



NEWSLETTER

FRIENDS OF THE CHELTENHAM MUSIC FESTIVAL

November 2018 VOL 38 No. 3 www.cmfs.org.uk

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Congratulations to Edward Gillespie, Chairman of the Music Festival, on becoming the Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire! We wish him, Alison Balsom, Camilla King and the Festival Team every success as they plan and prepare for the 75th Anniversary Music Festival in July 2019. Early soundings appear very exciting.

Please may I invite Friends to contact me if they have any proposals for CMFS events throughout the year, in addition to the very successful CMFS concerts arranged in Chapel Arts. At the September Executive Committee meeting members discussed the possibility of having a drinks reception during the Festival at one of the Pump Room concerts. In addition to the Annual Lunch Party and AGM, which it is hoped to hold again at the New Club. There are 221 CMFS members, and I would welcome the opportunity of meeting more of you, and hearing your views about possible future activities.

Please may I take this opportunity to thank those of you who have supported our Young Musicians Concerts at Chapel Arts this autumn. Besides the regular Friday lunchtime free concerts given by local schools (which are of an incredibly high standard) there have been Friday evening and Sunday afternoon concerts too. The last concert before Christmas will be given by Adam Heron, BBC Young Musician of the Year 2018 Keyboard Finalist at 6.00p.m. on Friday 30th November. Details of the other concerts arranged for 2019 are listed in the "Coming Events" section of this Newsletter. Please be assured that these concerts are not being arranged using our subscription income, which will as always be applied to the Music Festival itself. The owner of Chapel Arts, Ian James, is underwriting the concerts and our involvement comes in connecting young people who have a talent and a passion for music with a performance platform. After all, they will be both the performers, and the Friends, of future Festivals, so in this way we are supporting the splendid educational work undertaken by Cheltenham Festivals.

In addition, would any Friends who might be interested in an Opera Gala evening of Verdi's Macbeth at the Everyman on Tuesday April 30th please contact me directly to arrange tickets. The usual ticket price of £31 is reduced to £28 for a group booking, and an extra £10 allows us the exclusive use of the Directors Lounge for the evening, with light canapés and drinks. There are five group places remaining.

I would like to thank Graham Lockwood again for all he did as CMFS Chairman, and for the great help, support and advice he kindly offered me. You may be interested to know that he has recently published a very informative and interesting follow up to his 2009 book, *the Cheltenham Music Festival at 65; a perspective on its themes and variations*. His latest work, which should be available locally at the Suffolk Anthology bookshop and the shops at the Wilson and the Holst Birthplace Museum, is entitled *Concordant Cheltenham: The making of a musical town 1716 – 1944*

May I take this opportunity to wish all readers as very happy and healthy Christmastide, and many musical adventures in 2019. *Andrew Auster*

Advance booking on November 27th for Syde weekend in 2019:

Unlike previous years, the only Music Festival event which will be on sale before Christmas this year will be for the Syde Manor weekend (29 – 30th June 2019). Details will be released in due course, but it will be curated by the Carducci Quartet with the theme *A Voyage to the New World*.

CMFS members priority booking slot is **10.00 – 13.00 on November 27th 2018**. After 13.00, booking opens to other Festival Members. There is **NO** physical box office at this time. **To book, call the Box Office Team at: 01242 850 270** However we **DO** hope a physical box office when booking for the main Festival opens on 26th March. Details to be confirmed as soon as we have them,

Roger Jones: A generous friend of the Music Festival



Friends will recall the sad and sudden death in 2017 of Roger Jones, who edited this Newsletter among his very many other contributions to the musical and cultural life of Cheltenham. The CMFS committee were recently advised that Roger made an extremely generous bequest of ten thousand pounds to CMFS in his will. This magnificent gesture will of course be used to further the aims of the Cheltenham Music Festival, and discussions as to how that might best be achieved will take place in coming weeks. CMFS members with ideas or thoughts about the best ways to do this are invited to share them with any of the committee members.

The 75th Cheltenham Music Festival 2019 – A first look.

Newsletter readers may recall the interview with Camilla King in the April 2018 edition, where she explained that planning for the next Festival begins even before the last notes of a current year fade away. So it will come as no surprise to learn that our Director, Alison Balsom, supported by Camilla and the whole team, have been very busy indeed over the past few months. The “full reveal” does not take place until March when the programme is released, but here are some pointers to what promises to be a splendid Festival - all of course subject to possible change because “stuff happens” in the lives of musicians, just like the rest of us!

Alison says we might expect “new and exciting events, including a weekend of free performances in Imperial Gardens, a whole day dedicated to new music and the art of composition, and a sultry summer’s night of tango in the Town Hall.” Also the first ever Cheltenham performance by the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Elim Chan, a day of concerts broadcast live via Classic FM with presenters John Suchet, Anne-Marie Minhall, John Brunning and Catherine Bott, and a series of events for those who enjoy their music in a relaxed setting, with a late night cocktail...or two. As always, the intention is to maintain the high quality of music for which the Cheltenham Music Festival is renowned, presenting a program that appeals to our existing loyal supporters while also reaching out to music lovers further afield and to the new, younger, audiences necessary for classical music to thrive into the future.

