two sets the pattern for the next few days - sectionals 9.30 - 12.30 and 2.30 - 5.30 and then full rehearsal from 7.00 - 9.00. We get down to some serious note bashing at 9.30 a.m. which seems very early. Slowly and quietly seems to be the phrase I use most often but it seems to work; the players gradually get to grips with the passage work and progress is definitely being made. The viola section has quite a wide age range from about 15 to 20. Working in a way that school pupils will progress and music college students won't feel is too slow can be a tricky balancing act. The days are quite tough; eight hours playing a day can be exhausting and for the tutors, finding interesting ways of keeping the music fresh while not letting up on the process of preparing them as well as possible can also be draining. We break things up by occasionally playing something different; I have some viola ensemble pieces that we play and Hannah, the principal viola has an arrangement of Mamma Mia for eleven violas that the section will play on "Cabaret Night" when each of the sections contributes to a fun night in the Students' Union. After lunch I bump into Meyrick Alexander, the bassoon tutor who tells me that along with some of the other tutors, he's just played an arrangement of The Wasps Overture by Vaughan Williams that the flute tutor Ken Smith has arranged for wind quintet. Four of the five players (John Anderson, oboe and Huw Jenkins, horn along with Ken and Meyrick) played together for many years in the Philharmonia Orchestra and along with Liz Jordan on clarinet make up a first-class team of wind tutors. The next few days seem to go by quickly, we vary things a little by having a full strings rehearsal; Andrew Litton has helped things greatly by supplying copies of his own parts for the Shostakovich, so bowings and dynamics are all well marked.

Friday is the last day for sectionals. Andrew takes over from Saturday and for the tutors it's our opportunity to take a breather, so after the evening rehearsal we have a small wine and cheese party. Eluned Pierce our harp tutor takes a large part in organising this and is a wonderful hostess. Andrew

Litton has arrived in Lampeter and joins us for a glass of wine. Many of us have worked with him before and it's good to see him embracing the Nash spirit. As a young man he met Shostakovich in New York and shows us a picture of the two of them together, something he treasures. Saturday is the last day of the course for most of the tutors and the first time for the orchestra to meet and work with Andrew Litton. It's great to see the players reacting so positively to the new conductor; some of the tempos are different from the ones we've rehearsed and the second movement of the Shostakovich goes by at tremendous pace but the orchestra takes it all in very quickly. In the evening we have the Tutors' Dinner when the sections have an opportunity to thank the tutors at a special evening meal that is served to us by the staff at TSD Lampeter. The recipients of the awards are announced and the room becomes very noisy. It becomes even louder as the unofficial award for the

best joke in the brass section is told (not printable in this publication) and John Hendy, the trombone tutor awards the "Tickling Stick" to a member of the trumpet section who promptly runs around the room waving the stick in the air.

After the dinner most of the tutors make their way home. Adrian, Liz and John Hendy stay on to look after the various sections and for the rest of the course the orchestra is in Andrew Litton's hands. I attend the concert at St David's Cathedral and am really pleased at the end result of the hard work that was begun almost two weeks previously. I've mentioned most of the tutors already but along with Sian McNally, second violin; John Cullis, cello; Richard Lewis, double bass and Rhys Owens, trumpet, we're all incredibly proud of the achievements of the Nash. Long may it continue!

Hannah Roberts

Blaenwraig yr adran fiola



Eleni, enillais wobwr Irwyn Walters, i'r chwaraewr llinynnol mwyaf addawol. Braint mawr oedd derbyn y wobwr yma, am taw Irwyn Walters oedd yn gyfrifol am sefydlu'r gerddorfa ym 1945.

Ymunais â'r gerddorfa yn 2015, ac eleni, fi oedd blaenwraig yr adran fiola. Dwi'n flaenwraig yr adran fiola yn ngherddorfa'r sir ac mi oeddwn yn aelod o

Gerddorfa Genedlaethol Plant Prydain am chwe mlynedd.

Rwyf yn fy nhrydedd blwyddyn yn astudio gyda Martin Outram yn yr Academi Frenhinol yn Llundain. Yn y coleg, rwyf wedi cael cyfleoedd bythgofiadwy yn gerddorfaol, fel unawdydd ac mewn grwpiau siambr. Cyn dechrau fy astudiaethau yn Llundain, mi oeddwn yn astudio gyda Laura Sinnerton a Louise Broderick.

