



SUPPORTING &
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VOLUNTARY MUSIC

CPC NEWSLETTER

Concert Promoters' Committee

www.makingmusic.org.uk/cpc

IN THIS EDITION

- AGM report: Welcome new members
- News Clips: Audience Development request
- Berkeley Ranby gives his final Chairman's Report
- Audience Development Case Study - Gloucester Music Society by Christine Talbot-Cooper
- Mike Alexander provides a profile of Music at Duffield
(Please send your own society profile in 600 words to b.ranby@makingmusic.org.uk)

AGM

Sadly not a lot of people came to the Promoters' AGM in London. But those that did picked up some useful tips about artists from their colleagues - always a very valuable exercise. And one member may have saved a lot of money by learning how the Making Music cancellation insurance works.

Unusually, we did not get many apologies either - were the notices sent out too early? - they were included with the Network brochure in May.....

The really disappointing fact was that we had no nominations for the three committee member vacancies. We particularly need someone who will take over as editor of this newsletter. It's not too late to make enquiries, we welcome people who would like to sit in on a meeting to find out if it is going to be congenial (see contact on back page).

But the good news is that we now have three new officers:

- **Peter Marchbank (Chairman)** has spent a lifetime in the musical world. After 21 years in the BBC, latterly as Senior Producer in charge of the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, he now spends much of his time as a free-lance conductor and writer on musical matters. Peter was the Founder-Director of Brancaster Midsummer Music.
- **Len Jenkinson (Treasurer)** is a retired IT consultant and company director. His main hobby is music - he plays the violin and performs chamber music regularly. Being involved on committees of three Derby based Music Societies/Festivals makes him aware of the need for Making Music and the benefits it provides and might provide in the future. His two children are professional musicians, so that gives him an added perspective.
- **Glynne Stackhouse (Network Co-ordinator)** has given up his job as our treasurer to produce the Concert Promoters' Network brochure. He is also the administrator of the Awards for Young Concert Artists and Artistic Director for Music at St Peters in Wallingford.

Welcome New Members

Classical Music Society
Kidderminster
Aboyne and Deeside Festival
Cheltenham Jazz
Blackburn International Music
Festival
Pollok House Arts Society
Sydenham Music
Southern E-Media Education
Arts
Melrose Music Society
Music in the Vale
Music at St. Martin's
Mendelssohn on Mull Festival
Bradfield Festival of Music
Music at Leamington Hastings
Tunbridge Wells Int YCA
Competition
Petworth Festival
Grove Park Music Festival
Drayton St Leonard Music
Festival
Convivium Music
Moray Spirit of Brass
Tenterden Folk Festival
London Mandolin Festival
Jazz House
Priston Festival
Oban Music Society

Please make sure that you request your additional copies of the Concert Promoters' Network brochure at:

<http://www.makingmusic.org.uk/html/620.shtml>

NEWS

- ❖ The **Programming Survey** has been distributed, one to each member society. Please check that you have been sent either a paper copy or an electronic one.
- ❖ We received **20 applications for grants** for the London Concertante octet. Lucky members will be notified shortly.
- ❖ If you know any young artist who you think should apply for the **Philip & Dorothy Green Award for Young Concert Artist**, look at: www.makingmusic.org.uk/ayca

Audience development

Many RDOs are holding seminars on Audience development. Perhaps some of you have already attended them in the Scotland or South West, North West, Eastern or London regions? There is useful information on the Scotland and South West websites (where the case study opposite originated).

Does anyone have **further tips** they can pass on? Please send them to the Editor (see back page) and share best practice with other promoters.

Chairman's Report on 2007

The Committee produced a further Three Year Development Plan to cover the period 2007-10. All the objectives and actions are targeted to build upon the Making Music national plan Five Years Five Aims.

