



The Newsletter of the



Wind Orchestra

BAND NEWS

WELCOME!

We are pleased to have two new members joining our flute section and extend a warm welcome to Carole McCrindle and Sandra Lees. We hope they have an enjoyable time playing with the YWO.



Our Cheerful New Recruits!

GET WELL WISHES

We send get well wishes to clarinettist Noreen Thomson who is recovering from a bad fall. Noreen tripped on her way into a choral concert in Wellington Church, but such is her stoicism that she sat through the whole concert before being persuaded by friends to go to hospital. It was fortunate that she did as x-rays showed that she has a badly broken shoulder. We wish her a speedy recovery.



No, the YWO has not tripled in size since you last saw us! This is a picture of our Musical Director Michael Philip conducting the Kalamazoo Concert Band in Michigan in February. You can read the fascinating story of how this came about later in this newsletter.

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Congratulations

Congratulations to trombone player David Welsh who celebrated his 70th birthday in April. David marked the occasion by holding a big party for all his family and friends. We wish him Many Happy Returns. Several members of our brass section are also members of very successful brass bands and we have occasion to congratulate two of them on their success at the recent Scottish Brass Band Championships. Duncan Parkinson's band Kirkintilloch, came second in the Championship Section while Douglas Suckle's band Coalburn Silver Band came first in the third section. We wish them continuing success with their respective bands.

Congratulations to one of our readers, Norma Murray, who was the winner of our last competition. As Norma recently organized a very successful concert for us in Paisley, we think she deserves her win – even if it did mean her name was pulled out of a hat there being so many all correct entries for this competition! Thank you to everyone who took the trouble to enter.

AN INVITATION

Please come along to one or both of our future concerts.

Friday 5th June Summer Concert in Renfield St
Stephens Church Centre

Saturday 8th August Pollok Family Day, Pollok Park

A TRIBUTE

We were very sorry to hear the sad news of the death of Jean Lee in March. Jean was the wife of trumpeter Jimmy Lee one of our most loyal and longest serving members. Jean and Jimmy were a devoted couple who had been married for more than fifty years. We send our deepest sympathy to Jimmy and all his family.

Through our newsletter, we keep in touch with many of our former members and we are always pleased to hear news of them. At this time, we have occasion to congratulate two of them and by coincidence, they are both former members of the oboe section. First of all congratulations to Sylvia Wight on her success in her recent Grade 8 oboe

examination. She not only passed but passed with merit. Well done Sylvia!
Congratulations also to Michele Newall who recently celebrated her 50th birthday. Michele's husband Frank surprised her with a luxury stay in the Gleneagles Hotel complete with

champagne reception, six course meal in Andrew Fairlie's restaurant and a cookery demonstration by the chef followed by lunch. Sounds very posh! We wish Michele Many Happy Returns.

CURRY NIGHT



On the 27th March, we found ourselves without a rehearsal room, all available space being taken up the Glasgow Music Festival. It was decided that this was an ideal opportunity for a social evening instead and with that in mind 15 of us descended on the Koh i Noor Indian Restaurant at Charing Cross to enjoy a wonderful buffet. If you have never tried one of these buffet nights, it really is a wonderful gourmet experience. For a very reasonable price, you can enjoy as much as you can eat of starters, main courses and desserts. I think it's fair to say that some of our party certainly got their money's worth!

In a rather cavalier fashion, I chose for my main course a chicken curry which had the word HOT written on its label. This proved to be a bit of an understatement but fortunately my fellow diners were able to dissuade me from printing an extra word in front of HOT!

Altogether it was a lovely evening – a pleasant venue, attentive staff, wonderful food and of course good company. A big thank you to Glenda Johnston who organised the whole outing.

SPOTLIGHT ON:
THE BASSOON SECTION

Gillian Braithwaite started learning to play the bassoon in school at the age of 11. As a member of Jordanhill School orchestra and band, she enjoyed great success at the Glasgow Music Festival. She also plays the clavino and electronic organ.

Gillian feels that the musical highlight of her playing so far was the Children's Prom in the Kelvingrove Art Galleries in 2003 to help raise money for the refurbishment work.

