

INTERNATIONAL CONCERTINA ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

Does your envelope bear the letter S ? If so, your annual subscription is due NOW and you should send your £4 to John Entract straight away.

EDITORIAL

First, I should like to thank Howard Rosenblum, on behalf of the entire membership of the ICA, for all the hard work he has put in during his long and distinguished reign as editor of this newsletter. Even though his name will no longer appear at the end of each letter, Howard will continue to play an important part in its production and distribution and I hope, too, that I shall have the pleasure of including many more of Howard's reports and articles.

This edition of the newsletter may not appear vastly different from its predecessors, but in the months ahead I hope to introduce some new features. One, an article about a contemporary concertina personality appears this month and there will be more to follow.

Another feature, which I think is essential in a newsletter serving a group of people whose common interest lies in making music, will be the inclusion of scores which you will be able to add to your own collections of written music. I have already received a number of pieces which will have to wait until the appropriate duplicating facilities become available next month but, in the meantime, if you have a favourite piece of music which you think other members would like to play, do please send me a copy so I can include it in a future issue.

Finally, I'd like to reassure our more isolated readers, whether you're living in a remote area or lacking sufficient mobility to keep in touch with other members, that I know just what it's like to be a lone concertina player. I hope you will regard this newsletter as your channel of communication with the rest of the concertina community and I look forward to reading, and printing, your queries, comments and criticisms.

- Colin M Turner.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARYSunday: 16th September

The West Country Concertina Players are holding a concertina meet at Freshford Village Hall, Bradford-on-Avon, from noon to six pm. Players will have the opportunity to work in groups, and refreshments will be available.

Saturday 29th September

The ICA London meeting will be held at the Portlands Hotel, 383 Euston Road, from noon onwards.

Although the Portlands has a Euston Road address, it is about as close to Great Portland Street tube station as it is possible for a pub to be. For drivers, parking is just possible in the vicinity (try Clipstone Mews) and I believe there is a National Car lark in Carburton Street, behind the Portlands.

Meals and bar snacks are available at the bar, which is on the ground floor. The meeting will be in the basement and to find your way to it you will need to use the street door which you will find to the left of the bar entrance. Davy lamps are recommended.

Saturday 10th November

Taunton and Somerset Music Festival.

This is one of the foremost artistic events in the South West and, thanks to the efforts of the West Country Concertina Players, the newly introduced Concertina classes offer a golden opportunity to demonstrate the concertina's unique qualities to a knowledgeable audience.

Prizes already promised include a Wheatstone Cup from South West Telecom, and another from Marcus Music of Newport, Gwent.

The six Concertina Classes are:

- No 68 Elementary Own choice of music, not exceeding four minutes.
Anglo, English or Duet.
- No 69 Intermediate Folk
Three short pieces. No more than four minutes total.
Own choice. Any system of concertina.
- No 70 Advanced Folk - as for Intermediate Folk
- No 71 Advanced Classical
Own Choice. No more than five minutes. Any system.
- No 72 Two Concertinas
Own choice. No more than four minutes. Any system.
- No 73 Three or more Concertinas
Own choice. No more than four minutes. Any systems.

A fee of £1 must be paid for the solo classes, and £1.30 and £1.50 for nos. 72 and 73.

A syllabus and entry forms can be obtained from Ceillian Greig Music, Kingston Rd., Taunton, Somerset. Price 40p plus postage.

I believe that the WCCP treasurer, Mrs Violet Fordham, is prepared to submit entries on behalf of members. She will need your entry fee, name, address, phone number, the number of the class you are entering, the number of performers in a group entry, title of piece(s) and duration.

Her address is:- Tacker's Cottage, Horn Street, Nunney, FROME, Somerset BA11 4NP

Sunday 11th November

Concertina Meeting at Halsway Manor.

Halsway Manor is at Crowcombe, just off the Taunton-Minehead road. There will be plenty of playing from 10am to 4pm with refreshments available at the bar.

If you have travelled to the area for the festival on the previous day, why not spend the Saturday night at Halsway. Bed and Breakfast can be booked in advance for £10.

