

INTERNATIONAL CONCERTINA ASSOCIATION

Membership Secretary
Martin Williams
46-Alkham Road
London N16 7AA
01 806 5893
01-737-7987

President
Rev Kenneth Loveless
VRD FSA FSA Scot Hon RNR

Events Secretary
Marian Janes
15 Crescent Road
London N8 SAL
01 348 5553

Treasurer
John Entract
16 Mandeville Rd
Saffron Walden
Essex

Editor
Colin Turner
309 Uggmere Court Rd
Ramsey Heights
Huntingdon
Cambs PE17 1RJ

No 329

NEWSLETTER

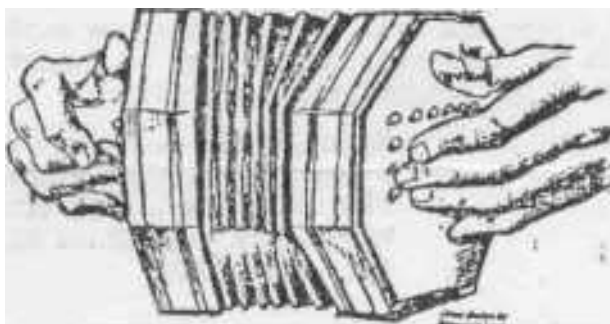
July 1985

CONCERTINA

MINI-TUNES

Edited and Arranged

by
FRANK BUTLER



YOUR FREE COPY of Mini-Tunes will be mailed, to you in September in lieu of the usual newsletter. In the meantime, there will be no August issue so I'm expecting a bumper crop of letters and articles for inclusion in the October issue. The deadline for contributions is Monday 9th September.

Enjoy the break - whether it's Summer or Winter depends on your chosen hemisphere!

Back soon,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Colin". The signature is written in dark ink on a light background.

YOUR LETTERS

Elusive profits

Having just caught up with the May edition of your news - I haven't had enough time yet to look at the new one - it was nice to see letters from our fellow Concertina makers.

In common with Neville Crabb, we do feel a bit neglected by the ICA. It may be thought that we are acting the role of chief parasites to the Concertina enthusiast but, to lay the rumour before it spreads, NO, we didn't buy a new works bicycle with the profits last year.

How do you make a cheap Concertina? Well, there are only three workshops, to my knowledge, ours being one, that are capable of making Concertinas and their prices are, you may be assured, already as cheap as can be.

Making a true Concertina involves hours of painstaking and precise fitting work and, without this work, you have not got a Concertina.

I get frequent letters asking where the parts can be obtained for the manufacture of these instruments, and disbelief when we reveal that not only do we make the special parts ourselves but also all the bolts and screws and press tools and jigs. When other firms and suppliers are involved, the quality drops.

Before leaving London for the lure of the country I was, for some years, an industrial designer and design engineer and have plenty of ideas as to how you would go about making cheaper reed instruments. This would, I'm afraid, involve quantities of 50,000 to 10,000 units per annum and, clearly, this sort of project would be in the realms of cloud-cuckoo land. We wish Pat Robson all the best in his project. He will, I'm sure, as he seems a determined sort of person, produce an interesting instrument. It won't be a Concertina, though.

If you do want to make Concertinas, a government grant will not help you. You will have to be verging on madness if you think to make a living out of it. The main thing is that we have made many good friends while we have been making Concertinas - worth all the elusive profit.

Best wishes to Neville and to Steve and the certainty that with three makers to choose from the quality and price will always be the best for the enthusiast.

Now for a commercial. Last year we agreed to act as agents for the American 'CONCERTINIA AND SQUEEZBOX' magazine and can announce that we have now got all the back numbers plus the current issue - all excepting number one which, I think, was only made in a quantity of ten. 1985 issues will include information on reed-organs, Virginia folk-melodeon, free-reed physics, review of British dealers, review of Gremlin Saxon Concertinas, and new free-reed makers in Brazil. What more could you ask for? We have imported them and, without making anything on the deal at all, can supply them to ICA readers at £1.75 each, including postage. There are seven different issues in stock at the moment.

We also continue to stock tutors and will be getting a new anglo tutor soon. More details about this as soon as it is finalised. Sorry that we cannot get to your meetings at the moment but at least we paid our subscription - didn't we?

Colin Dipper
C & R Dipper, Concertina Makers
West End House, High Street, Heytesbury,
Warminster, Wiltshire BA12 0EA
Tel: 0985 40516

An open market

I admire Steve Dickinson's enterprise in making new instruments with the Hayden keyboard while retaining most of the traditional features from a century ago. Even Rolls Royce and Daimler Benz can't do this with their motor-cars. I would also agree with him that £500 is a very reasonable price to pay for such craftsmanship.

However, it is not the instrument per se that is the end product, but the music it produces. One must not lose sight of this, nor must one forget that it was Uhlig, not Wheatstone, who coined the name 'Concertina' for this type of the genus 'Handharmonika' that plays on 'blow or suck', which differentiates it from a Regal or a lap-organ.

Uhlig had no railway telegraph to divert his attention from his masterminding development of his instrument into what is basically that used by 90% of the Polka bands in the USA today. These instruments, as well as Bandoneons, were not made by the big accordion factories, who saw them as a threat to their melodeons, but by small concerns.

The accordion factories, no doubt, put out the cheap and nasty Anglo type boxes to

YOUR LETTERS

continued...

make money, to divert attention from the Chemnitzer, and. to drive people away from the Concertina and back to accordions. They probably still do it. Why, after all, should they cut their own throats? The same goes for Italian reeds; why should they supply a rival tina with vital parts? And why should they alter their voicing to suit the higher air pressure of a smaller concertina when they are all set up for accordions? There is nothing wrong with the method of manufacture but some form of wave-form analyser is needed when grinding the tongues, I think, to steer clear of the inharmonic overtones that are a feature of the free reed.

Given a reliable supply of good reeds and bellows corners, there should be no problems in caking square Concertinas for the USA or Bandoneons for South America - or melodeons for anywhere else. The market is wide open since the demise of the Arnold bandoneon and Concertina works.