New for 2019! Clara Schumann on Imperial Square, Saturday 6th July

In the 200th anniversary year of Clara Schumann’s birth we remember this extraordinary Romantic composer with an afternoon of Chamber Music in private residences around Imperial Square. Delve into Cheltenham’s stunning Regency houses and experience a number of short performances of Schumann and other beautiful music in the Salon setting for which it was originally composed.

It is hoped that the above announcement, or words to that effect, will appear in the 2019 Music Festival Programme. However, in order to bring this splendid idea to fruition our Music Festival Manager Camilla King, and her colleagues, are asking for our help. She says that they are looking for approximately four houses or flats situated on or very near to Imperial Square (one has already been agreed) whose owners are willing to take part in this immersive event at the 2019 Festival. These houses will turn into mini-concert venues for one afternoon only. Ideally they need to have one sitting or dining room area which can comfortably fit 15 – 20 people (seated and standing) plus 1 – 4 performers. It would be perfect if at least one property includes a piano the performers can use, Performances will last 15 minutes before the audience moves onto the next house, and it is hoped to repeat this between two and four times across the afternoon, meaning each house will only be in active use for about one hour, although Music Festival staff will need access early in the afternoon for rehearsal and to set everything up. Camilla says that the Music Festival will provide all the staff needed to run the performances, including a dedicated event manager. The public will have **no** access to any rooms other than the performance space in the house – and that includes the toilets as the Town Hall is very close by! Of course Music Festival staff will ensure that everything is put back properly and left clean and tidy.

Socould CMFS members possibly scratch their heads and think through their friends and contacts to see if we can help to bring this about? The idea of hearing chamber music performed in the manner for which it was originally written seems both very appealing, and a most appropriate way to mark the 200th anniversary of Clara Schumann’s birth. If anyone either **has** a suitable space, or knows someone who has, Camilla would be delighted to hear from you.

She can be contacted either by phone at: 01242 537 292,
Or by email at: camilla.king@cheltenhamfestivals.com





Putting the Cheltenham Music Festival together: How do they do it? Part two:

Editors note: As someone who winces a bit every time I pay for my concert tickets I confess it came as a bit of a surprise to learn just how big a gap there is between what we, the concert going public, pay for our musical pleasures, and the cost of putting them on. Bridging that gap takes a lot of work by a variety of people. One important member of the team is Sam (Samantha) Skillings, Head of Marketing across all four Festivals. Sam's degree is in Art History and English and her interests have always lain in the cultural field. As a student she volunteered in archives, libraries and galleries, before getting into Arts marketing via a New Labour apprenticeship

scheme. This saw her working with everything from individual singers to the Arts Council for East Anglia. From there Sam moved into the world of Theatre marketing spending several years working with venues large and small before relocating to Oxfordshire, where she worked with the tiny theatre in Chipping Norton prior to spending eleven years with Compton Verney. Joining Cheltenham Festivals just as the 2018 Music Festival opened allowed Sam to see first hand how everything here works.

In order to market a product, even when the product is Classical Music, it is essential to understand the audience for that product. Cultural organisations nowadays work hard at something called audience spectrum profiling of their ticket buyers to identify clusters such as families, with whom the organisation particularly wants to engage. The Music Festival is currently working hard to build family audiences. Sam notes that children are typically more open minded and will happily come to an event that their parents might initially not select, but that all eventually enjoy. Similarly the free "Around Town" events provide a gateway to the Festivals for many people. Locally, Sam and her team work with Visit Cheltenham and the Cheltenham Business Improvement District group who appreciate the benefits of a vibrant cultural sector and, like us, want to encourage people to visit from further afield perhaps staying for several days. Reaching out to tour groups brings people to the Festivals in groups rather than as individuals, and hopefully many will return and even bring their friends! To make this work a great deal of networking is involved by many team members, not just with the Trusts and Foundations who give the Music Festival much of our support, but with new and existing supporters who choose to become involved for a variety of reasons. Some businesses might become supporters as a way of 'giving back' to the community, whereas for a new business it might be to raise their profile. However Sam says the most important "marketing" of all is to make sure people attending the Festival have a great experience all the way through, from Box Office, to venues and concerts - to food offerings.

Membership Renewals: Subscriptions for 2019 are due on 1 January.

Life Members should find their membership card enclosed with this mailing. (I will be posting cards to those Life Members who receive their newsletters electronically).

If you pay by standing order, you need take no action. I will send you a membership card once I have had confirmation of your payment from our bank.

Would other Friends please complete the enclosed renewal form and, if appropriate, the Gift Aid declaration. The Committee would like to encourage all Friends to use an electronic payment method if they feel able – either bank transfer or PayPal. If you wish to change to paying by standing order, please set one up directly with your bank. Please return all the completed forms to me (Jennifer Stapleton), either by post or by email, together with any payment. If you are posting your form, please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope and I will send you your membership card by return. As always, please feel free to contact me by telephone on 01242 692764 or by email at treasurer@cmsoc.org.uk if you have any questions.

