

The Nash

Newsletter of "The Friends of the National Youth Orchestra of Wales"

www.friendsofthenash.co.uk

Registered Charity No. 1053788

Summer 2018

The committee of "The Friends" is still working to keep the flag flying for the young Welsh musicians of the present day but we are always on the lookout for younger, enthusiastic talent to support us in our endeavours, so if any of you care to join us we'd be delighted to hear from you. (Contact: www.friendsofthenash.co.uk)

In this edition of our newsletter we include articles about two founder members of the orchestra. We hope that you will enjoy reading these reminders of the early days of NYOW.

Our article celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Rhondda Symphony Orchestra also serves to emphasize the importance of the National Youth Orchestra of Wales in the wider musical life of the nation. Over the years NYOW has enjoyed a symbiotic relationship with amateur ensembles throughout Wales in which young players have been able to develop their orchestral skills. In this respect, and at a time when music education in schools is facing some of the greatest challenges of the last fifty years, RSO has been one of the foremost training grounds. Of course, we must remember that only a small minority of NYOW members go on to play professionally. However, thanks to such orchestras as RSO, many other former members of NYOW experience a life-time of amateur music-making at the highest level. What a remarkable achievement that people from such a wide age range and from such varied backgrounds are keeping music alive in Wales. It

is our sincerest wish that RSO will continue to flourish and encourage people, young and old, to make music together.

"Magical Music" 2018

We are very pleased to announce that once again "The Friends" are presenting a fundraising concert – this year at The Grand Pavilion, Porthcawl on Sunday 16th September.

The Friends of the National Youth Orchestra of Wales present
Magical Music
with
Mark Llewelyn Evans
'A warm baritone voice, with humour to match' - The Observer

Raising funds to support The National Youth Orchestra of Wales

WEST END
BROADWAY
HOLLYWOOD
....and more!

The Dave Hughes Orchestra
The Mike Plowman Singers

Sunday 16 September 2018 - 7.00pm
Tickets: £18 | £16 (+ Concessions)
The Grand Pavilion Porthcawl 01656 815995
www.grandpavilion.co.uk

Music Services in Wales

A report by Brian Clarke - Chair of The Friends

There is an on-going debate as to the existence of 'a crisis' in Welsh music education. The continual reductions in funding to music services offered by local authorities and the lack of equitable provision across Wales means the challenges are greater than ever. The 'knock-on' effect for the National Youth Orchestra of Wales has been significant; the last few years has seen difficulties in recruiting sufficient numbers of musicians. This year the Nash will be supplemented by members from the Ulster Youth Orchestra.

The first move to address issues in relation to music services in Wales was the establishment of a task-and-finish group in January 2015. It has been acknowledged that since its publication 'little had changed, and the position of music services had deteriorated'. Fast forward to 2018.

Two reports relating to music services in Wales were launched within days of each other in June 2018. (No analogy to bus arrivals of course). The first to appear '*Hitting the Right Note: Inquiry into funding for and access to music education*', published by the National Assembly for Wales, recognises the challenges and calls for 'fundamental changes to the Welsh Government's approach to music education'. Its Chair, Bethan Sayed AM, herself a musician, is quoted as saying, 'Music Services must be protected, nurtured and accessible to all.' The report makes 16 key recommendations for the radical reform of music services in Wales.

The second report by Professor Paul Carr for the Welsh Government entitled '*International Best Practice in Music Performance Education Models and Associated Learning Outcomes for Wales*' launched a few days later. The report concludes 'the old funding models for Music Support Services no longer work and are no longer fit for purpose. It is therefore time for a new approach, a new strategy and a new model for Wales. There is obviously a need to act quickly before a legacy which has built up over hundreds of years is

disseminated to the point where "The Land of Song" will be but a distant memory.'

Have we reached a turning point? There is clearly public, professional and political will to move forward to ensure consistency, access and equity for the beneficiaries of music services and accountability, sustainability and parity of pay and conditions for those who deliver them. Let's hope progress is rapid!