The market is there for a British manufacturer if he'd like it and could give good value and quality. Incidentally, the 3 by 5-fold bellows section of a normal Bandoneon with two end, and two centre, frames contain about 340 separate pieces, while a similar breakdown of, say, an 8-fold octagonal bellows comes out at around 420 bits.

There was nothing shoddy about the workmanship of an Arnold Concertina or Bandoneon. The South American bands are still using Arnold Bandoneons built about fifty years ago and these are given the same status as any orchestral instrument. They have to be good to withstand being played for dancing, continuously all evening, 360 days a year. They didn't only play tangos. Most players would certainly have at least two instruments in case of breakdown - but this is only normal for professionals.

The square form of Concertina is what Uhlig intended it to be - .a good substitute for the melodeon that retains some of the melodeon's advantages while overcoming its limitations. The English form is more of a solo job or substitute violin, but I have a feeling that it could handle the usual tango 'variations' for 1st Bandoneon in the final reprises pretty well. If you vent to try, I have some music. I can't do them - you need to learn young.

Pat Robson
Meadowlands, Crookham Village, Aldershot.

Priceless knowledge

Just a few random thoughts inspired by the last newsletter. Re. older ICA members: surely funds could stretch to free, or much reduced, membership for those over 65? The older players represent a priceless fund of knowledge and experience, whose value should be acknowledged by all Concertina players.

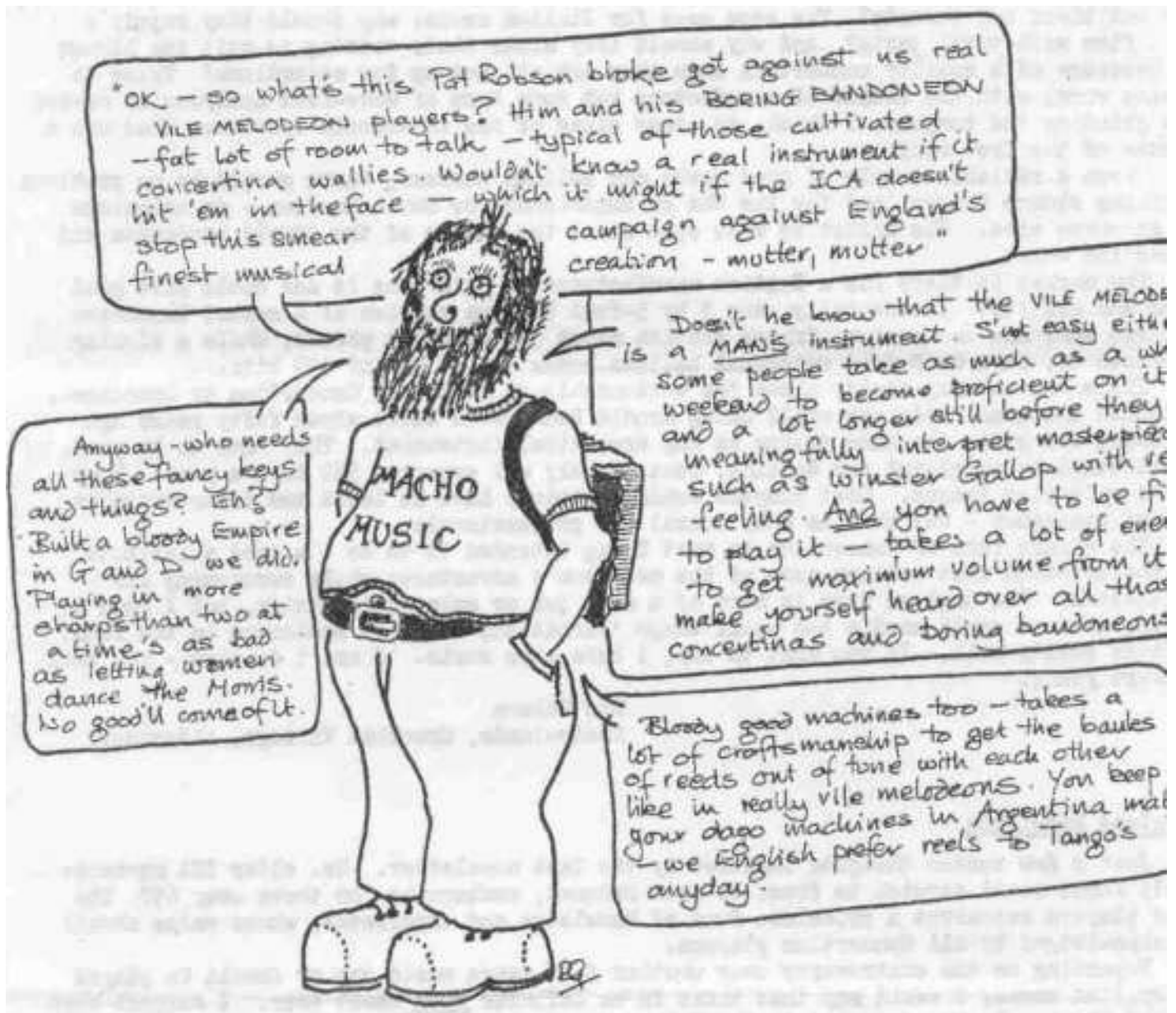
Expanding on the controversy over whether folk dance music can or should be played off written music, I would say that there is no definite rule about this. I suspect that many of the people who competed in the folk dance section at the Festival probably play without music in other circumstances and had the music as a confidence-booster when playing in a stressful situation. I used music when recently recording pieces I have been performing from memory for years, for the same reason. Written music does inhibit improvisation, and the ability to play with or without music can, and should, be learnt by those who can do only one or the other.

I noticed the leaflet advertising the New Mexborough Quartet's LP. Is this service - advertising and enclosing order forms - available to anyone, and what is the charge? Proper advertising space in the Newsletter might be yet another source of revenue for our hard-pressed Treasurer.

Finally, I'm glad Steve Turner pointed out the gaffe in your review of his record. I've just recorded a Concertina album with no multi-tracking and I will personally strangle and eat any reviewer who dares to suggest that I did!