Mae bod yn aelod o Gerddorfa Genedlaethol leuenctid Cymru wedi bod yn anrhydedd anferthol. Dros y pum blwyddyn diwethaf, rwyf wedi perfformio ar draws Cymru, ac wedi gweithio gyda arweinyddion rhagorol megis Maestro Carlo Rizzi, Paul Daniel ac Andrew Litton. Mae Steve Broom, y tiwtor fiola ar y cwrs, wedi fy ysbrydoli gymaint dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf. Rwyf mor ffodus i gwrdd â chymaint o ffrindiau sy'n rhannu'r un diddordebau ar hyd y blynyddoedd. Un o uchafbwyntiau'r pum blynedd diwethaf yw chwarae gyda Cherddorfa Genedlaethol Gymreig y BBC, mewn prosiect ochr yn ochr.

Glyndwr Parfitt 1935 – 2019

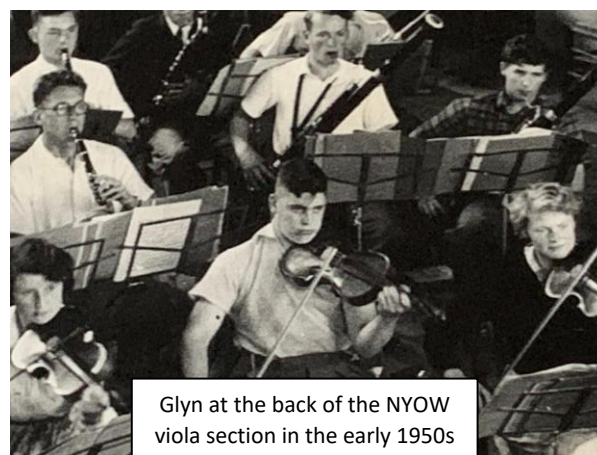
John Hendy - trombone tutor

Glyn passed away on 18th August after a period of declining health. Born in Markham, Gwent, he studied the viola under Frederick Riddle at the RCM and was a member of NYOW from 1951 to 1955 before joining the viola section of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. From there he went to the Ulster Orchestra where, as leader of the violas and orchestra chairman, he also performed concerti on the Viola d'Amore, with regular appearances with other orchestras including the RLPO, BBC NI and BBC Welsh Orchestra.



Although he loved playing the viola, “the meat in the sandwich” of the orchestral strings, his passion was teaching, which in his early days included coaching for the Monmouthshire YO; County Antrim YO; Belfast YO; Irish YO; Lancashire YO (where he was the county’s Head of Strings); Essex Schools YO and NYOW (from 1981 to 2002). In 1978 he became Head of Strings for the BA Hons. course at Colchester Institute and later also their Head of Arts Administration. He was influential in the career of cello soloist and chamber musician Paul Watkins whose potential he spotted when Paul became a member of NYOW in 1982.

A hearty, irrepressible character, his bluff no-nonsense manner left many a new student awestruck, but inevitably they came to love and respect him for his care. At home with private pupils he and his beloved wife Margaret (nee Williams, also viola and ex-NYOW) maintained a blend of musical and pastoral care, with the lessons often ending around the kitchen table with tea and Welsh cakes.



Glyn at the back of the NYOW viola section in the early 1950s

Probably the most eloquent testament to their approach is one daughter (Claire) and granddaughter (May) being current members of the first violins of the LSO and their son (Geraint) a former member of the violas of the Israel Philharmonic.

Among many fond memories of Glyn, my favourite recalls the lines of Wordsworth (William not Barry) with which he regaled ladies in the Lampeter canteen at the appearance of anything particularly tasty - especially the excellent Lampeter bacon:

*“She was a vision of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight
A lovely apparition sent
To be a moment’s ornament”*