Saturday 24th November

Dorset Day of Folk - organised by the English Folk Dance and Song Society.

This will be at St Mary's School, Puddletown, where Alistair Anderson will be holding a workshop in the morning.

If there are any concertina events taking place in your area, please send me the dates as soon as you know them. Overseas readers, this means you, too.

30th INTERNATIONAL FOLKLORE FESTIVAL, SIDMOUTH
HOW LADY FLORENCE MET JIMMY ALLAN
 by Peter and Jenny Cox

From Sunday to Friday a congregation of concertina players collected at Sidmouth Festival every morning - altogether some ten hours of concerted playing and company. Sappy, interesting, useful sessions.

On Sunday, Brian Hayden talked to some thirty people about getting the right chords out of a concertina then played some Uilleann pipe tunes on his unique box. Polly Clapp played her Jeffries, duetting with Ivan North. Ethel Hayes and Vi Fordham passed out the West Country Concertina Players' music folders, which were so very useful all week.

Monday saw Vi in charge and Polly, the Duet Princess, playing her McCann. Andrew Blakeney-Edwards dropped in to dazzle everyone with Maple Leaf Rag on his Anglo.

By Tuesday, the group had split. Roy Tomkins took the beginners off to the Blaydon Races to put their money on Jimmy Allan, Nancy Dawson and the Rakes of Mallow. It was a long journey, but they got there in the end. Colin and Brian Bibby took charge of concerted playing from the folders and this was the pattern for the rest of the week.

It was grand to play together and feel an improvement begin to creep in. Dave, Jo, Mary, Charlotte, Jenny, Peter, Pete, Sheila, Pete, Ken, Ian, Morfydd, Graham, Alan, Brian, Mark, Pippa, Tom, Terry, Keith, Mick and Martin worked splendidly together, assisted by Colin's musical sense and Brian's Bass Edeophone. At eleven thirty-two on Friday, outside the Marine Bars in the sunshine, our umpteenth rendition of "All in a Garden Green" produced a genuine round of applause!

The only sad note was that Bob Hayes, who had set up these informal sessions at Sidmouth, couldn't be with us because of illness. We were glad to see Ethel a couple of times: "Get well soon, Bob. We need you," as Polly put in the Festival newspaper.

Many thanks to everyone for coming, helping and joining in. It was good publicity for the ICA and its WCCP sub-group, creating interest and bringing new

The beginners' group with Roy made tremendous progress during the week. With four tunes mastered in as many days, there will be no stopping them.

On Friday evening, Brian Bibby had an idea. "Next year, our concertina band could take Lady Florence to the torchlight procession." How about it, everyone?

For those of you who live overseas or are not involved in folk activities, I should explain that Sidmouth folk festival is an event organised by the English Folk Dance and Song Society in which a small seaside town is taken over in order to provide more than 300 displays, dances, concerts and workshops. Although there were concertina workshops as long ago as 1969 (run by Alistair Anderson) the past two years' sessions have been unofficial events initiated by the West Country Players.

(CMT)

PHIL INGLIS - DEALER AND ENTHUSIAST

Oundle, in Northants, is a small market town on the A605, about eight miles from Peterborough. It's a pleasant little place, memorable for the rich warmth of its stone buildings, its public school, and the two sets of traffic lights placed so aggravatingly at either end of the town.

If you go there by car and park just off the market square you can be excused for thinking that all Oundle's commercial activities are confined to a small central area. If your curious, though, you might take a stroll along West street, in the direction of Corby, and just as you think you have left the shops behind you'll notice a rather stark, old-fashioned looking shop front facing the Ship Hotel on the opposite side of the road.

Above the tall plate glass window are the words "Oundle Music Shop". Not much to remark about. But you're no ordinary customer; your knowledgeable eye has already spotted a curious rectangular instrument in the window - a flutina!