Dave Townsend
36 Minster Rd, Oxford OX4 1LY

...New records, books, etc, will be mentioned in the newsletter if you provide me with details. A handout, prepared and supplied by the advertiser, like last month's, can be distributed for the cost of an extra subscription - £4. I have no plans at present for laying out and duplicating an advertising page. .. Ed.



STOP PRESS...Sat 7th Sept. _ NATIONAL FOLK MUSIC FAIR, Stockport College, Cheshire.
 Meet and work with John Kirkpatrick, Alistair Anderson and other folk musicians. Concert and Ceilidh in evening.
 SAE for details to Mrs M Chadband, 62 Ridge Crescent, Hawk Green, Marple, Stockport SK6 7JA Tel 061 427 4430

CONCERTINA PLAYERS will be welcome at the Autumn Accordion Festival at Warner Holidays, Seaton, Devon, Oct 18th - 20th. £38.50 inc.
 SAE for details to Malcolm Gee, 146 Birmingham Rd, Kidderminster, Worcs, DY10 2SL
 Malcolm Gee is keen to include a concertina feature in the weekend's activities. Let him know if you'd like to take part.
 BOOKING: Warner Holidays, Seaton, Devon
 Tel 0297 21816

YOUR LETTERS

Showing the flag

You asked if any of us played to a wider audience to publicize the Concertina. I was playing for the Watford Clog Morris last Saturday in Watford, disgracefully with music stand as I have only been in the folk scene since September and haven't got the music yet by heart. They are so short of players that they assured me they would rather have me with music than not at all! They have bought me a new stand!

At Christmas I played for a women's church group for carol singing with a friend who is a celloist. Douglas Rogers told me that music was written for cello and Concertina.

I was also asked recently to go to a Night-school French class and accompany French songs and to play background music when people were arriving for a Soiree Francaise at Hatch End College. Would that it had been Jean Megly and not me but I did my level best with 'Sour les Toits de Paris', 'La Marseillaise', 'Ma Norrnan die', songs from 'Irma la Douce', etc.

Apparently the Mayfair Concertina was cheaper because of imported Italian accordion reeds, which is why it is popular to give 'ambiance' in French circles.

Doreen Hunt
8a Brookdene Drive, Northwood, Middlesex

...The Mayfair was a budget-priced English model produced by Wheatstones in the 1950s. Ed

An historical note

Doreen Hunt, recently announced as a new member of the ICA protests that she is a rejoined member. So we did a bit of research and found that she joined the ICA in 1959 and immediately became its first 'Hon Librarian'. She entered the Beginner's Class in the Festival of 1960 and the Intermediate Class in that of 1962. She then got much engaged on school affairs, in one of which she featured playing a piano duet, and as the report included an apology for absence it must have been about that time we lost the pleasure of her company.

There used to be a saying among the troops in the First World War; 'It serves you right, you shouldn't have joined.' So we say to Doreen, 'It serves you right, you shouldn't have left,' and we hope she will never do it again.

From our own correspondent

Sleeping Treasures

Thanks for the Newsletter. It's always a delight to read it. Also many thanks for the warm and friendly welcome at the ICA Festival - especially to Tom Jukes with whom I had the honour to play a duet.

Also, I was enthusiastic in the playing of Tom Prince. Would it be possible to publish some music of him and the other senior members of the ICA? I think there must be a lot of sleeping treasures which would be worth an ICA edition. By the way, I agree with Jean Megly on the idea of collecting tape recordings.

Georg Möllers
Berbomstiege 70, 4440 RHEINE, W Germany.

WEST COUNTRY CONCERTINA PLAYERS
Players' Day

GLASTONBURY TOR gleaming silver in the bright spring sunshine guided players from a wide area to Butleigh Court on May 19th where the WCCP Players' Day and AGM was to be held, thanks to the generous hospitality of BOB and HILDA SENIOR.

Twenty four players turned up and the music was again in the capable hands of Tom Jukes, our Musical Director. Tunes were played from the very varied selection in the WCCP folders, we listened to special items played by members, tried each others' boxes and talked 'concertina' while, out of the corner of our eyes, we glimpsed the cricket match in progress on the lawn outside the huge gothic window of this great hall.

A very pleasant item during the AGM held during the afternoon, was a presentation of crystal glasses made to BOB and ETHEL HAYES. It was Bob's determination to seek out other players in the West that led first to a meeting in Dorchester and subsequently to the founding of the WCCP.

For four years - three as Secretary - Bob has made contacts, arranged venues and looked after players' interests, and Ethel has given tremendous support by organising and catering for food on playins days and in handling the arrangements for the Halsway weekends.

Bob has now retired as Secretary and this proved to be a splendid opportunity for members to show their appreciation and thanks for all the hard work of these two grand, people.

Jenny Cox has now taken up the job of Secretary. To practise and play in such a convivial atmosphere and in such a beautiful venue made this a most memorable day.

Gladys Thorp

* * * * *

MEGAGROUP SENSATION



In the depths of Islip Mill, in the fair village of that name, lurks a large kitchen from which groans and wheezes have emanated these last few weeks as the Kitchen Concertina Band have huddled round the Aga attempting to start and finish tunes together - whatever happens in between. Struggling against those well-known difficulties of randomly variable metronome and the propensity of Concertina buttons to move before you press them, these musical wizards emerged from the gloom on the evening of June 17th to expose their undoubted skills to an expectant public.

The Mill at Islip possesses a large, barn-like room used intermittently for amateur dramatics and musical recitals.

The KCB was booked at one of these events as the 'light relief' between the more traditional offerings of the local amateur symphony orchestra and various string and wind ensembles.

The performance was, by request, short, consisting of a selection of Prank Butler's arrangements of Victorian Ballads; 'White Wings', 'Old Rustic Bridge', and 'In the Gloaming'. The succeeding interval drew appreciative comments from the listeners and numerous intelligent questions about the 'unusual' instruments - all encouraging enough to send the KCB back to the kitchen to cook up some more courses for their repertoire.

