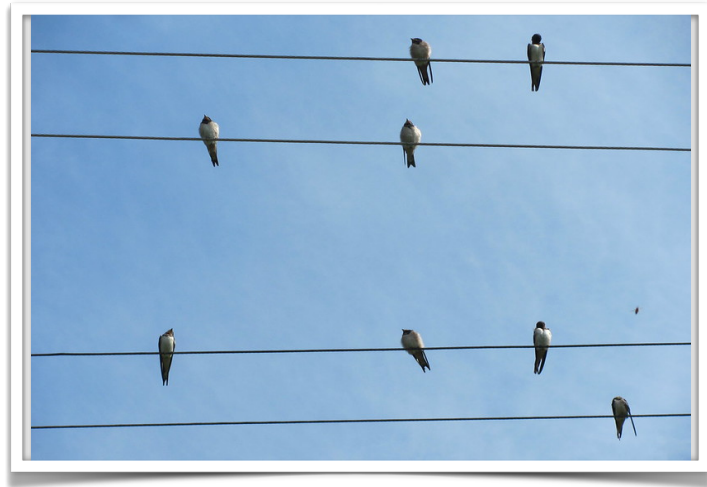




MUSIC ON THURSDAYS

Bedford Music Club



Bedford Music Club

Newsletter / 1

Winter 2020



An important announcement

Club members and friends will be sad to learn that Felicity Good has given notice to stand down from her role as Chair, which she has held for the past 12 years. During that time the Club has hosted a wide variety of artists, selected by the Artistic Directors, for 70 wonderful concerts. She says “it was a great pleasure and privilege to welcome approximately 265 artists on their arrival to rehearse at the different venues prior to those concerts. They all had their own personalities but were mostly charming and some were even a bit nervous.” One young pianist asked for a hug before she began her recital which Felicity was happy to dispense! Some others had arrived without music stands and being unable to access the Town Band's equipment in the Bunyan basement, she obtained a couple just as the music shop was closing. Freshly delivered local pizza ensured the Clare College Choir sang their hearts out on two occasions.

Bedford Music Club

Felicity oversaw the Appeal to members in 2011 when the finances were looking bleak and she was heavily involved in the transfer of the 'Bedford Piano' in 2012 to the newly formed Bedford Piano Trust, comprising the Bedford Orchestral Society and the Bedfordshire Festival of Music, Speech & Drama.

She extends warm thanks to the Committee and members for their invaluable support and help during her tenure.

Dorothy Williams is also stepping back from the Committee after many years of valuable contribution, notably as our chief point of expertise in music education and contact for amateur music-making in Bedford: long may that tradition continue! We are enormously grateful to her too.



The Committee has co-opted a new member, Dr Ian Rowlands, to take on the role of Chairman. Ian has recently retired from a career in the university sector, where he taught information science and librarianship before moving into more senior administrative roles in research management.

“Felicity guided the Club through some very difficult financial waters and it’s absolutely to her credit that we are still in existence, let alone solvent. The Committee will miss her enormously - although I’m very pleased that she has agreed to mentor me through the handover. If I can achieve half of what Felicity has, I will be very happy” says Ian.

Online survey findings

For obvious reasons, it has not been possible to schedule an AGM in the usual manner this year, but we need to stay in close contact. Many thanks to all those members and friends who responded to our online questionnaire earlier this year - this has proved to be an invaluable exercise and your views and comments will help shape the Committee’s thinking as we navigate these difficult times.

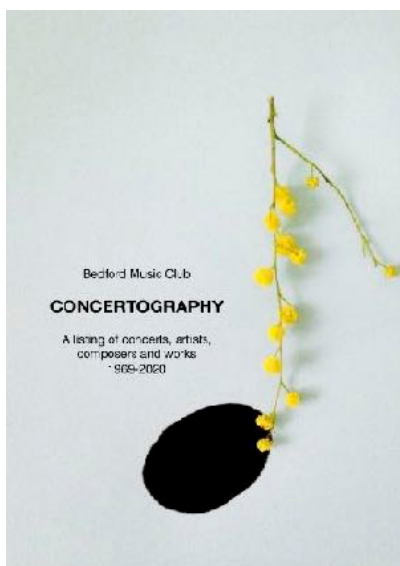


You can read the survey findings together with an executive summary here:

<https://www.bedfordmusicclub.com/downloads>

The Committee is always keen to hear from members, so please do get in touch if the survey findings trigger any ideas or reactions.

Bedford Music Club



BMC Concertography project

We have just completed a project to load details of every BMC concert to date into a computer database. This has enabled us to prepare a full concert listing, with artist and music indexes, which we imagine will be of considerable interest to members.

You can download a copy of the publication or view it online here:

<https://www.bedfordmusicclub.com/downloads>

Please pass this link on to any others who might be interested.