Tony Moore

Kathryn Phipps



Anthony Francis Moore, or Tony as he was known to all his friends, passed away earlier this year within a few days of losing his beloved “Mam”. Tony will always hold a special place in Nash history as he worked with the orchestra for 30 years. In 1977 he was invited to join the House Staff together with his old friend, Clive Rowlands. They had been friends since teacher training college and shared the same wicked sense of humour. They worked together

every summer supervising the boys of the orchestra and when Clive retired Tony was joined by friend and colleague, Fred Nicholas. In 1992 Tony took over at very short notice as Course Director. The title changed from Director to Co-ordinator to Manager and back to Director, but the job was the same and he carried it out until he retired in 2007. Working closely with the NYOW Administrator, Beryl Jones, he not only oversaw the running of the summer course, but also helped with the administration of the auditions, getting to know parents and reassuring candidates with that special twinkle in his eye that put them at ease. Tony and Beryl became one of the Nash institutions and are fondly remembered by the many players that passed through their hands. Tony's welcoming speech to the orchestra members was looked forward to each year and he set the tone for yet another happy, enjoyable course of music-making. Tony had a very special personality that made everyone warm to him and in all the years I worked with him I only saw him lose his temper once, with an inebriated horn player who tripped over a tram line on one of our overseas trips and nearly got run over! He was held in great affection by both the House and Tutorial staff. Elgar Howarth who conducted NYOW in the nineties invited him one year to be his special guest at the National Brass Band Championships and he made such an impression on Owain Arwel Hughes that he mentions him in his autobiography, *My Life in Music*. Tony was awarded the MBE for services to music and young people in Wales and he received his award from the Queen at Buckingham Palace with his mother looking on proudly. Following his retirement from NYOW, the Guild for the Promotion of Welsh Music awarded him the Joseph Parry Award for an exceptional contribution to musical education in Wales.

“Sounds of Music”

John Watkins



On a sunny Sunday afternoon in early October members of the Friends and other supporters gathered in the splendid drawing room of Insole Court, Llandaff for a lecture given by Dr. Bernard Richardson on how musical sounds are produced and how we respond to them. Bernard, an honorary lecturer in the School of Physics and Astronomy at Cardiff University, is an expert on acoustics and musical acoustics and is also passionate about making and playing musical instruments. From the outset Bernard's lively presentation engaged the audience and his fascinating demonstrations brought to life a subject that might have daunted many a layperson. However, speaking as a listener with no scientific background, I can only say that he revealed to his audience the nature of sound and how we perceive it with this most comprehensible and stimulating presentation. Many thanks to Bernard, Denise and their daughter Lucy for their hard work in making the afternoon such a success.

Following the talk we enjoyed an excellent buffet arranged by members of the committee. This was accompanied by a glass of wine, a raffle and the opportunity to chat with other audience members, all of which made for a very pleasant conclusion to the afternoon's proceedings.

I am very pleased to report that the funds raised by this event amounted to £233.

A donation to the Friends from Aberbargoed Ladies Choir

John Watkins



Aberbargoed Ladies' Choir was founded more than sixty years ago and has been conducted over the past twenty years by retired music teacher Hetty Watkins. Under her leadership the choir has gone from strength to strength and now has more than forty-five members. They rehearse weekly at St. Peter's Church, Aberbargoed in the Rhymney Valley and give concerts at least three times a year. The proceeds from their concerts are always used to support local or national charities. Following their concert last summer, they decided to donate all the proceeds to the Friends of the National Youth Orchestra of Wales – a magnificent sum of £570, together with a separate donation of £200 from an individual member of the choir. This decision was in no small part motivated by the fact that over many years the Ladies' Choir had enjoyed the privilege of inviting young performers to join them in their music making. Hetty, with her background as former head of music at Rhymney Comprehensive School, has always been aware of the need to encourage young musicians and whenever possible to offer them a platform to perform in public. She is delighted that many of the choir's guest instrumentalists - if not already members - went on to become members of NYOW.

For members of the choir, many of whom are retired, the opportunity to make music on a regular basis is an important part of their lives, and over the years they have experienced singing a wide range of music including such challenging works as Vivaldi's Gloria and Pergolesi's Stabat Mater. We should never forget that to offer young people the means and the opportunity to play an instrument or sing is to provide them with an asset they can continue to enjoy throughout their lives.

Ledger Lines by Terry Johns

More recollections from "Drac" - famous former member of NYOW

Terry Johns – internationally famous horn player



and former member of NYOW - has travelled the world as a member of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and then the London Symphony Orchestra. He has recorded jazz albums, and appeared on TV with Shirley Bassey, Tony Bennett and Peggy Lee. He can be heard on the soundtracks of many

films including "Superman", "Raiders of the Lost Ark" and the original "Star Wars" trilogy.

His latest book - Ledger Lines - is now obtainable from Amazon. It tells with gentle humour of the ups and downs in the life of a professional musician over the last 60 years.