Who, you are asking, are these paragons of Concertina virtuosity? In no particular order they are Phil Inglis and Emily Inglis - owners of Islip Hill - Richard and Jean Gregson, and Colin Turner. Colin, Richard, and Emily play English Concertinas and Phil and Jean perform wonders on McCann Duets.

Richard Gregson

* * * * *

SWINGING IT!

At the 1955 Festival, Arthur Clements was criticised for swinging his Concertina in order to produce that very distinctive Doppler effect. At this year's Festival, the adjudicator, Ivor Beynon, pointed out that this method of producing a ringing tone was one advantage which Concertina players have over accordionists. At his recent Anglo workshop, Alan Davis demonstrated, hilariously, what happens when this technique is used to excess. Your views, please.....Ed.

ALF EDWARDS ~ MUSICIAN and FRIEND

Frank Butler writes.....

Not many of the present ICA generation will have met Alf Edwards. His likeness on the cover of his Tutor for the English Concertina is a good one of him in about 1955.

I have only hearsay to guide me when I say that he came from circus forebears and that 'both he and his wife,' Jeannie, were of Scottish descent. He never spoke of his musical training but his ability as a performer was backed by sound musicianship.

Although with a world-wide reputation as a Concertina player - most deservedly so - writing music and playing the trombone probably provided the backbone of his living. Around the New Year he was much in demand in London hotels to play bagpipes, a distinguished figure in the kilt. He possessed a quartette set of ocarinas, of Victorian origin. They were beautifully made of polished wood, in a splendid velvet-lined, case. He was a virtuoso on that now little-known instrument and he recorded the sound for the BBC sound archives.

At one time he had his own regular spot on the radio; fifteen minutes of classical Concertina playing, including compositions written by him for ICA Festivals. At that time a film or television performance including Concertina playing was almost sure to be that of Alf Edwards, often playing a part as well as a Concertina. That it could be in a role disparaging to his instrument was a great grief to him.

As a founder member of the ICA, a committee man and Musical Director, he formed the London Concertina Orchestra, which settled down into the much smaller band which became known as The Kensington Group. Professional engagements intervened and Alf played with it intermittently, but remained its patron and welcome guest artist.

He also taught privately, a kindly and helpful tutor of whom some will have happy memories.

The loss of his wife, a charming woman and a great support to him, was a sad blow and the slow decline of his health followed, leading by the early 1970s to his withdrawal from musical circles. He suffered from Parkinson's disease, that most insidious infliction, for more than fifteen years.

His last appearance was at an ICA Festival when, already greatly incapacitated, he was prevailed upon to present the prizes. It was a sad spectacle, for we all loved Alf.

Tom Jukes writes...

I think Alf Edwards was the last of his line. One brother, presumably dead, lived in South Africa. His only remaining aunt died about three years ago.

I gathered from the Sister at the Worthing nursing-home that there was only his bagpipes to dispose of, and she did not know who had taken them. Alf, a founding member of the ICA, had been unable to engage in its activities since the early 1970s and there is only the wealth of his music left for members to share.

He was a generous man with everything, including his time. He came with the Kensington Group to fund raising events for Scouts, Boys Brigades, the blind and other causes. He played with us, gave a solo and, for good measure, an ocarina solo - usually his own composition.

The BBC came to record us playing a Handel Concerto Grosso. The crew came to the Crown and Sceptre in Kensington and, after drinks, Maurice Harvey, Charlie Jeffries, myself and Alf played our piece. Later we were told when to witness the performance, the commentary on which went something like this: "You might think the days of snuff, quill pens and baroque music had passed, but there are some old gentlemen in a room above this pub, just like that." The music had barely started when news was flashed across the screen - "KENNEDY ASSASSINATED". I suppose they got their priorities right.

Alice Killick writes....

I must say how sorry we are to hear of Alf Edward's death. He was a great friend of my late husband, Len Jones. He came to our wedding, bringing Jean, his dear wife, with him and only last week I was reminded of them. I was spring-cleaning and I washed up a very pretty coffee set and I exclaimed to Ron, my hubby, "Oh, that's Alf and Jean's wedding present to Len and I."

I must tell you this little story about our great day. We had the reception at home at Mottingham, South East London. After the meal was over and all cleared, away the Concertina players got under way. They were Alf Edwards, Charlie Jefferies, Maude Upson, Jack Jones and Len Jones, the bridegroom. This went on all afternoon and evening and it was after 12pm when they began to break up. Can you wonder that I had begun to despair of a first night?

Eileen Jones writes...

I was very sad to read of the death of Alf Edwards, as I have known Alf for many years, from the time when he was with the BBC Orchestra - I think as a trombonist - but doing any occasional concertina work as the occasion for it arose.

I remember seeing a film on TV in which there was a character sitting in a corner wearing a gipsy-type headscarf and playing a Concertina. I thought, "I'll warrant that is Alf," and, sure enough, it was. In the credits at the end of the film: "Concertina - Alf Edwards", but on his Tutor, published by Wheatstone's in 1960, he was named Alfred Edwards - something we were not used to.

I visited Alf twice in the Nursing-home. He was just a shadow of his old self but he could still play his beloved Concertina beautifully, though only for a short time. The staff said they wished he would play for them. I think the fact that I was ICA spurred him into playing. I wonder if any other ICA member who visited him found that? He was a very sick man but on my first visit he was still able to write and, after the visit, he wrote to say how happy he was that his ICA friends still remembered him frequently. Like all of us in the ICA then, Alf was deeply attached to it.

At that time we were few in number and we knew most other members personally. Whenever he could, Alf came to the meetings and, even though he was such a skilled professional musician of the highest order, he always had time for the likes of me and often gave me helpful advice.

I remember one Christmas Day Alf was giving a solo Concertina programme on Radio 3 (that marks his musicianship!) of Christmas Carols. I had to take myself away from our family Christmas dinner to listen to the programme because Alf was playing comparatively unknown but traditional carols and the family didn't appreciate the music. I made a recording as well as I could from the loudspeaker. I must look through my old tapes to see if I can find it, for losing Alf is like losing a member of one's family - that was the spirit of the ICA. I hope that spirit will live for ever.

May all our past members and our dear friend, Alf, rest in peace.

