

DULWICH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

8th February 2005

NEWS LETTER.

Dulwich Symphony Orchestra

Next Concert...

Our next concert is on the 19th March in St Barnabas Church, Calton Avenue, Dulwich Village.

The rehearsal is from 2.30 - 5.30pm. If you are helping set out chairs etc please remember to be at the church at 1.55pm.

The concert is at 7.45pm. Dress is black for ladies and dinner jackets for gentlemen.



Social

On Tuesday 22nd March there will be a chance for us all to meet at 7.30pm at the Fox on the Hill pub, Denmark Hill, SE5 - on the right side section at the rear in the non-smoking area. This will give us the chance to talk, get to know each other, have a drink and /or food as we like.

The pub has a large car park - not I that recommend drinking and driving - and is by the 40, 42, 68, 176, 185, 468 etc bus stops and Denmark Hill station is just down the road.

In the past our socials have given us the opportunity to let our hair down and relax after the rehearsals - and we don't talk about the concert for the whole evening!

Summer Concert Date!

Our summer concert date is now the 18th June, at St Luke's. That means rehearsals will start a week earlier on the 12th April

Inside this issue:

St. Christopher's	2
Review	3
Poll	3
Committee	4
Membership	4



St. Christopher's Hospice

The committee have decided to make St Christopher's Hospice our regular concert charity. Our summer "garden parties" at Philips's have always supported them and from now on all our concerts will have an interval collection on their behalf.

A Review of the last concert

I always look forward to the concerts given by the Dulwich Symphony Orchestra. I am neither a professional nor an expert but I enjoy music enough to recognise the very high standard that this orchestra has reached. In this concert, particularly, I noted a togetherness, allowing Julian's direction to bring this group of musicians and let them become an orchestra. (I have heard professional orchestras that do not achieve this.)

On Saturday 4th December I was almost late, arriving just in time to applaud Paula and Julian as they took their places. I had no time to look at the programme notes. What a wonderful surprise to be immediately transported to Cornwall. There really is no other coast like it, and Bax really captured the contrast of wild sea and magnificent scenery on a wild, but sunny day. The orchestra really caught the mood of this music, right from the first crashing waves. (Not easy to start on such a high point, which you would not usually find until later in the music as a finale.) I have nothing by praise for this performance - I did not want to come back down to St Barnabas.

The Sheherazade, by Ravel, did not I'm afraid, transport me to the magic of Arabian nights. In spite of Lesley Jane's beautiful voice I never quite got into these songs. However, the orchestra worked very well with her, never over dominant, and providing some delightful passages such as the flute theme in the second song.

What I love most about amateur orchestras (with professional standards) is the freshness that each performance has. It's a one off - the players have rehearsed over weeks, often after tiring days at work, and purely for the love of playing and performing a work to the highest standards. There is that something extra - enthusiasm? adrenalin? whatever - that gives edge to the performance. This was evident in the Elgar symphony. I certainly enjoyed all the contrasts, from military grandeur to the perplexities of a war general faced with the agonies of decision, to moments of calm for a great man. I had not heard this work before but it seemed to say as much about Elgar as about General Gordon. To make me feel like this the orchestra must have been on top form; I heard the composer speaking, rather than the orchestra playing. This time you were superb!

Concert review Continued

I certainly enjoyed all the contrasts, from military grandeur to the perplexities of a war general faced with the agonies of decision, to moments of calm for a great man. I had not heard this work before but it seemed to say as much about Elgar as about General Gordon. To make me feel like this the orchestra must have been on top form; I heard the composer speaking, rather than the orchestra playing. This time you were superb!

Norma Francis

If you have a friend in the audience who would like to write a review of our next concert then please speak to Mo.

Summer dress for men

We will be taking a poll later on in the term as to whether, in our summer concerts only, male members of the orchestra should wear long sleeved, black, open-necked shirts. Many of the major London orchestras do this for all their concerts.



Raffle

Our raffle is a handy source of income, but could raise more if everyone got involved regularly. Tickets are £1 and the prize is usually a bottle of wine, or something even more interesting. Winners are invited to run the raffle the following week - and if you really can't face this responsibility then ask someone else to take your place.

This doesn't mean you have to provide the prize out of your own pocket - that can come out of the raffle money. So this simple system not only helps the orchestra, but also provides light entertainment in the tea

Venue manager

For the concert on 19th March our venue manger will be Annabel Noton. That means Annabel will assume Frances' role as Chair of the orchestra for that day, enabling Frances to concentrate on playing the viola (for a change!). Annabel will then be joining us again as a member in the flutes in the summer.