NYOW concert tour 2018

At the time of publicising this Newsletter, the 2018 NYOW course will already be underway. For the first time in their combined history, Wales' National Youth Orchestra and Choir join together to celebrate Leonard Bernstein's Centenary with a performance of his beautiful *Chichester Psalms*. The second half belongs to the Orchestra who will take on Mahler's epic 5th Symphony. Both works will be delivered under the guidance of Maestro Carlo Rizzi, who continues his fruitful association with the Orchestra.

The concerts are to be held in Hereford Cathedral as part of the Three Choirs' Festival on 2nd August, in St. David's Cathedral as part of the Fishguard Festival on 3rd August, and in St. David's Hall, Cardiff on Sunday 5th August.

We are confident that the concerts will be of a high standard once again and we will report on them in our next Newsletter.

Francis Howard

NYOW Founder Member's family establish an annual bursary in his name.



Francis Howard was a violinist, born in Swansea in 1929 into a family in which music was an important feature. As a teenager, he, with his elder sister and younger brother, formed the Howard Piano Trio which was well known locally, and came to the

notice of the BBC in Cardiff. This led to broadcasts in the "Young Artists" series of programmes, and, though he didn't know it at the time, it was the beginning of a long association with BBC Music in Wales. Some amateur orchestra playing and attendance at a summer school at Sherborne, Dorset, fired the enthusiasm of the two brothers for a more expansive sound, and so in 1946, both auditioned successfully for the first course of the National Youth Orchestra of Wales.

As a National Serviceman, he joined the Royal Artillery band. This was a marching band, so he was given a clarinet and told to "learn it", which he did, and was soon playing as one of the solo clarinettists. He described it as a wonderfully varied musical life. Orchestra concerts alternated with band concerts, and as the leader of a small group of mainly string players he played at some unusual venues.

Following National Service, he played with several London orchestras, but he decided to return to Swansea where there were opportunities for freelance work and teaching. In 1961 he became a member of the newly enlarged BBC Welsh Orchestra, as it was known then, and where his young cellist brother was already a member. At the time, the orchestra's repertoire was somewhat limited, but during his twenty-seven years of playing, he saw the orchestra's growth

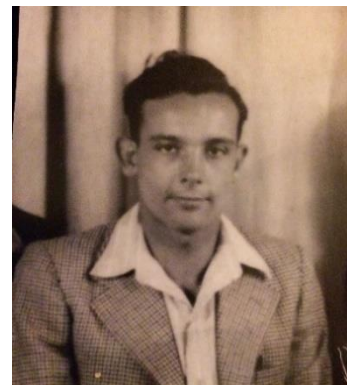
into full symphonic strength, working under international conductors and playing in concert halls across the globe. He was also a tutor at the (now Royal) Welsh College of Music and Drama, and many of his pupils became NYOW members and, eventually, professional violinists.

He retired in 1987 owing to increasing sight problems, but he was still able to enjoy travelling, particularly when he accompanied his wife when she undertook overseas tours as an Associated Board Examiner.

He will be long remembered by friends, colleagues and past pupils and is sadly missed by his family, who have founded a bursary for string players from the Swansea area in his memory.

Terence William Burke

1930 - 2004 Merthyr Tydfil



(This article is based on notes, photos and memorabilia provided by Terence's widow, Patricia and daughter, Jane Grime.)

Terence was a pupil at Cyfarthfa Grammar

School from 1941 until he went on to study in London at the Guildhall School of Music. At the age of sixteen he joined the newly formed National Youth Orchestra of Wales. In Beryl James's story of NYOW, "*First in the World*", Terence's name - together with that of Francis Howard - appears in the list of founder members. After one year at the Guildhall he was called up for three years of National Service. Following this, at the age of 21, he enrolled as one of the first students in the newly formed Welsh College of Music and Drama in Cardiff Castle where he studied violin with Hubert Davies and composition with Grace Williams.