When not playing music, Gillian is kept busy in her work as a clerical assistant for podiatry and physiotherapy for the NHS. Dary, she is also kept pretty busy getting her new home in order.

Jonathan Smithers had his first taste of music making when he joined his church choir at the age of 8. He started learning to play the piano four years later but didn't take up the bassoon until his mid 20s.

In a long and varied musical career, Jonathan has many musical highlights – singing in St Paul's Cathedral with a Royal School of Church Music Choir, leading the bassoon section in a performance of Berlioz' Grand Messe de Morts in Victoria Hall, Hanley, and taking part in a performance of Mahler Symphony No 1 in Greyfriars Church in Edinburgh, a performance that involved 2 orchestras, 4 brass bands and 3 choirs and was conducted by Gary Walker.

Jonathan is a keen sailor and says that the highlight of this hobby was sailing his boat from Stockholm back to his home on the Clyde via Norway. He also enjoys hill walking, gardening, reading and Mathematics (he has a PhD in applied mathematics.)

We're not sure how he manages to fit in his very demanding job as a chemical engineer.

He is married to Hilary who plays the cello and they have two sons, Jeremy and Ben both of whom work in London.



Jonathon gets in some practice before rehearsal.

Visit to Michigan - February 2009

It all began one morning at my brother's B&B in Inverness-shire. I was staying for a few nights and there was an American couple, Tom & Karen Voigts, who had booked in for a single night. We got chatting over breakfast and Tom said his hobby was playing tuba in a Concert Band. Not being one to pass up an opportunity, I suggested they might consider playing some of my music sometime.

We kept in touch and a year later I sent over the score and a recording of 'Five Burns Sketches'. The result was that it was programmed by the Kalamazoo Concert Band (KCB) for their Concert on 21st February this year. I had said that I would like to be present if possible. Such was the hospitality of the KCB that they invited me to conduct the piece myself and even paid my airfare to make sure I responded!

Next, in order to secure the co-operation of my employer, South Lanarkshire Council, an intensive schedule of school visits was drawn up. I visited a dozen contrasting schools in western Michigan and worked with their High School Bands in rehearsal as they prepared for imminent Festivals. I was most impressed with the whole band system in schools and have learned a huge amount which will impact the delivery of instrumental teaching and band rehearsal in South Lanarkshire.

The main strand of my visit, though, was rehearsing and performing 'Five Burns Sketches' with the KCB. My reaction after the first rehearsal was that it was like "taking a Rolls Royce for a test drive". The KCB has over 100 players - the brass section, for instance, has 11 trumpets, 10 French horns, 9 trombones, 4 euphoniums and 7 tubas. Despite these big numbers, the band 'lives' at a quieter dynamic than we do at the YWO - but when a crescendo is called for, there is a huge amount of power to call on.

There are similarities between the YWO and the KCB. Both are community Concert Bands, with players aged from teens to 80s. But there are obvious differences as well and these will be the focus of much debate by our committee in the months ahead! For instance, the KCB regularly performs in a Concert Hall roughly twice the

capacity of the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall - and fills it. Furthermore, the tickets are all FREE!



Michael makes a point at rehearsal.

The whole experience was one of the best weeks of my life and I'm certain the relationship with my hosts and with the KCB is going to last.

Michael Philip.



Michael with Dr. Thomas Evans, KBC Conductor.

DESSERT ISLAND DISCS

We have chosen a member of the clarinet section to banish to a desert island this time. David Hay describes his musical taste as a bizarre cross section! Let's see if we agree. Here is David's selection with some of his comments.

- 1) **La Vie en Rose - Edith Piaf** - I think this is a gorgeous song. The older, grainier and more redolent of the 1930s the recording, the better!
- 2) **The Very Thought of You - Ella Fitzgerald** - elegance.
- 3) **Over and Over - Hot Chip** - my dance music choice. Hot Chip would be categorised a 'new rave', which actually sounds very little like rave music at all; rather, the way I think of it is 'organic dance music' - unquestionably dance, but created and performed using (almost exclusively) live instruments and percussion as opposed to computers. This has great use of layered percussive lines and a vocal that nods at the repetitive nature of the medium. (*Er, yes - quite so David! We couldn't have put it better ourselves!*)
- 4) **The Lark Ascending - Vaughn Williams**. - This, for me, encapsulates wonderfully the pastoral feel, post-war angst, sorrow and optimism that the English school typifies.
- 5) **La Danse Russe - Act 3, Swan Lake - Tchaikovsky**.
- 6) **Clarinet Concerto No 1 in F Minor - Carl Maria von Weber**.
- 7) **Una Voce poco fa (The Barber of Seville - Maria Callas, 1957) - Rossini**.
- 8) **I Want to Disappear - Marilyn Manson**



David at a recent rehearsal.