At first glance the inside of the shop is also unremarkable. Although the tongue-and-groove wall panelling makes no concessions to modernity, the displays of records and cassettes, mostly classical, are what you would expect in any well-stocked music shop. It's the showcase full of concertinas which makes Oundle Music so different from any other music shop. Ranging from a 20 keyed Anglo to a top quality Wheatstone Aeola, these concertinas and the many others which have passed through Phil Inglis' hands are the principal reason for the shop's existence.

Phil Inglis (pronounce it to rhyme with 'singles') the man who started the shop about three years ago, first discovered the world of concertinas in about 1976. At the time Phil's main interest was in melodeons but it was while he was visiting Stamford Music Shop that he was first shown a Duct concertina and became fascinated by what he describes as the synthesis of "art, science and engineering" which the instrument embodied.

Besides learning to play the Duet (he is very modest about his ability and claims that his wife, Emily, had to take up the English in self-defence) Phil began to buy and sell concertinas, his principal outlets being Stamford Music Shop and the stalls which he and Emily set up at local events.

After some five years Phil was able to open his present shop in Oundle. A shop devoted entirely to concertinas would be an unrealistic prospect, so Phil decided to run his business as a conventional music retailer's, offering the usual range of records, instruments, sheet music and accessories but with concertinas as its unique speciality.

Since then, his turnover of second-hand concertinas has doubled and Phil not only deals with personal callers but has also established a postal service for customers in the States as well as allover Britain.

Talk to Phil about his stock of concertinas and you will find him as knowledgeable about their physical condition as he is enthusiastic about their music-making potential. Although a number of his instruments can be described as "basic" - a £50 Anglo, for instance - he is careful to avoid stocking anything which cannot be described as being in "good working order". As well as the ubiquitous Lachenals and Wheatstones I noticed that Phil's instruments included a couple by George Case, a Jones, a Chidley and an unidentified miniature.

At the top end of the range you will find the sort of instrument which Phil admires most; the seventy year old Wheatstones whose quality convinces him that they were the product of a team of craftsmen whose skills can be copied but never again reproduced in such a high degree of perfection.

The majority of his customers are from the folk world, wanting instruments to play for the Morris, for folk dance bands and for song accompaniment but Phil believes that a growing number of enquiries are coming from players who are aware of the concertina's origins in "serious" music and who wish to explore the instrument's potential for playing the sort of music with which it was associated in its early days.

Phil's comprehensive range of written music housed and displayed in a separate room at the back of the shop is not aimed specifically at concertina players but contains much, including a useful folk music section, which can be played on, or adapted for, the concertina. Of more immediate use to beginners are the concertina tutors; four each for the English and Anglo, one for the Crane Duet.

The supply of concertina spares is another of Phil's services. Don't look to him for major repairs - he will prefer to put you in touch with one of the established professional repairers - but if you're in need of springs, pads, straps and so on he has a useful stock of parts to draw on, some new - such as bellows papers - some taken from dismantled instruments.

I came away from Oundle Music with the impression that Phil had chosen what most of us would consider a precarious way of making a living. After all, concertina players are very much a musical minority, few of us can afford to buy more than one quality instrument in our lifetime, the supply of concertinas is finite, and so on. Phil's business is no flash in the pan, though, and I felt that Phil had tackled the problems of catering for a minority interest in a realistic way. Phil has realised that he needs to do more than just search out and sell the instruments themselves, hence the shop and its unusually appropriate selection of music, his informative fact sheet and monthly catalogue as well as his far-reaching postal service.

If you make that trip to Oundle Music, and you're genuinely interested in concertinas, you needn't expect to be met by a high-powered salesman determined to sell you an instrument. Instead, you'll find a knowledgeable enthusiast who's prepared to spend more than a little time discussing your requirements and offering you an expert's advice.

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(Any enquiries should be sent to Phil Inglis at
Oundle Music, 13 West St., Oundle, Peterborough
PE8 4EJ Phone 0832 73669)

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ICA MEETING - PORTLANDS HOTEL 21st JULY

John Hutcherson was the mainstay of the event, providing scores for the concerted playing which included Perry's 'The Curtsey', the Minuet and Trio from Haydn's 'Surprise' symphony, Mendelssohn's 'On Wings of Song', several pieces arranged by Woodhouse, some Swedish folk dances and a selection of waltzes by Schubert.