That means we will need a new venue manager for the concert in June! Both Frances and Annabel have the job description for this voluntary position so if you know anyone who might be interested please ask.

Lost Property

A grey cardigan was found after our last concert in St Barnabas. It has a pink edging and large mother-of-pearl buttons. Frances has it.

Committee member...

No - these are *not* aliens fresh from another planet (is there a photographer in the orchestra?) but your committee members



Tim, Frances, Ian, Sam, Graham, Louise, Chris and Michael

Membership and recruitment—Ian Finn - Membership Secretary

One of our strengths compared with some other amateur orchestras is that we have a consistent and regular membership, which allows us to perform as a true ensemble rather than just a collection of players. This note is to explain where we are with membership so that we can maintain and develop this.

Members and subscriptions

Our constitution states that:

“Membership of the Society shall be open to any person interested in furthering the objects of the Society, and who has paid the annual subscription at the appropriate rate or rates as shall be determined by the Committee, all subscriptions being payable in advance”.

In plain English, this means that you are only a member of the orchestra once you have paid your subs. The bit about paying in advance just means that we should all try to pay at the beginning of term rather than the end. Remember that the Committee has agreed that the standard rate of £50 a term can be reduced or waived for those on a low income, so speak to me if this applies to you, as we don't want anybody to feel excluded for financial reasons.

Recruitment

We currently have fifty members, which is very healthy, but there will inevitably be losses over time, so we all need to keep an eye open for potential recruits. It is the nature of the orchestra that the number of places for wind and brass players is limited, whereas we can nearly always accommodate extra strings, so if you know somebody who might join us, your response will depend on what instrument they play. String players should simply be asked to come along to the next rehearsal and introduced to the appropriate Section Leader (and Julian, of course). Enquiries for wind and brass players *must* be directed to Sam Purser (flute), who keeps a waiting list for each instrument. If and when a vacancy arises, she will invite the next person on the list to come along to try out. (We currently have vacancies for a second trumpet and a tuba.)

Some concerts, such as next term's, will need additional wind players. They will be members for that term, and will normally be the people at the top of the waiting lists.

Extras and deputies

We usually have a few extra players for our concerts; these are either unusual instruments (harp, percussion, etc.) or professional string players brought in to strengthen the numbers. They are engaged by our Chair, Frances Barrett, in her capacity as fixer, following consultation with Julian.

Occasionally a wind player will be unable to get to a rehearsal and a deputy will be required. If you need to get a deputy, please make it clear to them that they are not being invited to join the orchestra; if they want to do so they must apply to Sam.

ARTICLES FOR OUR MAGAZINE

email your contribution, as an attachment, to Chris Burns

at

baxquartet@yahoo.co.uk

or by hand to Mo (violas)

The deadline is 3rd May 2005

Seen from the other side...

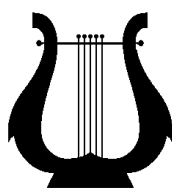
Having played with the orchestra for a number of years now, it was an interesting and enjoyable experience to find myself in the audience for the 22nd January concert held at St. Paul's, Herne Hill.

Arriving in time for our usual 7.45pm start, I was disappointed to find that the streets of SE24 were not heaving with audience. In fact, they were decidedly empty. However, on approaching the Church, I was greeted by the strains of Fingal's Cave and discovered that the proceedings had started at 7.30pm - what a relief that I wasn't actually supposed to be playing!

The church was packed and I was just about able to find a spare seat in a corner of the back row. Having gradually regained my composure after a rather untimely entrance, I settled down to enjoy the Egmont Overture, of which I felt the orchestra gave a very convincing performance, ending with the resounding and triumphant theme from the 'Victory Symphony'.

During the interval, I managed to find myself a seat a little closer to the front, which enabled me, in the second half, to benefit from studying Paula's bowing technique whilst listening to both soloist and orchestra playing Rachmaninov's Second Piano Concerto. I particularly enjoyed the lyrical exchanges between the piano and woodwind in the second movement and felt that the soloist, conductor and orchestra were justly rewarded with a standing ovation from members of the audience at the end. We, in turn, were treated to an encore from the pianist. Thank you all for a most enjoyable evening!

Jane Howard, Violin II



**DULWICH
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA**