

The Nash

Newsletter of "The Friends of the National Youth Orchestra of Wales" June 2008
Registered Charity No. 1,053,788

Membership

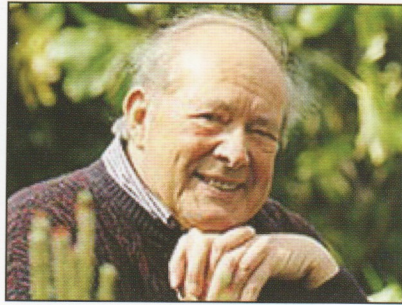
Since Beryl Jones, former Administrator of NYOW, has become Membership Secretary of the Friends, she has instigated the setting up of a subcommittee to look into recruitment of new members. We are currently producing an introductory brochure and plan to develop a website. Is there anyone out there with experience in graphic or website design who would like to help us? If so please contact John Watkins whose address is at the bottom of this page.

Wyn Davies

On Saturday 17th May, Wyn Davies, a distinguished former member of NYOW, performed his inimitable cabaret at The Gate in Cardiff to a delighted audience in order to raise funds for the Friends. Not as many turned up as we would have liked but we were competing with Cardiff City at the Cup Final. An appreciation by our secretary Noreen Harris appears elsewhere in the newsletter.

Concert Tickets

All paid-up members of the Friends of NYOW are entitled to receive **ONE** free ticket at a venue of their choice during the NYOW Summer Concert season. Additional tickets for non-members may be ordered at a cost of £10 or £6 concessions. A Ticket Order form is enclosed with this newsletter and should be returned to Beryl Jones as soon as possible.



With the sad death of Alun Hoddinott, in March of this year, Wales has lost one of its greatest composers: and The Nash mourns one of its most celebrated founder members. Born in the South Wales valleys town of Bargoed in 1929 Alun, at quite an early age, was taken by his father to a concert at which he heard the violin for the first time. This prompted him to take up the instrument there and then and he eventually received tuition from the former co-leader of the BBC Welsh Orchestra, the ever affable Garfield Phillips. Although he was set upon making a career as a violinist, Alun was already deeply immersed in composition and at sixteen years of age he won a composition scholarship. Eventually he enrolled as a music student at University College, Cardiff and also came under the influence and guidance of the distinguished Australian composer, Arthur Benjamin. It was during his tenure as a lecturer at the Welsh College of Music and Drama that Alun's first big breakthrough came when, in 1954, his clarinet concerto was first performed by Gervase de Peyer with the Halle Orchestra under Sir John Barbirolli at the Cheltenham Festival. The overnight success of this work propelled Alun into the forefront of British composers and resulted in further performances and new commissions. In 1959 Alun became a lecturer at University College, Cardiff where he was

Alun Hoddinott

A Personal appreciation by Jeff Lloyd

destined to become Professor of Music. It was around this time that, as a music student at the university and leader of The Nash, I first made his acquaintance. The Nash were performing the first of his sets of Welsh Dances and I well recall him sitting alongside me following his score with a demeanour of approval as 'Clarry' Raybould rehearsed the work. Over two decades later I was asked to perform his third Suite of Welsh Dances with the South Glamorgan Youth Orchestra for the Schools Proms Wales. A few weeks prior to the performance I was invited to discuss the work 'over a few coffees' at his delightful Llantrisant home. Upon my arrival I was greeted by Alun's charming and beautiful wife, Rhiannon, who then apologised for having to leave us to attend a hair appointment. Within minutes of her departure, and sporting a mischievous grin, Alun proceeded to 'top up' my coffee with a rather more potent brew than had previously been proffered by dear Rhiannon!

Despite his eminence in international music circles Alun never displayed the slightest hint of grandeur or pomposity and was always fun to be with: this has subsequently been borne out in conversation with members of BBC NOW and other seasoned orchestral musicians. How appropriate that the BBC NOW will soon occupy its prestigious base in the Welsh Millennium Centre - Hoddinott Hall. A fitting tribute to a great musician and a fine son of Wales.