Benefactors: I am sure that you all appreciate that raising adequate funding for the Music Festival is often problematic. To this end, the Committee would like to encourage more of our Friends to become Benefactors of the Society. Benefactors are acknowledged by name in the Festival programme book but the main reward is the warm feeling you get about how you are helping the Festival to continue and to thrive.

Gift Aid: The Society would like to encourage UK income tax payers to help our funds by completing the Gift Aid form. If you do so, it means that, without any extra cost to yourself, the value of your subscription (and of any donation) is increased by the amount of standard rate income tax which we recover from HMRC. Please only fill in this form if you do pay UK income tax. HMRC paid us £1446 this year - so you can see how helpful it is.

Donations: As ever, we would also like to encourage Friends to add a donation to their basic subscription. We shall be very grateful to all those who feel able to contribute.

To make more of your membership fee go towards the Music Festival, please consider receiving all communications (including the newsletter) via email - if you don't already do so. It saves on printing and postage throughout the year.

Jennifer Stapleton, Membership Secretary & Treasurer



Events for your Diary



Chapel Arts/ CMFS Concerts for 2019 include:

Friday 8th February: Lydia Kenny (saxophone) Gloucestershire Young Musician of the Year 2018

Friday 22nd February: Adam Heron Duo Recital. Programme may include movements from Holst's *The Planets*.

Sunday 3rd March: Anup Biswas (Cello) plays unaccompanied Bach Suites. Anup has given concerts all over the world and has performed on separate occasions for President Clinton, the Pope, and the Queen.

Sunday 17th March: Zacharias Brandon (Piano) plays Bach, Beethoven and Liszt. Zach is a Music Scholar at Westminster Cathedral School. Aged 8 years old Zach played with Lang Lang at the Royal Festival Hall, and has since performed in many venues including the Cadogan Hall, St John's Smith Square and the Royal Albert Hall. The March 17th 2019 concert will also be Zach's 17th birthday!

Sunday 24th March: Port Isaac Gulls; music and humour from the Fisherman's Friends village in Cornwall where the TV series *Doc Martin* is filmed,

Sunday 31st March: Chris Treglown Foundation Fund Concert given by students of the Royal College of Music, London. The Fund is for young singers, supporting them in pursuit of a musical career.

Opera Trips

Tickets have been reserved for *Un Ballo in Maschera* (Verdi) by WNO in Cardiff at 3.00 pm on Saturday 16 February 2019. Simon Rees will give a talk about the opera to Cheltenham Opera Society at St Andrew's Church, Montpellier Street at 7.00 pm on Monday 28 January. CMFS members are welcome, free of charge.

The Cheltenham Opera Society will be showing DVDs of *Der Fliegende Holländer* (Wagner) at 7.00 pm on Wednesday 27 February and *Don Carlo* (Verdi) at 3.00 pm on Sunday 10 March, both at St Andrew's Church. CMFS members are welcome on payment of an entry fee of £5.

The Cheltenham Opera Society is organising a recital by singers from the Wales International Academy of Voice at St Andrew's Church at 7.30 pm on Monday 15 April, tickets £15, including a glass of wine and a piece of cake.

To get on the mailing list for opera trips, send your address, phone number and e-mail address to Robert Padgett, 14 Century Court, Montpellier Grove, Cheltenham GL50 2XR, 01242 571802, robertpadgett@btinternet.com.

Holst Birthplace Museum:

Friday 30th November 2018. *Stained Glass of William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones: Talk by Adrian Barlow*. 7.30 pm at Harwood Hall, Christ Church, Malvern Road, Cheltenham GL50 2JH. Tickets are £13 for Holst Birthplace Museum members, £15 for non-members, £6 for students and children. Ticket price includes wine/soft drinks and canapés, and may be obtained from the Holst Birthplace Museum, The Wilson, or online at holstmuseum.org.uk

Friday 22nd February 2019 at 7.30 pm in St Luke's Church Hall: Wine and cheese tasting led by Majestic Wine.

Cheltenham Music Festival Society Committee

(Charity No 281044)

Chairman: Mr Andrew Auster: 01242 248 873; chairman@cmfsoc.org.uk

Honorary Secretary: Miss Mary MacKenzie. Tel: 01386 710 517; secretary@cmfsoc.org.uk

Rivendell, Hill Lane, Elmley Castle, Pershore WR10 3HU

Honorary Treasurer & Membership Secretary: Mrs Jennifer Stapleton. Tel: 01242 692 764; treasurer@cmfsoc.org.uk

Newsletter Editor: Mrs Frances Gabriel. Tel 01242 234 766. newsletter@cmfsoc.org.uk

Committee members

Dr Anne Dunn: 01242 580 337

Mr Norman Fyfe: 01242 526 651

Mr Alan Haylock: 01242 526 651

Mr Steve Hudson: 01242 820 920

Ex Officio Website Manager: Mr Philip Stapleton 01242 692 764

Mr Hugh Barton: 01242 269 968

Mrs Nicola Lawson: 01242 242 064