After leaving college, he had a variety of jobs but went into teaching in 1970. He was appointed as the first music teacher for John Beddoes school in

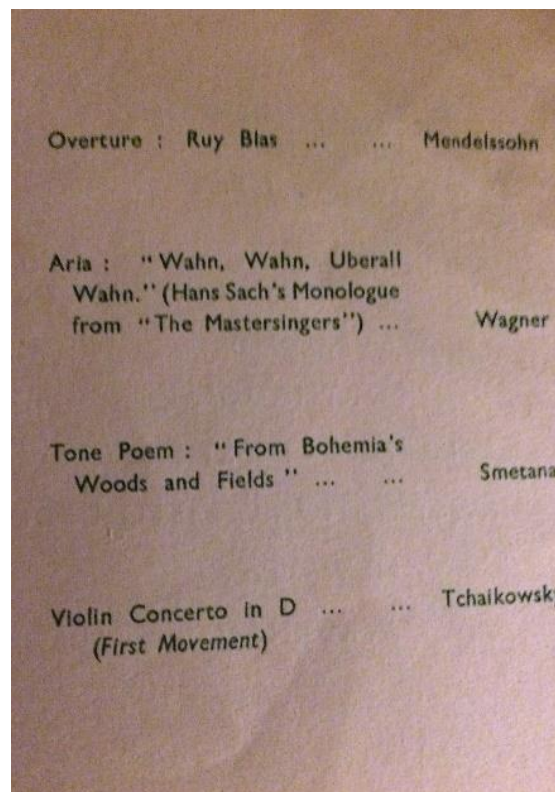
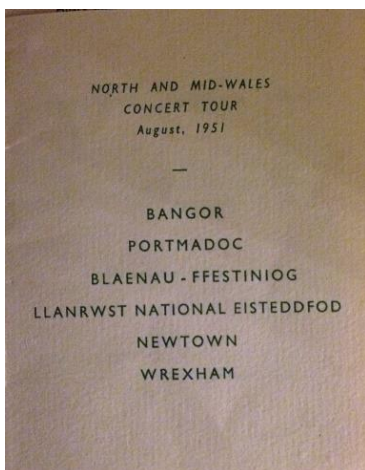
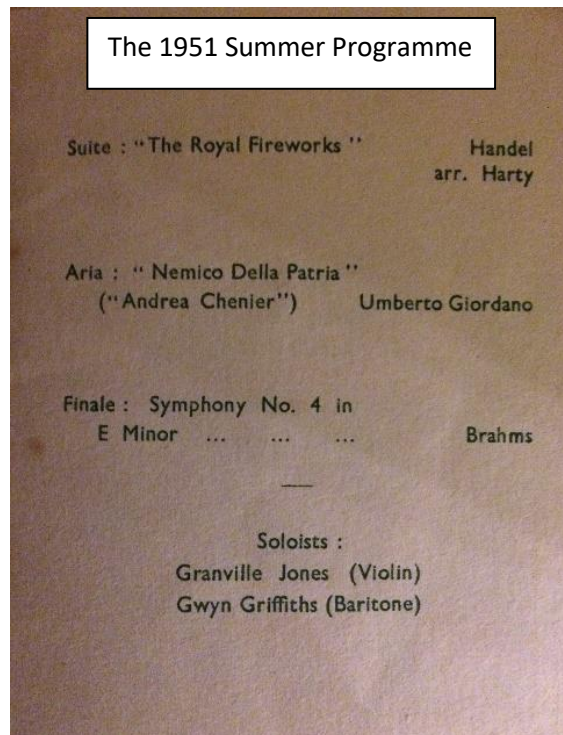
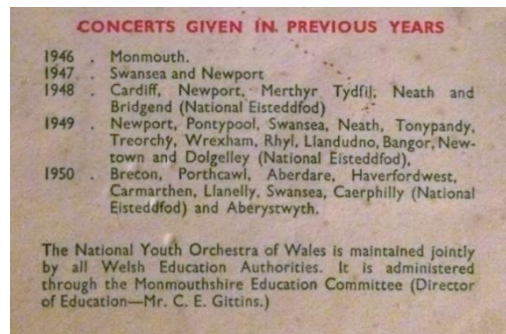
Presteigne and he and his family moved there in August of that year. In 1973 he became Head of the Music Department at Banff Academy where his wife, Patricia, was appointed as his assistant! He took early retirement in 1986 due to ill health. Throughout his life, he continued to play the violin.

