

Solway Sinfonia

Newsletter November 2013

A few bars from our Chairman



Nick Riley

Hello from me to all the supporters of the Solway Sinfonia. And a very big welcome and thanks to our generous Patrons and Sponsors. You are all important to us as we try to maintain our profile and security in times of funding cuts.

We exist to make music, and the Orchestra's next big venture is on November 24th in the Easterbrook Hall. We have a fabulous evening of music planned which we hope you will enjoy with us. And enjoy it we do.

Since the theme of this newsletter is early musical influences I include some of my own! As a local boy some of you will know some of my background (hopefully few will know too much!).

Through playing my flute from about 10 years old with John Burnett (thanks John) and having piano lessons with my dad from 3 or 4 years before that it became obvious that music was going to be prominent in my life – not least because I was dismal at everything else at school! Certainly nothing else seemed so important to me. I've since discovered motorbikes, but more on that later.

My three sisters and I each had a piano lesson on a different morning of the week. Between my dear dad Arthur (who many of you will remember I'm sure) and my mum Agnes, good music and interesting musical chat about anything from Bach to Sinatra was always around the house. This diversity had long-term implications: in recent years I've enjoyed making music with many of the musical institutions we're proud of in the town including the Choral Society, "the Operatic" as it used to be known, and of course the Solway Sinfonia.

I think Chairman is probably the role in a Society in which one can do least damage and certainly I haven't caused nearly as much chaos as I had assumed



I would. The Orchestra and the Committee are great teams to be a part of. Dedicated musicians who, like me, have fine music-making close to their hearts. Several of the committee have served for 16 years. Now that's commitment, and it's a pleasure to work with them. Did I mention motorbikes? Now that's a brilliant way to blow away the cobwebs. I love it. Round the north of Scotland humming the Flying Dutchman. That takes a bit of beating.

I do hope you enjoy this season's music from the Orchestra. With typically five rehearsals before each concert we work on the basis that some things become stale if they are over-rehearsed. So relax and enjoy the music. We're honoured to have an audience at all. No really, we are. Between the players, yourselves as audience, and with the support of our Sponsors and Patrons we keep the flag of orchestral music flying in D&G. See you in Moffat Academy on March 23rd for the magnificent Mozart K488 A Major Piano Concerto amongst other wonders.

Next Concert

Easterbrook Hall, Dumfries

Solway Sinfonia

Conductor - Geoffrey Keating
Leader - Sarah Berker

Alina Bzhezhinska (harp)
Karin Leitner (flute)

Kalinnikov : Symphony No 1
Mozart : Flute and Harp Concerto
Khachaturian : A Masquerade Suite
Glinka : Russian & Ludmilla Overture

7.30pm Sunday
24th November 2013

Tickets £12, students £6,
accompanied schoolchildren - free
01387 261611 or at the door
www.solwaysinfonia.org.uk

Scottish Charity SC049150

Dates for your Diary

23 March 2014: Moffat Academy:
Cimarosa Overture to The Secret Marriage;
Mozart Piano Concerto in A; Beethoven 7th
symphony.

18 May 2014: Threave Visitors Centre:
Patrons & Sponsors Party.

www.solwaysinfonia.org.uk

Cathy Tyler: Editor Ken Smyth: Design & Printing

Musical Money Matters: Peter Hutchison

The Solway Sinfonia Treasurer's early musical life

I was late coming to making music. At about 14 years old I suddenly took the notion to play something: wind, perhaps, rather than string. At my school they had a spare French horn and bassoon so I tossed a coin and ended up a bassoonist. A good choice as it turned out because there were no others around so I was earning money playing for local Operatic Societies within a year.

I came to be Treasurer of the Solway Sinfonia by default. Having been in at its inception, I was made Treasurer perhaps because, as a doctor, if I ever did anything untoward with the funds, I would be struck off by the General Medical Council. I had some idea of balancing books as a Partner in general practice so I set up a computer accounting package where I recorded and categorised every penny in and out. At the end of the financial year it is then just a case of hitting a button to present everything to our auditor and

so far, after 16 years, it still balances perfectly!

The worst part of the job is the form-filling required when applying for external funding. I think this is an area that we could improve on so I am really happy to have persuaded David Howdle to take on the role of Assistant Treasurer. With his legal brain, he is so much better at spotting the best way to present our case. He has already managed to turn us into a Charity and has raised £742 by claiming Gift Aid back from the taxman! We had considered charitable status before but the bureaucracy involved seemed daunting; not so for our David!