My love to them all,
Eileen (Jones was not necessary in those days')

Phil Ham writes...

I was sorry to hear of the death of Alf Edwards. I met him in the mid-sixties at one of the Keele Folk Festivals when we were both doing Concertina workshops and he was performing. I remember his dedication to giving a professional performance, and how tense he was as we paced up and down the hall before he went on. He also would not play by ear, or from memory. "I can't busk," he said, in a tone which more implied that he didn't intend to. His was probably the first Concertina many of us heard on record or radio in a time of shortage, and I remember him for that.

THE NINETEETH CENTURY CONCERTINA
a revelation by Douglas Rogers

A fascinating insight into what might be regarded as the Golden Age of the English Concertina was presented to us by Douglas Rogers in his illustrated talk at the ICA meeting on 18th May. Attired suitably for the occasion in velvet jacket and cravat, he commenced by explaining how he came to take up the Concertina three and a half years ago. Unlike most of us, he was previously a performer on another instrument - the guitar - and it was his interest in the guitar works of Giulio Regondi (1822 - 72) which led him to the Concertina works of this prodigious composer and performer on both instruments.

He then traced the history of the instrument itself, starting with Wheatstone's symphonium and the various patents, and described how it first came into Regondi's hands when aged ten or eleven. Contemporary accounts of his performances were ecstatic in their praise of his artistry, but some had reservations about the sound of the instrument, in one instance comparing it unfavourably with the solo stop of an organ. One can understand these reservations when listening to one of the early Concertinas of the 1840s, demonstrated for us here, which had a thin tone and noisy key action. We do not know what particular model of Concertina was favoured by Regondi, but it seems that he renewed his instruments quite often!

In addition to Regondi, who dominated the Concertina scene of the 1840s and 50s, other composer/performers and arrangers, were given their due: Richard Blagrove and George Case, both of whom joined Regondi in public performances, Bernhard Molique, Joseph Warren, as well as the publishers of the music. Most popular and numerous of these works were the arrangements of operatic melodies, especially those of Donizetti, Meyerbeer and Verdi, followed by arrangements of vocal or instrumental music, and lastly original works for the Concertina. Regondi's output of major works, for example, comprises sixteen original pieces, twenty-five vocal and instrumental arrangements and fifty or so operatic 'fantasies'.

The account was interspersed with superbly played illustration - mainly pieces or arrangements by Regondi, but also those of Molique, Heller-Ernst, and Warren's popular 'Home Sweet Home' variations, culminating with Regondi's beautiful 'Morceau de Salon' - most of which were ably accompanied on the piano by Alison Pink.

Tutors published during this period included Regondi's 'Rudimenti del Concertinista' of 1844, those of Case and Sedgwick of 1848 and 1849, Regondi's 'New Method' of 1857 and Blagrove's of 1864 - all of them models of thoroughness and application to the problems of learning the instrument.

Since we have no recordings from this period, we can only guess at the techniques used in performance, and some mysteries remain. In view of the Concertina's thin-sounding upper notes, how were the melodies to be heard above the more resonant chordal passages below? Were they always played, in octaves and were the chords shortened, violin-style,

in order to separate the melody? Regondi always stood while performing and, since his music requires the frequent use of the fourth finger, the instrument was partially supported by a ribbon or strap attached to each end and passing behind the player's neck, a practice which has since fallen out of use.

Douglas regards the Golden Age as -lasting approximately thirty years - 1840 to 1876 - reaching a peak in the mid 1850s, by the end of which period the instrument was being produced in larger quantities and became associated less with an 'elite dilettante' and more with popular entertainment; moving from the recital and drawing room to the music hall, and later the Salvation Army band.

Some of the Concertina music of this period can be borrowed from the ICA Library (lists "by application to the Editor with SAE, works from John Hutcherson) and some is obtainable from Boosey and Hawkes, but much of it can only be obtained from copyright collections such as the British Library.

Our lecturer modestly admitted to being unable yet to perform Regondi's celebrated 'Les Oiseaux', the six Concert Studies or the two Concerti (the second of which had been lost until he found the MS in an auction last year), but in this talk he has opened a window for many of us into a world of which we were hitherto only dimly aware. I came away feeling that this was only the beginning of an important piece of research by this enthusiastic musician and historian. I do not think it is too much to hope that one day Regondi's works will be heard again as he himself played them, and certainly that the Concertina will regain its place as a serious instrument in the eyes of the concert-going public.

Marian Janes
Events Secretary

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This talk is the first in a series - arranged by Marian Janes - to be held at ICA meetings in Bloomsbury, London.

At the meeting on 6th July at 4.30pm, Brian Hayden will be telling us about his newly-designed duet Concertina, and bringing instruments to sample.
On 21st September, Nigel Pickles and the New Mexborough Quartet will enlighten us on the old and new Mexborough bands.
On 2nd November our President will give us his 'Recollections of William Kimber', and, on 14th December Arthur Clements (winner of the Arthur Clements Cup at the recent North London Music Festival) will entertain us with his account of 'Sixty Years with the Concertina'.

THE 19th CONCERTINA FESTIVAL
(Affiliated to the British Federation of Music Festivals)
at
Victoria Methodist Church, Westmoreland Terrace, London
on
Saturday, April 20th, 1985

The Place

An insignificant building from the outside, Victoria Methodist Church comprises a large ground-floor hall with plenty of space for the audience of fifty or so Concertina enthusiasts who gathered to hear the bold spirits who had decided to expose their talents to critical assessment. Downstairs, the basement rooms allowed competitors to practice without interrupting the performers, while the kitchen area provided space for John Royds to construct sandwich skyscrapers.

The People

No matter how good the playing, the Festival would have been a far less enjoyable occasion had it not been for the presence, and whole-hearted participation, of a quite outstanding adjudicator. Ivor Beynon, LRAM, ARCH, LTLL, LLCM, ABCA, LBCA, proved to be well qualified to assess Concertina performances; as well as being a professional accordionist with performances with the London Symphony Orchestra and at La Scala, Milan, to his credit, Mr Beynon has also provided the current edition of Groves' Dictionary of Music with an entry on free-reed instruments. A final qualification which probably outweighed all the others in the minds of the audience, was Mr Beynon's revelation that he had worked on many occasions as a session-man with Alf Edwards.