Band Memories

Would you like to join the YMCA?"

That may seem a strange question to ask a 16 year old girl. However, I soon found out that I was being asked to join the YMCA Glasgow Wind Orchestra. So, a week before my 'O' Grade exams, I walked through the doors of YMCA Glasgow in Steel Street for the first time. Who would have thought that 25 years later I'd be asked to write this article, as the longest serving member of the band!

So, I thought I would take the opportunity to share with you some of my memories over these years. The band is 'famous' for its band tours and I'm a veteran of 6 trips over the years, also doing my fair share of trip organising.

My first trip was to Rome in 1984, where the piper gave a rendition of 'I Belong to Glasgow' standing in the Trevi Fountain losing his shoe in the process - a true Cinderella.

Then came the USA trip in 1988. On arriving at JFK at 3am, we were greeted by a small, rotund Italian New Yorker playing the bagpipes, wearing a kilt and a hideous yellow T-shirt. And yes, you've guessed, by the next day we too were modelling the same said T-shirts! I found mine recently and it was even worse than I'd remembered. Our host family was unforgettable, shipping in their Italian granny to cook for us for the week but as the dishwasher was broken, paper plates and plastic cutlery came to the rescue! New York was where 'Iain met Alison'. Well not strictly true, but it was where Iain and I went on our first date - to the cinema, accompanied by about 10 YWO chaperones!

A day off during the Nuremberg trip in 1994, saw us having lunch in a local restaurant but we couldn't quite get the waiter to understand the principles of vegetarianism, so the vegetable soup came with a large frankfurter. We couldn't stop laughing.

There was a second trip to the USA, visiting Massachusetts in 1998. I felt quite relieved when we touched down at Glasgow airport. As tour organiser, I'd got everyone home despite hospital visits, lost tickets and passports to name but a few incidents...

It rained continuously on our visit to the Black Forest in 2007 but the weather didn't dampen our spirits, 'you know what I mean' (this became the catch phrase for the tour)!

Over the years there have been some memorable concerts. The front row of elderly ladies at a Glasgow church doing their aeroplane impersonations during the 'Dam Busters March'; prisoners at Barlinnie prison whistling along to our debut performance of 'The Great Escape' and I mustn't forget our first trip to Germany, playing in a hospital car park, beside the bins, where the 'audience' were locked in the building and our playing could only be described as awful! There have also been some great days out to play at Pollok Park family day, where I think I've now earned the title of 'picnic queen'.



Alison and Iain on their wedding day.

Who would have thought that that question all those years ago would lead to me meeting my husband, making lifelong friends and the great enjoyment that playing music has given me over these years. I do hope there are many more years to come!

Alison Glen

COMPETITION

The theme of our competition is the United States of America, not as a sop to the Obamamania that is sweeping the world, but rather as a reference to our conductor's recent American adventure. We're back to song titles! (Yes, I know, I know but we haven't had them for a couple of years.)

The answer to all these clues is the title of a well known song. Numbers 1 to 10 include the name of an American state and numbers 11 to 20 include the name of an American town or city. To give you a bit of help, the appropriate letters are printed in dark print.

When you have worked them out, send your entry by post to: L. McMillan, 56, Lounsdale Drive, Paisley, PA2 9ED or by email to mcmillan2008@btinternet.com by 10th July.

1. TBHOD
2. CD
3. DITHOT
4. SHA
5. TTW
6. GOMM
7. THWS
8. CM
9. KW
10. MIV
11. NC
12. IGAGIK
13. IHIM
14. ILMHISF
15. TWL
16. DYKTWTSJ?
17. ITTWTAT?
18. WTNO
19. BTTIGTP
20. WIM

GOOD LUCK!

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