John's solos included 'The Stars and Stripes' by Sousa and 'Just a little Love, a little Kiss'. His playing of 'The Bells of St. Mary's', in memory of Harry Hatton was supported by Mr. Jevons, Eileen Jones and Douglas Rogers, among others.

Regular soloists included Mr. Jevons with the Valse from 'Coppelia' by Delibes, Malcolm Barr-Hamilton with Morris tunes and a couple of dance tunes from Vic Gammon's 'Sussex Tune Book', Douglas Rogers, John Entract, who played 'The Skater's Waltz' by Waldteufel and 'La Vie en Rose', Howard Rosenblum - who showed that even Beatles numbers are at home on the concertina, and Pat Robson with his weighty German instrument.

Folk tunes figured largely in the playing of Martin Williams, Steve Green, John Royds, Marian Jones and Mark Swingler, while June Rosenblum gave very confident performances of a selection of Scottish airs

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ADDRESS LIST

I should like to distribute an up to date MEMBERSHIP LIST so that you can get in touch with other members in your area. With luck, it should be in the post by about Christmas. If you DO NOT want your name and address to be included, please let me know as soon as possible, otherwise I shall assume that you have no objections.

LATE NEWS

THE SEPTEMBER MEETING WILL NOT BE AT THE PORTLANDS HOTEL as stated on page 2.
 The new venue is TEE BLOOMSBURY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION HALL, BLOOMSBURY WAY.
 Date:- Saturday 29th September. Times:- 12 to 6 pm.

Please ignore the directions on page 2. Instead, go to ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH in Bloomsbury Way, which is at the Eastern end of New Oxford Street. Take the passage at the LEFT of St George's Church. The hall is at the far end.

Nearest tube:- HOLBORN

Nearest pubs:- THE BLOOMSBURY TAVERN, New Oxford St.

THE PLOUGH, Museum St.

THE FALKLANDS ARMS, (Watney's!) Bloomsbury Way.

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ODDS AND ENDS

Will the member(s) who borrowed four copies of the Australian CONCERTINA MAGAZINE during the meeting at the Portlands Hotel on 21st July please return them to Malcolm Barr-Hamilton at the earliest opportunity.

The ICA has taken out a subscription to the CONCERTINA MAGAZINE and copies will be available for you to borrow on request to the secretary.

If you would like to buy your own copies of this very informative and well--researched magazine, write to :-

Richard Evans,
 Lot 5, Soundham Rd
 BELL
 NSW 2785
 Australia.

Pippa Sandford, of 9 Mardle Rd., Leighton Buzzard, Beds., would like the opportunity to play any 36 (or more) key Anglo by Jones, Jeffries, Crabb or Colin Dipper. She is having a new box made by Colin Dipper and would like to find the best spacing for the buttons as she is not happy with the layout of her present Wheatstone.

Pippa is also involved in pub sessions with other concertina players and folk musicians in the Leighton area. They play Northumbrian and Irish music and would welcome new faces. Ring 0525 375794 if you're interested.

COPYRIGHT Are there any members with a legal background who can advise me about the intricacies of the copyright laws in this and other countries where the newsletter is received? CMT

STOLEN CONCERTINA Lachenal 56 key, ebony ends, green bellows and thumbs-traps, Salvation Army Musical Supplies label. Any information to Mark Austin of 163, Dale St., Chatham, Kent.

EAST ANGLIAN concertina players, where are you? I last heard of an East Anglian gathering (at Diss?) about three years ago. If you're still holding meetings and would like them publicised, please contact me. CMT

OCTOBER NEWS LETTER Please send your news, comments, queries, articles, etc to Colin M Turner, 309 Uggmere Court Rd., Ramsey Heights, HUNTINGDON, Cambs PE17 1RJ
 I shall be especially pleased to receive any MUSIC which you would like to see included in future newsletters.