No impersonal judge, Ivor Beynon entered into the spirit of the occasion, offering sympathetic understanding to the nervous and inexperienced, interspersing his comments with anecdotes and demonstrations, recalling players for impromptu lessons, and invariably placing the emphasis of his remarks on competitors' strengths rather than dwelling on their weaknesses.

Beginning with Bill Blakeman's welcoming smile at the door, encounters with Concertina personalities came thick and fast. To prove that the title 'International' has substance, Jean Megly and Georg Möllers had travelled from France and Germany respectively. Manufacturers Neville Crabb and Steve Dickinson, together with Brian Hayden, were there to publicise their very distinctive brands of Concertina, Steve Chambers displayed some early Concertina music and rare instruments, Nigel Pickles and Dave Townsend - two expert performers - came to listen and the gathering was completed when Tom Prince arrived in the afternoon.

The piano accompaniment required by some of the more advanced players was provided by Alison Pink, whose precise and sensitive playing was apparent in spite of her having to wrestle with an unresponsive keyboard.

THE COMPETITION

Class 2

The competitors in the opening class, the Intermediate English Test-piece, were understandably nervous and all had difficulties with Kimberger's 'Les Carillons' - a demanding piece under the best of circumstances. Most took it far too quickly, assuming that 'allegretto' indicated a dance-like tempo rather than the more deliberate pace intended by the composer. Competitors were: Brian Bibby, Jenny Cox, Vi Fordham, Doreen Hunt, Howard Rosenblum, Penny Ward and Martin Williams.

The Winner was Jenny Cox, with 87 marks.

Class 1

June Rosenblum was the only player to attempt the Elementary English Test Piece, 'Afton Water'. June earned 80 marks but still gave scope for Ivor Beynon to give a very useful lesson on the importance of bellows central and phrasing.

Class 5

The lunch break, which provided an opportunity for a variety of concertina conversations to take place in the pub next door, was followed by the Intermediate Duet class in which Pat Robson was the sole competitor. Pat played a Habanera on his square Concertina - a performance which earned him 80 marks and a brief lesson on how to attain a true Latin America rhythm on the left hand.

Class 6

Malcolm Barr-Hamilton was the only entrant in the Intermediate Anglo class, playing a piece well known to folk dance musicians as 'Captain Lance's Quick March' - a performance which gained him 85 marks.

Class 13

The Folk-Dance playing brought about a change of adjudicator, with Father Kenneth Loveless taking the chair. This class, which attracted the largest number of competitors, was marked by a common misconception on the part of most players - that they were there to play folk dance tunes rather than to show that they could cope with the demands of a very functional form of music.

Competitors were: Malcolm Barr-Hamilton, who included a high-speed dash through the Morris tune 'The Rose' in his set of three, Brian Bibby, Doreen Hunt, Tom Jukes, Georg Möllers with a Norwegian Waltz, an Irish Reel, and the most attractive 'Stop-Galop Polka' from Germany, John Royds, Penny Ward and Martin Williams.

John Royds shared the winning marks (85) with Jenny Cox.

Class 16

The Intermediate English 'Own Choice' class attracted a great variety of music, from John Glasson's 'Loves's Old Sweet Song', to Vi Fordham's Sonata in G by Pepusch. Ranged in between were Brian Bibby's 'Fantasia', Jenny Cox's 'Calico Rag' and Doreen Hunt's 'Dancing Dustman'.

Vi Fordham's performance was undoubtedly the most accomplished and earned her 88 marks.

Class 3

The Advanced English Test Piece, the Sonata in A by Handel, is daunting enough to look at, let alone play, but three competitors were bold enough to attempt it. They were Tom Jukes, Georg Mollers and Douglas Rogers.

The first two played the piece as written, but the independently minded Douglas Rogers perplexed the adjudicator by incorporating an accompaniment of his own. In spite of his waywardness, Douglas won with 86 marks.

Class 6

The only entrant, Jean Megly, advanced the frontiers of Duet playing by performing his own composition, 'Hen-pecked Spaceman' in the Advanced Duet class.

This piece, with its complex rhythms and unfamiliar sonorities excited the audience and gave Ivor Beynon further problems when he discovered that Jean was playing it rather differently from the way he had written it. Still, 88 marks was a Triumph!

Class 12

The entrants for the class for Five or More Concertinas began the day as 'The Odd Bods' but their numbers gradually increased until they had to be re-christened 'The Even Stevens' before lining up under the baton of Tom Jukes. Ivor Beynon awarded the group 85 marks in spite of being able to detect some wrong notes, possibly played by the 2nd Baritone, who also forgot to note the name of the composition.

Class 10

Two Concertinas. Brian Bibby and Jenny Cox played Telemann's Canon, Vi Fordham and John Hutcherson gave a sensitive rendering of Beethoven's Minuet in G - in spite of a certain, lack of synchronisation - while Tom Jukes and Georg Mollers boldly opted for a maiden performance of 'Forgotten Dreams'.

Brian and Jenny won with 85 marks

Class 17

For the Advanced English 'Own Choice', John Hutcherson played Brahms's 5th Hungarian Dance. Tom Jukes performed Romance in G minor by Alf Edward's - a poignant moment for those of us who had just learned of the composer's death - Georg Mollers played Romance in G minor by Beethoven, but Douglas Rogers was the undoubted winner, earning 90 marks for the Rural Scene and Serenade from 6 Characteristic Pieces by Molière.

Prizes were awarded by Tom Prince who declined to enter any of the classes but was persuaded to play a piece which seemed to require rather more fingers on one hand than on the other.

Please turn to the final page

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

August 1985

- 2nd - 9th SIDMOUTH INTERNATIONAL FOLKLORE FESTIVAL
Alistair Anderson will be performing during the first weekend (2nd - 4th)
4th - 9th WCCP members will arrange a drop-in-and-do-it-yourself Concertina Centre
from Sunday to Friday at Christian Alliance Holiday Centre, All Saints Road.
Sidmouth. 9.50 to 12.30 daily. All festival-goers welcome.
Seafront busking from Sunday.
- 9th - 11th BROADSTAIRS FOLK FESTIVAL with THE NEW MEXBOROUGH QUARTET
- Wed 14th Professor John Cheek at the Empress of Russia, St John St., Islington.