He had a family of 5 children and 14 grandchildren and all his grandchildren have, or have had, a connection with music as players or composers, many playing for regional and national youth orchestras. One of his granddaughters - the composer Helen Grime - now enjoys an international reputation and is currently Composer in Residence at Wigmore Hall. In 2017 she was commissioned by the Barbican to write a two-part work for Sir Simon Rattle's inaugural season as Music Director of the London Symphony orchestra.

In 1951 Terence was still a member of NYOW. On that summer tour, the orchestra gave six concerts in north and mid Wales. The programme also reveals that there were 108 members in the orchestra in that year – exactly the same number

as in 2018! On the back cover of the programme details are given of tours in previous years. For example, in 1949 the orchestra performed an astonishing total of twelve concerts throughout the length and breadth

of Wales. What stamina they must have had in those days! One can't help wondering how all those towns were able to offer halls of suitable capacity.



Rhondda Symphony Orchestra's 50th Anniversary

"The Rhondda Symphony Orchestra was born out of frustration – my frustration! I had been involved with the Glamorgan Youth Orchestra for many years, first as a member and then as a tutor. But although I was allowed to conduct a few rehearsals during the courses held at that high, windy enclave, Ogmores School Camp, I still thirsted for more. So, in 1968, I invited a few retired professional musicians together with a number of peripatetic teachers to a rehearsal in Tonypany Grammar School.

From the very outset I was acutely aware of the importance of involving young talented instrumentalists from the locality. Initially, a few of my own pupils such as violinists Gerald Hopkin, Carl Darby, Robert Bird and cellist Christopher Hodges (each of whom were destined to enjoy successful careers as professional orchestral players) were early 'conscripts'; but young pupils from Aberdare, Maesteg and Bridgend areas also joined us. So, within just a few years, the orchestra grew in numbers enabling me to perform a truly symphonic repertoire.

Of course, we had several characters in our midst. Our elderly second clarinetist, Vernon Lloyd had, in his younger days, been solo clarinet at the esteemed Kneller Hall Military School of Music whose alumni included brilliant performers such as the clarinet virtuoso Jack Brymer. For one of our concerts in the 70s I had invited a rather brilliant violinist, Susan Lynne, to perform the gargantuan Violin Concerto by Brahms. Susan indicated that she would need to retune after the lengthy first movement, to which I told her that the clarinets had also to change from B flat to A clarinets. But, more importantly, Vernon would also have to change his DENTURES! In the performance, after the first movement and having retuned, Susan looked at me and enquired, 'What about the teeth?'"

The orchestra held its 50th Anniversary Concert on 7th July this year in which six former conductors were welcomed to take the stage

once more. It is estimated that around two thirds of the members of the orchestra performing that evening were past or present members of NYOW!

Under its now-president Jeff Lloyd RSO gave its first concert in 1970. It is probably the oldest amateur orchestra in Wales and today draws musicians from across south east Wales. The orchestra performs three or four concerts each year at venues in south Wales with a broad repertoire from jazz to classical. RSO has a playing strength of about sixty, with members ranging from their teens to their eighties. Some are keen amateurs, some teach music, and some are semi- or ex-professionals, but they all share the same passion – bringing live performances of the world's greatest music to local communities.

Jeff Lloyd

The Conductors

Jeff Lloyd	1968 -1999
Kevin Adams	1985 – 1990
Roger Clift	2000 – 2000
Huw Williams	2000 -2011
Donal Bannister	2011 – 2013
George Thomas	Various
Edward John	2016 – Present