Our objectives cover the whole plan period but the actions are reviewed and set for one year at a time. The dominant aim has been to continue to develop and improve the Concert Promoters Network (CPN) scheme together with other activities. In particular we have:

- Monitored the effectiveness of the CPN scheme (see below)
- Documented the house-style and production timetable of the CPN brochure
- Introduced online application for CPN via the MM Web and formalised listeners reports
- Arranged for our database of Concert Organisers to be on the national database
- Improved communications via the newsletter and our own CPC web
- Influenced the 2007 MM national conference to include many events for promoters
- Lobbied the office to provide a development officer for promoters
- Advocated the benefits of planning conferences for promoters on a regional basis
- Participated in the MM national debate about house-style for newsletters and webs

Analysis of the Network for 2006-7 season showed over 94 bookings (140 last and 91 the previous to last season) and savings of £38,000 (£51,000 last and £30,000 previous to last

season). Nine artists had 6 or more bookings (10 last year); one soloist and 2 groups had 12 bookings and 16 out of the 27 artists received one or more booking. Over 50 societies used the scheme (80 last year). The committee is just starting to put bookings and the success of the brochure into perspective, so I cannot at this moment explain the differences in outcome of the last three brochures; it may be down to the difficulty in recording the bookings.

The Network brochure (2008-09) was again produced 'in-house' by Mike Alexander, continuing the full colour high standard recently established. The accounts show that the brochure made a further healthy surplus which covered the cost of all the committee activities (and we have been working on handing this back to promoters in the form of subsidies).

I am very grateful to the committee for their expertise and support during the year, especially to the retiring people. Mike Alexander (the Network Co-ordinator) steps down this year, having been involved with CPC for over ten years, during which time he has been Chairman and then Network Co-ordinator. He has made a major contribution to the development and delivery of the brochure as well as being able to give advice to artists and promoters. Richard Philips is also stepping down from the committee after eight years; we shall miss his very extensive knowledge of artists as well as his hospitality for our annual planning meeting. I have now completed my term of four years as Chairman and Newsletter Editor and am pleased to say that it has been one of the happiest committees I have served on.

Berkeley Ranby

Audience Development Case Study: Gloucester Music

Involving the local community

When I took over as Chairman of Gloucester Music Society in 2001, the once thriving Society, founded in 1929, had a dwindling and ageing membership, funding sources had dried up and there were few people to turn to for help. To me it seemed that the only way forward was to aim for a really big programme which would draw the Society to public notice in Gloucester and beyond, and which would be of sufficient importance to attract lottery funding.

First we needed a really good series of concerts with top class artists and we decided on a Russian theme, which included Russian musicians performing music from their native land. The themed programmes have since become a feature of our seasons and have proved fascinating. We persuaded Gloucester's Folk Museum to host an exhibition about Russia, the City Council to screen some historic Russian films to link with the series and the local library to put up a display. A Russian pianist came to perform a Rachmaninov programme at a local school, also giving a special concert to the students there. We also commissioned a Piano Trio from Graham Whettam, the distinguished composer now living in Gloucestershire. A combination of all these enabled us to get lottery funding to relaunch the Society and the Mayor of Gloucester at that time became very interested in our work and attended many events.

Subsequent seasons have also included arranging exhibitions and linking in with films. In one special exhibition for our 75th anniversary, which featured music and musicians with Gloucestershire connections, two local artists put on a major exhibition of paintings of the county at the Museum and Art Gallery, who also exhibited many of their own historic Gloucestershire paintings.

We have also featured music and musicians from Eastern Europe. Like many other counties, Gloucestershire has its fair share of immigrants from Eastern Europe and we hoped to provide a touch of home for them. Our first concert of the 78th season should

have been an 80th birthday tribute to Graham Whettam, but sadly he died just three weeks before his birthday, so this was a celebration of his life instead. We linked with the Europe-wide *Czech Dreams* project for the second concert of the season which featured the wonderful Škampa Quartet playing Janáček's "Intimate Letters" Quartet and also included the beautiful but rarely performed Double Bass Quintet by Dvořák.