Professor John Cheek, leader of the Wisconsin Dutchmen Polka Band will
give a talk about himself and his music. Plans have yet to be finalised
but it is hoped that John's playing - on a Hengel-made Chemnitzer Concertina -
will be accompanied by a scratch band of music students (brass and woodwind)
to be assembled by Douglas Rogers.
This event is jointly organised by the ICA, Islington Folk Club and EFDSS.
Club room upstairs. Nearest tube: The Angel
- 18th - 25th ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL, SOUTH BANK, LONDON
A week of Folk Music hosted by Alistair Anderson including:-
Wed A performance of Alistair's 'Steel Skies'. 7.30pm
Fri 'Squeezebox Evening' with John Kirkpatrick, Phil Cunningham, Alistair
Anderson and Martin O'Connor.
Sat Aly Bain and Phil Cunningham
Sun 1 pm Alistair Anderson and Phil Cunningham) F
2.30 Willy Taylor, Joe Hutton, Billy Atkinson,) O
Willie Scott) Y
3.45 Aly Bain and Junior Doherty will play) Y
American Fiddle music) E
5.00 Young Traditional Musicians, including) R
the brilliant Anglo playing of Andrew Blakeney-Edwards)
7.50 Boys of the Lough, Clann na Gael and Eric Bogle in Concert
For full and accurate details it is essential that you ring the
Royal Festival Hall Booking Office 01 928 3002

25rd - 26th TOWERSEY VILLAGE FESTIVAL with THE NEW MEXBOROUGH QUARTET

Sept 1985

- Sun 8th CONCERTINA MEETING AT LEIGHTON BUZZARD, BEDFORDSHIRE
Forster Institute 12 to 6pm. Food available. Good selection of beers at
'The Hunt'.
Workshops will be held by Alan Dyer, on 'First steps in building chords',
and DICK MILES on SONG ACCOMPANIMENT.
For music, tune list and map, contact Alan Dyer, 7 Stoke Road, Leighton
(tel 0525 375 889) or Pippa Sandford, 9 Mardle Road, Leighton (0525 375 794)
SAEs, please.
- Sun 15th WCCP PLAYING DAY, FRESHFORD VILLAGE HALL, BRADFORD-ON-AVON, WILTS
12 to 6pm. Contact Jenny Cox, 55 Northumberland Rd, Redland, Bristol BS6 7AZ
(tel 0272 48796)
- 17th World Concertina Congress on tour of Europe propose to visit Halsway Manor
British liaison person: Pat Robson, Meadowlands, Crookham Village, Aldershot.
- Sat 21st ICA MEETING, BLOOMSBURY - St George's Church Hall, Bloomsbury Way. 1 to 7pm
Come and meet the members of THE NEW MEXBOROUGH CONCERTINA QUARTET.
Steve Dickinson, Rob McKie, Dick Miles and Nigel Pickles will talking
about their unique ensemble and providing examples of their playing.
Get there early to avoid missing them.
Also: The World Concertina Congress are hoping to pay a visit to the
meeting.
Nearest tubes: Holborn and Tottenham Court Road. Nearest pub: The Plough

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

November 1985

- Sat 16th TAUNTON AND SOMERSET MUSIC FESTIVAL
7 Concertina Classes. All 'Own Choice'. Adjudication by Dave Townsend, Gent.
SAE for details to Vi Fordham, Tackers Cottage, Horn St, Nunney, Frome, Somerset
- Sun 17th Post-Festival Gathering at HALSWAY MANOR, Crowcombe, Somerset. 10.30 to 5pm
Workshop by Dave Townsend
Make Halsway your centre for the weekend's activities by booking B&B.
- Sat 2nd ICA MEETING BLOOMSBURY
Fr Kenneth Loveless will give a talk: 'Recollections of Willian Kimber'
illustrated with Morris tunes on Kimber's own Anglo. Talk starts 2.30

December 1985

- Sat 14th ICA MEETING, BLOOMSBURY - The 'Christmas Social'
Star attraction: Talk by the Northampton Concertina virtuoso ARTHUR CLEMENTS
on 'Sixty Years with the Concertina'
* Please note that at all Bloomsbury meetings there will be a charge of 50p
per person which will go towards the hire of the hall. Tea and biscuits
will be available at 15p.

February 1986

- 16th WCCP Meeting. Venue to be confirmed.

March 1986

- 14th - 16th 3rd ANNUAL HALSWAY MANOR WEEKEND
The New Mexborough Quartet will be in residence for the entire weekend.
Anglo and Duet players will be (equally?) well catered for.
Pull details available from BOB HAYES, 44 Rothesay Rd, Dorchester, Dorset
Tel 0305 66809

- LATE NEWS 30th July - Douglas Rogers will give a recital and talk at the St Anne Hotel,
Buxton. Evening
- 31st July - Douglas Rogers will play Concertina and Guitar. Same venue. Lunch
Tickets £2 and £2.50. All part of BUXTON FESTIVAL.
- Sun 29th Sept 1985 2nd M1 Folk Day. Luton. Alistair Anderson will be present.
Organised by EFDSS. Contact Dave Rutherford, 2a Pilgrim Close, Harlington,
Bedfordshire, or ring him on 05255 4543

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THIS MONTH'S MUSIC

Study in C by Fernando Sor

Thanks to Brian Bibby for supplying this guitar piece. The arrangement is well suited to
the English Concertina, and you don't have to be a brilliant player to make it sound good.

Packington's Pound

This piece has been arranged by Phil Edwards for the Anglo players of the South Wales
Concertina Association but Duet and Tenor/Treble English players might like to see what
they can make of it.

