

Friends of DARLINGTON ORCHESTRA

Winter 2012 Newsletter

Hello and, as it's still January (so we can just about get away with it), Happy New Year from all of us at Darlington Orchestra!

Our Winter Concert

Our next concert is on **Saturday 28 January at 7.30pm** at Darlington Arts Centre. We know the dark nights and winter weather aren't very inspiring, but our packed programme certainly is!

We've got a lovely arrangement of Bach's richly harmonised 'Three Chorales' and, from the same arranger David Stone, the powerful and splendid 'Great Gate of Kiev' by Mussorgsky.

Then we'll be off to the West End with a showy selection of Gershwin melodies from 'Stop Flirting' and over to Broadway with music from 'Paint Your Wagon' including *They Call the Wind Maria* and *I'm on my Way*'

For something very different we'll have the composer of a piece of music called *Divertimento* with us to take the baton from David to conduct it too! See more on page 2...

Also featured is (what's now becoming a firm programme favourite)... a little bit of swing! We'll be tapping our toes to 'Take Five' and we hope you are too.

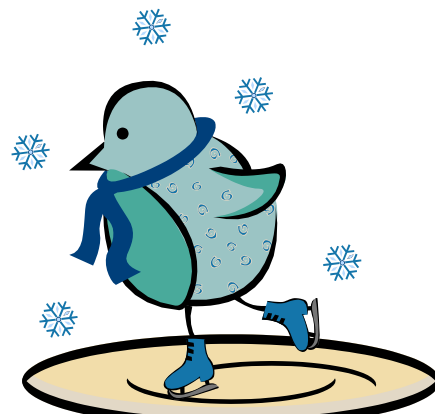
And our guests are . . .

At our concert on **28 January** we'll be welcoming Darlington Clarinet Ensemble to our 'guest spot'.

The Darlington Clarinet Ensemble, some 15 strong, hosts the full range of instruments from the E flat Piccolo Clarinet to the Contrabass and draws players from across the North East and Cumbria.

The clarinet has the biggest range of notes with a playing compass from the deepest bass, more than three octaves below middle C on the piano, up to the very high soprano three octaves above middle C

Their repertoire is a blend of transcriptions of existing works for other instrumentation and original pieces commissioned by this group and others. The music covers all tastes from early to modern, serious to light hearted.



At the concert they'll choose from the following pieces: 'Rikudim' by Jense; 'Mock Morris' from Grainger; 'Two Cinematographic Impressions' by James Rae; 'Festal Overture' from Fletcher; Gaspari's 'MC Wine Dance'; 'Song from a Secret Garden' by Lovland; JS Bach's 'Toccatà' and 'Fujiko' by Andy Scott.

The Darlington Clarinet Ensemble was started in 1980 as a group of five players and over the years additional players have joined the group. They have always rehearsed at the Darlington Arts Centre.



Darlington Orchestra's own Mike Frankton (pictured left) is one of the founder members of the group. After their performance with our Orchestra, you can next catch them in concert on 24 March at the Hearth, Horsley, Northumberland.

Find out more at www.darlingtonclarinets.co.uk

Box Office

Tickets for our concert on Sat 28 January are available on the night or in advance from Darlington Arts Centre's box office.

Tel **01325 486 555**

Tickets **£6 / £4**

Meet The Players . . .

This time around we've got a player 'with a difference'!

Many of you will have seen John Hawkes playing oboe with the orchestra, but at our concert on **28 January** you'll be seeing him on the conductor's podium too, when he'll be conducting one of his own compositions *Divertimento* (Movement 1).



Age 69

Lives Ponteland, near Newcastle upon Tyne.

Instrument Oboe.

John also plays oboe with the Tynedale Orchestra and the 'Cobweb' Orchestra.

What do you do in your 'day job'?

I took early retirement in 1997 but before that my career was in Physics. After attending Bradford Grammar School, I read Physics at Magdalen College Oxford, and remained at Oxford after graduation to work for a D.Phil. I was subsequently appointed as a Postgraduate Researcher at the University of Sheffield and then moved to Newcastle upon Tyne Polytechnic (later to become the University of Northumbria) to become a lecturer in Physics. When I retired I was made an Honorary Research Fellow.

So how did you get into composing?

A basic knowledge of musical notation was picked up whilst I was a member of a church choir, but it was not until a lunchtime concert given by the Halle orchestra in Bradford, when I was 14, that I heard an orchestra live for the first time. For some unknown reason this event triggered off a strong desire to write music, a desire I have been unable to shake off ever since! I had been given a recorder by my aunt at the age of 12 or so and this remained my only 'instrument' for some time until I taught myself to play first the flute and then later on the oboe.

Which composers do you admire? My initial musical 'god' was Beethoven, but a few years later I was bowled over by hearing Walton's First Symphony and from then on became interested in many other 20th century composers such as Stravinsky, Bartok and Tippett. Although initially self taught as a composer I did attend composition classes at COMA (Contemporary Music Making for Amateurs) summer school from 1994 to 2005 which were given by Michael Parsons, Diana Burrell, Daryl Runswick, Michael Finnissy, Stephen Montague and Deirdre Gribbin amongst others. More recently in December 2001, after two years part time study at the University of Newcastle, I was awarded the degree of MMus (composition). My composition tutors during this time were Agustin Fernandez and Deirdre Gribbin.

Which instruments do you enjoy composing for? My early association with the recorder playing fraternity has led to a significant proportion of my compositions involving this instrument. I am currently chairman of the Newcastle branch of the Society of Recorder Players (SRP) and am on the panel of visiting conductors for the SRP. I also founded the North East Recorder Orchestra in 2004, and am currently its musical director.

Tell us about *Divertimento* - the piece we'll be hearing at the Darlington Orchestra concert. 'Divertimento for Chamber Orchestra' was written in 1993 for the Tynedale Symphony Orchestra (as it was then called) who gave the premiere in November of that year. Since then it has received at least six other outings (although not all were complete performances). It was my first original orchestra piece (I had previously done an orchestra arrangement of a recorder piece) and, looking back, I should probably labelled it a symphony, but perhaps I was a little shy of doing so at the time! There are four movements altogether, although only the first is being performed by Darlington Orchestra. When I write a piece of music I almost always have a specific group of performers or a specific occasion in mind, which helps set basic parameters such as instrumentation, duration and difficulty and I try and write pieces which in some way embody a 'musical journey' rather than trying to be descriptive of some place or event.

Information about John's other compositions can be found at www.johnhawkes.co.uk



Bits of other things...

Do you shop online?

If so, you can help raise funds for the Orchestra at the same time by using our eStore. An eStore is an online shopping directory featuring hundreds of retailers including Debenhams, Sainsbury's, Marks & Spencer and more. Each time you shop with these retailers via our eStore, a commission is generated and given to the Orchestra. Visit www.spendandraise.com/DarlingtonOrchestra first, and then go via the store to the retailer that you wish to buy from. It doesn't cost you anything extra, and the number of companies linked to the store is large. All it means is an extra couple of clicks for you, the user.

Thank you very much

And finally, thanks to people who have helped us out with prize donations for recent Friends' draws, including mezzo soprano Janet Walke who donated tickets to one of her concerts and Helen Lillburn, leader of our Second Violin section, who baked some lovely homemade biscuits. Space is tight but hopefully we'll fit in a full list next time!

Cheerio for now!