Other concerts have included music from Hungary, Poland and Russia - much of it not the well-known favourites but new and challenging repertoire. When attending Making Music meetings, I find that some other music societies are envious of our adventurous programmes, but we find that our members enjoy the challenge.

We always offer tickets to adults with learning difficulties and have done quite a number of lunchtime concerts for them, introducing them to various instruments and generally enjoying ourselves. Perhaps the most memorable was when they all danced hand in hand round the Church of St Mary de Lode, where we hold our concerts, to the sound of a hurdy gurdy!

Audiences are increasing slowly but surely and we have received a number of generous donations from our members. We do find that most people prefer to come along on a concert by concert basis rather than taking advantage of the season ticket. I hope that we can continue to grow and to inspire, and will be here to celebrate our 80th birthday in 2009, when two commissioned works are in the pipeline together with a programme I am writing featuring literature and music!

For my "day job" I have seen the other side of the coin. Many of you will have had information from my agency. If anything, trying to find work for established world-class musicians in the present climate is even more difficult than running a music society with no funds, but even so it is with much regret that I am having to curtail my agency work drastically for health reasons. However, I am sure that GMS will continue to keep me out of mischief for a bit longer.

Christine Talbot-Cooper

Promoter's Profile: Music at Duffield

Music at Duffield began in 1975. Duffield is a village of about 5,000 people five miles north of Derby on the A6. The only venues of a suitable size in the village are the church and the secondary school.

As Concerts Organiser, I work with a small selection committee in deciding the concerts. For a few years we had a theme for each season. It had the advantage of focussing the mind, especially in choosing which of the many artists to book each year. However, it also caused a few problems when artists wanted to change what they had agreed to play and it did not really do anything to attract new members.

In my time we have increased our commitment to new music and educational work. Introducing new music was not easy and I have to thank Jennie McGregor-Smith from Bromsgrove who was a source of encouragement to me in the early days. It took three to four years to convince the committee that we should embrace new music. In the end it was only agreed to if it was completely separate from the main season and financially self-sufficient. For four years from 2000-2004 we put on three new music concerts each year in the Derby area. We received funding from the PRS Foundation, the RVW Trust and others committed to new music. In that time we had nine world premieres as well UK premieres and second performances of new works. We never paid to commission a new work, concentrating instead on inviting artists who knew composers who wanted their works performed. Sadly our audiences failed to grow and we decided to abandon the project. However, from 2005 we also agreed that each year in our main season we will include a new work, either a premiere or a work having its second performance.

For a number of years we put on a children's

concert each year. Initially these were well attended but then numbers declined and we moved into doing more workshops in the local primary schools as well as the secondary school where we hold our concerts. By linking the educational work to an evening recital we are able to attract a grant from our district council.

Audience development is also a challenge. When I took over we had seven concerts each year. We increased this to eight, with three concerts over a weekend (Friday evening, Saturday afternoon and evening). To celebrate our 25th anniversary and the end of the millennium we decided to have ten concerts in our 2000-2001 season. Surprisingly to us at the time this led to a significant reduction in members for the first time. This continued for four years when our membership fell from about 115 to just over 70, although interestingly we lost about 10 members each year and gained a similar number.

When a new concert hall at the school was available in 2005 we decided to reduce the number of concerts to six each season. The number of members increased again to nearly 100 and when we checked why it was clear that this was due to the reduced number of concerts rather than the new hall, which was comfortable but acoustically poor. The numbers were up to 120 last year. Interestingly in 1996-7 we had an average of 85 members at each concert, which fell to 57 in 2004-5 and rose to 94 in 2007-8. However, the attendance of non-members has fallen steadily from 71 in 1996-7 to 30 in 2007-8. It suggests that we need to concentrate on retaining members, rather than spending too much time and money on encouraging people to particular concerts.

Mike Alexander

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