Feedback No, it's not one of Jean Megly's compositions, but a plea for your opinions
about the music which has appeared in the Newsletter over the past months. Of course,
we can't please everyone but it would be nice to know whether you have played any of the
music, struggled with it or simply given up in disgust,
As yet, no one has offered an arrangement of any of the Bourrees and Polkas which appeared
in the May issue. Have a go!

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Subscription Receipts

The Treasurer, John Entract, has pointed out that it costs £27 a year to send you all receipts for your subscription payments. In future, unless you specifically request a receipt, we will acknowledge your payments in an announcement on the Membership page of the newsletter.

Subscriptions received

The Treasurer reports that subscriptions have been received from: Miss Mira Curtis, Jenny Cox, Andrew Norman, R C Newell and Art Hemenway.

Subscriptions due - A FINAL REMINDER

1985 subscriptions are due from: J Rainwood, G J Coyne, L Laieski, B Fellinghan, M Gee, B Bland, HTC Jones, J Barlow, J Sleeman, O Shotton, H Lake, O Linsell, A K Martin, S Fogarty, P E Morley, R R Majak, T G Laycock, G Crawford, A J Day.

If your subscriptions have not been received by the end of August we will assume that you no longer wish to receive the Newsletter. Many thanks for your past support.

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NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to:

- Anne Drynan
61 Longfield Street, LONDON SW18 5RD
- Ian Daly
14 Embassy Court, Inglis Road, Ealing, LONDON W5
- Peter Triming
20 Haslenere Road, THORHTON HEATH, Surrey CR4 7BE
- Derek Pearson
Narrowboat 'Wylo', Boat Basin, Walton Street,
AYLESBURY, Buckinghamshire, HP21 7QG
- Alan D'yer
7 Stoke Road, LEIGHTON BUZZARD, Bedfordshire
- Alistair Anderson
Mount Hooley, VWittingham, ALNWICK, Northumberland NE66 4RN
- Andrew Collins
Greenacre, High, Rd, BRIGHTWELL-cum-SOTWELL,
Oxfordshire OX10 OQU

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Overseas Subscriptions

John Entract has researched the various methods of payment. The cheapest method, for all concerned, is for overseas members to send their payments in the form of currency notes, which John will then exchange for sterling at a cost of about 75p for every 5 dollars

Envelopes

For the first time since February, MARK SWINGLER of Peterborough will have been spared the tedious task of addressing your newsletter envelopes. The reason? PIPPA SANDFORD has computerised the address list and envelopes will now be addressed by computer print-out. Grateful thanks to Mark and Pippa for this essential service.

SQUEEZING IT IN.....'ICA member ALAN DAY can be heard playing the Anglo on the latest record by 'ROSBIF' - 'TRADITIONAL DANCE MUSIC FROM CENTRAL FRANCE'. Tunes include bourrees, mazurkas and waltzes played on hurdy gurdy (vielle), Cabrette pipes and melodeon. Available from Alan for £5 including post and packing. Write to Alan at 'The Firs', Church Lane, Burstow, Surrey RH6 9TG.....Belated congratulations to PHILIP and SUSAN EDWARDS of Groeswen on the arrival of RICHARD on May 10th.....DERRICK HALE of Derby is looking for instruments and music to use in ensemble playing. Ideally, he would like bass/tenor and baritone/treble instruments and says, "A miniature would be fun," but his requirements are not necessarily restricted to those instruments. Derrick stresses that none of the items he buys will be re-sold as he intends to put them to active use. Contact Derrick at 12 Gayton Avenue, Littleover, Derby DE3 7GA.....JENNY COX, of 55 Northumberland Rd, Redland, Bristol, would like to get in touch with anyone teaching - or thinking of teaching - youngsters to play the Concertina. Share your problems, successes, techniques, knowledge.....DOUGLAS ROGERS and the Bloomsbury Concertina Orchestra, trying hard not to look like outcasts from an EFDSS country dance display team, have already mastered pieces by Mozart, Britten, Dowland, and the modern composer Bryan Kelly. Douglas thinks that 'Orchestra' is too pretentious; I refuse to label it a group; 'Septet' is only for the mathematically numerate. What shall we call them?..... ICA Membership Secretary, MARTIN WILLIAMS, has moved to a new address. Please contact him at Flat 3, Frinton House, Rushcroft Road, LONDON SW2. Martin claims that his new phone number is 01 274 4529. If so, why do I get the 'unobtainable' tone every time I try to ring him?.....Those of you living within striking distance of London missed a fascinating - but very long - Bloomsbury talk by BRIAN HAYDEN which, for me, helped make sense of all those bits of historical knowledge which I've picked up over the years. Thanks, Brian..... TONY KELL, of 14 Chalmers Road, AYR, would like to contact other Scottish and Cumbrian players with a view to holding a Scottish Concertina meeting. Ring him on 0292 262 100. Tony is also researching the history of the SOUTH SHIELDS CONCERTINA BAND and would like to know the present whereabouts of TOMMY ELLIOT and THE DOUGHTY BROTHERS, who may be able to help him.....Miss M CONNERTON, of Hull, has written to say that a member of her family knew the famous ALEXANDER PRINCE and would like to know whether he was related to our very own TOM.Thanks to ART HEMENWAY for overpaying his subscription and providing a Romanian folk-song for the Newsletter..... HOWARD ROSENBLUM has copies of Tutors for the English Concertina by ALF EDWARDS and FRANK BUTLER. These are available on long loan to any isolated member who feels they may be useful. Contact Howard at 41 Belloc Road, Littlehampton, W Sussex.SHELAGH ENTRACT sends her best thanks to the ICA and members who conveyed their concern during her recent illness. She is fully recovered..... Dublin member, SHAY FOGARTY, would like to see a Newsletter article on that great Anglo-builder, C Jeffries. Any offers?.....

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THE FESTIVAL (continued)

I suppose most people went home afterwards, but the pub was just next door and it had been a long day, so.....

I'm not sure how it started but at one moment we were chatting over a pint in the quiet of a London pub - the next Georg and Jean were lobbing tunes across the tables at each other like Wimbledon champions, a whistle appeared, more Concertinas, a melodeon was passed around, requests flowed from Guinness drinkers, passers-by pressed their noses against the windows, the music flowed. Who would miss it?