No doubt, this publication will bring back many rewarding memories of past BMC concerts. We are wondering if an enhanced second edition of the Concertography might be possible - perhaps fleshing out the raw data with recollections of concerts that really stand out in your memory? Or perhaps funny stories - concerts do not always go according to plan, even at Bedford Music Club!

If you see any errors or want more information, please contact Ian at ian.rowlands@ntlworld.com



Call for programmes

Compiling the concertography provided an opportunity to take stock of the Club's archive, which is now *almost* complete with regard to concert programmes. However, we are missing programmes for the following concerts and just wonder, is there anyone out there with a copy in their loft that they would be prepared to loan for the purposes of making a copy?

Arriaga String Quartet - 21 January 1971

Christopher Wilson (piano) - 23 March 1972

Naomi Atherton (horn) - 3 May 1984

Stile Antico: The Journey of the Mayflower

Stile Antico were to have performed with us this October, but that sadly has not come to pass. However, they have made an intensely moving film about the journey of the Mayflower which is available to watch online.

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Here is their press release:

“One small candle may light a thousand....”

So wrote William Bradford, a Pilgrim on board the Mayflower. In September 1620, the small band of religious puritans sailed to what would become New England, seeking a life free from persecution. They were confident that God’s favour was with them, but their journey was beset with difficulties, and their arrival heralded an era of destruction for the native Wampanoag tribe.

Award winning vocal ensemble Stile Antico seeks to shine a light on the unheard voices of the Mayflower story. Using a script written for the group by dramatist Katharine Armitage, the hour-long performance breathes life into the Pilgrims and the Mayflower crew. The drama is woven around extracts from ‘Of Plimouth Plantation’, the diary of William Bradford, the colony’s first governor, who documented their extraordinary journey.

Interspersed with the spoken text are full-length performances of some of the finest vocal music of the time. Musical gems by William Byrd, Orlando Gibbons, Thomas Tomkins and others, bring this extraordinary story to life with passion and immediacy.

You can watch a trailer here:

<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/thejourneyofthemayflower>

The full film is available from Vimeo to rent for a three-month period for £15.

However, Bedford Music Club has secured a discount code - **BEDFORD33** - which means you can access the film for only £10! Strongly recommended!

Gramophone Award

This year’s Gramophone Awards featured a special **Beethoven 250 Award** that went to the pianist Martin Helmchen, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin and Andrew Manze for their recording of Beethoven’s Piano Concertos Nos 2 and 5 on Alpha. Martin Helmchen accepted the Award in a speech, saying *‘recording something like this only makes sense in mutual spirit of curiosity, being willing to find these pieces as if they were new to us*

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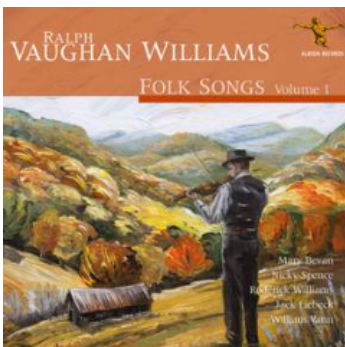
and discover the hidden mysteries that are still there, and that was exactly the spirit that made this whole project so inspiring and so exciting. It was a pure joy [...] It is a privilege and I'm very grateful to be part of it.'

Martin played for us in February 2009 and Andrew Manze is of course well known to all of us as our President.

Full information, including clips from the album can be found at the Presto Classical website:

<https://cutt.ly/BgbPXrj>

Alpha ALPHA555



Coming up for the Festive season

Looking for Christmas present ideas? Our artistic Director, William Vann, has embarked on a project to record all 80 of the English folk songs that Vaughan Williams arranged for voice and piano or violin. The first CD (of four) brings together BMC favourites Roderick Williams and Jack Liebeck with colleagues including Mary Bevan and Nicky Spence.

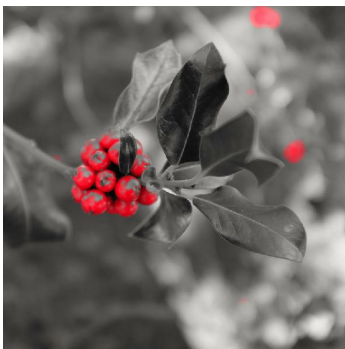
Full information, including clips from the album can be found at the Presto Classical website:

<https://cutt.ly/Sgxca3S>

Albion Records ALBCD042

While we're on the subject of Christmas, look out for a Bedford Music Club classical music quiz to challenge and delight your grey cells over the festive season.

Details will follow.



Next issue

We hope you enjoyed our first edition of the newsletter.

We would very much welcome contributions from members or friends for future issues. Would you like to share any reminiscences of past BMC concerts, news, or thoughts for the future?

If so, please email

ian.rowlands@ntlworld.com

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