I have recently retired from being a GP after 35 years in Dumfries so I had to find something to spend my pension lump sum on. This might now debar me from continuing as Treasurer, but, instead of shares, I persuaded my wife that a contrabassoon would



be a sound investment! It did cost a fortune but is great fun as some of our patrons might attest to, having witnessed my enthusiasm at the 2013 Threave event.

Solway Sinfonia Musical Networks (or what we're up to when not under the baton of GK)

The Solway Sinfonia is remarkable in drawing its players from Kelso in the north, Keswick in the south, Port William in the west and Corbridge in the east. Within this big geographical area, the strands of the Solway Sinfonia infiltrate a wide network of performing groups, of both instrument and voice. To promote the groups and to satisfy musical curiosity, here is our first attempt to draw together our musical mischiefs elsewhere:

West Scotland Wing Wind Band
Ann
Westmorland Orchestra
Clev
Fleet Renaissance
Dalgarno Singers
Antiphon Chamber choir
Hexha
Etoile String Quartet
Castle Douglas
St Andrews Church, Corbridge,
Cumbrian Rural Singers
Tynedale Symph
Balliol Consort
West I
Corbridge Chamber Festival Choir
Cleveland Chamber Orchestra
Galloway Piano Trio
Galloway
Royal Scottish Conservatoire
Carlisle Cathedral
Holywo
National Children's Orch

Player's Profile: Susan Beeby

A family cello affair

The decision was made, as the most important ones sometimes are, during the washing-up when I was twelve. I remember my mother saying in exasperation "and what instrument *are* you going to play?" Despite having heard all my life "one cellist is enough for any family" (my mother), I realised that the cello was the instrument for me. Also there was no way I was putting myself through group violin lessons at school where you could hear the teacher shouting all the way down the corridor! So, thankfully, cello lessons were duly arranged for me.

My earliest recollection of the cello was always my mother playing us "the Swan" and also of my sister and I on tiny instruments at about 7 and 5 playing pizzicato notes with piano accompaniment that I wanted to do again and again. The seed must have been sown in those happy times. Of course, coming from a musical family, my father also having learnt the cello

at school and my aunt being a violin teacher, we had family music-making in a wonderfully ad-hoc way. My first encounter with the Schubert quintet was at home with mostly family members – mistakes never being too important and accompanied with more laughter than anything else.

I duly studied at the Royal College of Music and have been most fortunate in having Anna Shuttleworth, the most inspiring and awesome of teachers who had studied with Casals and Rostropovich herself, all through school. Then at college, Joan Dickson, the celebrated Scottish cellist, who I heard play the Elgar cello concerto at the Proms under Sir Adrian Boult whilst I was her student and Helen Just who was a member of the first all female British string quartet. Most importantly they were wonderful people as well as fantastic musicians with the cello integral to all their lives. As a cello teacher now myself, they are there in my memory to aspire to their incomparable lessons.

So, in D&G, it has been such a great pleasure to have been a founder member of the Solway Sinfonia with Geoff as our conductor. It is the most amazing privilege to play concertos with the likes of Murray Maclachlan and Leland Chen and to play some fantastic music with friends and colleagues alike. This has also led to some fun and varied chamber music that is so fulfilling and just sheer good fun. What better way to spend one's time!! It is also of particular pleasure seeing some of my past students play with the orchestra, currently Garrie, Joanne and Louise and especially, so excitingly, Alex performing two cello concertos with us already.

So, thanks Mum, for extending the family cellists by another, and it's been tremendous having my son Richard as a cellist (amongst his guitar playing!) and my granddaughter, Bethany telling us she's going to be the next one in the family! I say "spread the cello love...!"

an Town Band Yetholm Symphony Orchestra
veland Philharmonic Orchestra Border Reefers Camerata Cumbria
Cobwebs Chamber Orchestra Langholm Singers
m Penrith Choral
s High School Orchestra City of Carlisle Orchestra
Choir Chandos Orchestra Lancaster Choral Solway Quartet
mony Orchestra Langholm Concert Orchestra Tonic Solway
akes Choral Cobwebs Orchestra West Lakes Orchestra
Millbeck Wind Ensemble Gentle Jazz
National Youth Orchestra of Scotland
Quartet Kirkudbright Choral Gatehouse Singers
e Orchestra Newton Stewart Singers Creetown Silver Band
ood Chambers Stewartry Chamber Orchestra
estra of Great Britain Hexham Abbey Chamber Choir

Easterbrook Hall

24 November 2013

Alina Bzhezhinska (harp) and Karin Leitner (flute) are our soloists in Mozart's sublime C Major Flute and Harp Concerto in the Easterbrook Hall on 24th November. Alina teaches harp at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and has performed with many major European orchestras. She gives regular master classes in the UK and abroad, composes for the harp and creates imaginative concert programmes as a solo artist and chamber musician.