Contact the Friends of NYOW:

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Wyn Davies at The Gate

Noreen Harris

The Friends had a wonderful evening on 17th May 2008 in the Gate Arts Centre, Roath, Cardiff. This is a venue where small events can take place in an intimate space and where the rapport between performer and audience can be savoured. If you were lucky enough to be there you will remember Wyn Davies for a very long time, he is just simply Wyn and just simply superb.

Wyn Davies is Music Director of New Zealand Opera and also performs piano cabaret featuring a whole range of musical styles including songs which took opera less than seriously, as well as works by Noel Coward, Cole Porter and Steven Sondheim. He has performed cabaret in such prestigious places as the Ballroom, New York and the Royal Albert Hall as well as in festivals like Edinburgh and Buxton so it was with much gratitude that the Friends welcomed him to the "Gate" Wyn gave us an evening of



Wyn Davies shares a joke with Beverley Humphreys and John Hugh Thomas

wit and musical intelligence that had us shaking our heads in wonder. Who else could combine Walton's Façade on the Piano whilst singing "Underneath the Arches"? Brilliant!

Some of his material was composed by him, some paid homage to Flanders and Swann, and some were bitter sweet, little known numbers by Steven Sondheim and Kurt Weill. What brought the house down was a musical reference to a composer called Dieter Albrecht Ifor Bach (from Caerphilly) who was uncle to the somewhat more famous Johann Sebastian. Unfortunately D.A.I. Bach kept getting pipped at the post with publishing his Air, Toccata and Fugue and others, by his nephew getting in first. The avuncular ire was amazing to behold (whilst the left hand was heralding very recognisable musical references)

Wyn had been a member of the Nash and he gave us this marvellous evening to raise funds for the Friends, with a request for each and everyone of us to write to our Assembly members calling for more government support for the present orchestra. If we all did this it would be a fitting thank you to him. **When are you coming back Wyn?**



Wyn Davies with Friends' Chairman, John Watkins and your editor

A Message from Portugal

Richard Buckley

With many of my colleagues from the successful West Glamorgan Youth Orchestra, I auditioned for the "NASH" during the 1986/87 school year.

Although a pupil of Olcha Comprehensive School in Swansea, my audition was held at Bishop Gore Comprehensive School in Sketty, Swansea, very close to my home. Yes! It was the then M.D. of the orchestra – Arthur Davison – who put me through my paces-even now I can recall his watchful eye and keen ear, as I tuned the Tymps. and played with (or sometimes against!), the rhythms of the inevitable sight reading passages.

I travelled north to Wrexham for my first Course. What a wonderful experience - musically and socially.....! So much to learn from the repertoire of the Course; the impact of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* has remained with me, so much so that the memories of the intensive rehearsals and the contribution of several of my friends - Mark Jenkins, Gareth Small, Rachel and Rhys Owen - to the performances on the concert tour "flash back" when I have been involved in subsequent performances of this powerful music.

The NYOW experience strongly influenced me to pursue a career of music making. Of course, there had to be a Celtic connection, so I was fortunate to be accepted to study at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Glasgow - where Pam Dow (Percussion) and Martin Gibson (Tympani) - both respective Principals at the Royal Scottish National Orchestra were highly significant influences on both my playing and career development.

During my time in Scotland I had the privilege to work with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra; Scottish Opera; BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. During my final post-graduate year I was awarded the Silver Medal of the Worshipful Company of Musicians and coincidentally successfully auditioned for the Orquestra Sinfonica Portuguesa (Teatro Nacional de Sao Carlos) based in Lisbon.

For the past fifteen years I have thoroughly enjoyed the delights of living in Cascais close to the most westerly point of Europe. Whereas the NYOW was traditionally made up from players throughout Wales (and the UK Music Academia), my orchestra consists of a nucleus of Portuguese musicians and players from European countries, an interesting cultural blend. Our annual programme keeps the orchestra extremely busy, with a full season of symphonic programmes; at least ten operas (some contemporary) and several ballets. I am also involved in several projects ranging from baroque to contemporary music. As Head of Percussion and Tympani Studies at a Music School based in Lisbon, I have recently restructured the entire course to focus more on orchestral repertoire.