Originally from Poland/Ukraine, Alina studied at the Fryderyk Chopin Music Academy in Warsaw (Master in Arts) and the



University of Arizona (Masters in Musical Performance). Alina's London performances include the Globe Theatre and Radio 3. She is a regular tutor and performer at the Edinburgh International Harp Festival, particularly promoting modern harp music. Alina explores jazz harp with saxophonist Martin Kershaw. Her critically acclaimed recording 'Harp Recital' is believed to be the first pedal harp CD made in Scotland.

Karin Leitner is an international flautist performing world wide as an orchestral soloist and chamber musician - eg soloist with The Vienna State Opera, Capetown Philharmonic and London Chamber Music Festival. She also composes music for flute, harp and orchestra. She has held principal flute positions with the Royal Philharmonic and BBC symphony orchestras.

Born in Vienna, she studied at the Academies of Music at Vienna and Freiburg and is now in demand as a guest tutor world wide. She has produced 8 CDs of flute and harp music, and undertaken TV and radio recordings internationally. Within her recordings she plays wooden flute, piccolo, Irish tin whistle and Native American flute. She is Artistic Director of the Vienna Film Orchestra. In 2010 Karin was awarded the Composition Prize for the City of Vienna. In 2012 she was appointed Artist and Composer in Residence in Tehran.

Patron's Profile

Dr Barbara Law

After many years spent working in London Hospitals, my husband and I decided to retire early and devote ourselves to our many hobbies - an ambition first conceived soon after our original qualification!

When we told our friends that we intended to live in Scotland the proposal was greeted with surprise and some concern and the question "but what will you do for culture?" To our delight we were soon to discover that we had chosen to live in a wonderful part of the country which boasted the highest concentration of artistic talent especially musical and certainly not lacking in culture.

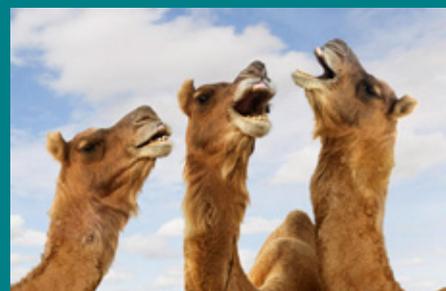
My husband came from a very musical family. No less than three of his aunts studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London at the turn of the century - a rare privilege for women at that time - and one told me that she took her final exams alongside Vaughan Williams in 1899. Conveniently their chosen instruments were piano, violin and cello so with the addition of their two brothers on wind instruments they were able to perform ensembles as requested by their father in the evenings. The other daughter had a good soprano voice to add to the repertoire! It is therefore not surprising to learn that although not technically gifted, listening

to and studying music was one of our chief hobbies and interests. We particularly enjoyed musical evenings in private houses, concerts with high calibre soloists in our local church with its excellent acoustics, jazz evenings, choral and carol concerts. We had plenty of "culture" and something to everybody's taste and little of which had been easy to come by in London. Just when we thought we had heard it all the Solway Sinfonia was born! What an achievement to find so many talented performers and, of course, a splendid unique and tireless, gifted and charismatic conductor - all in one small part of Scotland. It was unbelievable. We were soon enthusiastic supporters.

Although absolutely professional all members play without remuneration but inevitably there must be overhead expenses of a considerable magnitude. My husband and friends discussed the concept of sponsorship and patronage to help enable the orchestra to continue especially at a time when grants from various organisations were being cut or discontinued. While there do not seem to be millionaires in this locality at least the supermarket adage is appropriate - "every little helps" - while the benefits to us all are priceless.



Caption Competition



THE WINNER.....

"Try not to spit on the audience!"

DEBORAH THURLOW

THE RUNNERS-UP.....

"Is that 'Danny Boy' or the 'Dromedary Air'?"
(Pam Maitland)

Singing out of dune (Ian McCandlish)

"Shall we call ourselves Oasis?" (Deborah Thurlow)