I am regularly involved in giving Master Classes on Percussion Instruments and Tympani throughout Portugal. I would not readily change my continental lifestyle - it is most satisfying musically and culturally, but my heart has never really left Wales and the work/social balance I discovered on "NASH" courses and tours still serves me well!

An Important Date for your Diary

The annual collaboration between NYOW and BBC NOW takes place over three days in October 2008 culminating in a concert at St. David's Hall, Cardiff on Monday, the 20th of October.

Programme:

Roman Carnival Overture

Berlioz

A concerto to be announced

The soloist will be the sensational 12 year old trombonist **Peter Moore**, BBC Young Musician of the Year 2008

Pines of Rome

Respighi

This year the concert will be directed by the distinguished English conductor Paul Daniel.

In the past these concerts have been enormously successful; the whole experience of rehearsing and performing with professional players being of immense value to our young musicians, all of whom, because of the time of year when the course is held, are still at school.

This will be an occasion not to be missed, so please make every effort to attend.

NYOW Summer Course

Matthew Jones, Youth Music Manager

As the summer months disappear at a rate of knots, we in the NYOW office are busy making the final preparations for this year's summer course and concerts. The 112 young musicians of the orchestra arrive in Lampeter on the 28th July to start rehearsals with their sectional tutors before we throw them in at the deep end with their first full rehearsal that evening. As usual the first part of the course will be taken up with a mixture of sectionals led by our excellent team of tutors, and tutti rehearsals led by Adrian Dunn. On the 1st August Owain Arwel-Hughes joins the course to lead the last few days of rehearsal, add the final touches and prepare the orchestra for the performances.

We have a fantastic programme lined up, starting with William Mathias' vibrant *Celtic Dances*, fol-

lowed by Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, giving every section of the orchestra a chance to shine before Vaughan Williams' evocative *Symphony No.2 (London Symphony)* completes the line-up.

On Monday 4th August we start the business end of the course with our now traditional pre-tour concert; a free event in the concert hall at Lampeter University, open to the people of Lampeter, delegates from other courses who have shared the University campus with us and of course all Friends of the NYOW. The concert tour starts officially in St Davids Cathedral on 5th August before we leave Lampeter and set up base in Cardiff. On the 6th and 7th August we will be at St David's Hall to record a CD of the Vaughan Williams and what will be the first commercial recording of the Celtic Dances. On the evening of the 7th we have a con-

cert in St David's Hall as part of the National Eisteddfod, on Friday 8th August we travel to Birmingham to perform in the recently refurbished Town Hall and then the 2008 season draws to a close at St Asaph Cathedral on the evening of the 9th.

In addition to the free concert in Lampeter, we hope to be able to organise an open rehearsal of the orchestra to give people an insight into the preparations the orchestra go through. We will contact the Friends with details as soon as they are confirmed.

With a lot of our older students having left, we have a new and exciting look to the orchestra including a new leader in Carly Worsfold from Cwmbran. I'm really looking forward to the summer's events and I hope to see as many Friends as possible at one of the performances.

Thoughts from Last Year's Leader

Gwenllian Haf Richards

When I think of my time on the National Youth Orchestra of Wales, I am filled with so many happy memories. Having been a member from the age of 13 to 21, the Nash became the focal point of my summer and undoubtedly one of the highlights of the year! I recall driving up to Lampeter with my parents on my 13th birthday, feeling so nervous and anxious about my first course that I'm sure we had to stop for the toilet at least eight times! I kept telling myself, "It's only for one course...then you'll never have to do it again". How wrong I was. In fact, I loved it so much, I decided to come back for another ten courses!



Gwenllian with Owain Arwel Hughes

The Nash provided me with the opportunity to develop both musically and socially, and I feel it was a major catalyst in nurturing my ambition to become a successful musician. I remember sitting in my first tutti

rehearsal of Shostakovich Symphony no.7 under the baton of Christopher Adey wondering why anyone would ever want to do anything else but music!

The combination of high level of playing, excellent tutors, conductors and staff has expanded my musical learning and encouraged me to develop my musicianship further as a student in the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and a member of the European Union Youth Orchestra.

My time on the Nash was filled with pure happiness and fantastic memories. My friends on the Nash have become friends for life, and without this experience, I'm sure I would not be the person I am today.