

INTERNATIONAL CONCERTINA ASSOCIATION

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Table with 2 columns: Location (U.K., Ireland, Europe; U.S.A., Canada, S. America, S. Africa; Australia) and Rate (£5.00, £6.00, £7.00)

Subscriptions are due on the first of January. New members at 1/12th of the above rates per month to the end of the year. The Treasurer would be grateful if payments were made in sterling.

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Editorial Chuntering

Once again, it is time for me to say farewell as your Newsletter editor. I took on the job because there was no one else willing to do it, even though I did not feel fully recovered from my previous stint. I know that this may well have worked its way into my rumblings and chuntering, but I hope that you were, in general, satisfied with my efforts. I know I have received letters of appreciation from some of you. Thank you very much for them, they helped me feel a bit less lonely, talking to my computer. Thank you also for your items sent in - letters, short articles, adverts, etc. I am sorry I never got around to the "slush pile" which has been mentioned several times. Be assured all that material will be passed on to my successor.

Also, do not worry about how I will fill my time. There are plenty of books in my collection to catalogue, plenty of DIY. jobs around the house to do, a lot of concertina playing to catch up on, plenty of back reading to get done, plenty of enjoying my daughter growing up, the list is long.

As I said, this was in some ways an emergency job. If the new editor finds it all too much for her, I shall be available if no one else is prepared to take the job on.

And while I still have this platform, I must register my thanks to the committee and say what a pleasure it has been working with them, and the pleasure I hope to get working with them in the future. Of all the committees over the years that I have served on, this is the one which has looked to the future, and considered how the I.C.A. might be improved to fulfil its aims, whereas the others have kept the Association ticking over. Gentlemen (unfortunately, there were no ladies serving), it has been my privilege to work with you.

Howard Rosenblum

## Membership News

I have to start with an apology, I neglected to turn a piece of paper over, and missed out a new member who should have been welcomed last month:-

Danny Chapman, The Old Post Office, Wadeford, Chard, Somerset, TA20 3AP.

A fertile ground for new members was the Concertinas at Witney event. See the account later in the Newsletter. A warm welcome to:-

Maggs Allison, 52 Horner's Croft, Greenleys, Milton Keynes, MK12 5DB

Diane Bull, 8 Dene Close, Ovingham, Prudhoe, Northumberland, NE42 6BE

Matthew Dennis, 7a Caledonian Road, King's Cross, London N1 9DX

Ron & Christine Fidler, 1 Poynings Place, Old Portsmouth, Hants., P01 2PB

Dr. Adrian Jackson, 2 Station Road, Golcar, Huddersfield. West Yorks., HD7 4EQ

Jeremy Mainwaring-Burton, 5 Roland Gardens, London SW7 3PE

Ken Okines, 2 Hyde Green South, Stevenage, Herts., SG2 9XU)

Michael Perry, Guillermo Cottage, 31a Canterbury Road, Herne Bay, Kent, CT6

5DQ

Not to mention two rejoined members back in the fold:-

Jean Megly, 50 Rue D'Aubuisson, 3100 Toulouse, France

Norma Moore, 21 Oaklands Road, Petersfield, Hants., GU32 2EY

And finally, a change of address:-

T.J. Eydmann, 4 Dog Cottages, Hammerwood Road, Ashurstwood, East Grinstead,

RH19 3SL.

## Annual General Meeting - An Afterview

Well, the AGM. was both pleasing and disappointing. Disappointing in that not very many members attended - my count was about 16 at maximum. Rather less disappointing was the number of members who took the trouble to send apologies for absence. At least they recognised the importance of the meeting although they could not attend for various reasons.

The pleasing things were that we now have a draft constitution. I enclose a copy of it with this Newsletter. It will be for approval at the next AGM., on 17th October 1992 (Make a note of that date now, and keep it free), and amendments will be considered before final approval. Please note, your committee will now be acting as if the new constitution is in force. The second pleasing thing is that after this Newsletter, you will have a new editrix. She is Charlotte Oliver, and please send all your items to her from now on at 47 Freshfield Road, Brighton BN2 2 BJ. Her 'phone number is Brighton 603633. Charlotte has access to all the new technology that I would have liked to use for the Newsletter, and will be heading a small team designing and producing the Newsletter. I wish her the best of luck, and hope you will support her as well as, or better, than you have supported me.

Another pleasing thing was that there was a whisper that someone else was also thinking about taking the Newsletter on.

Your committee remains the same, apart from the addition of Charlotte.

The subscription has been increased, with effect from 1st January 1992, to £6.00 for the U.K., Ireland and Europe; £7.00 for U.S.A., Canada, South America and South Africa; and £8.00 for Australia. Don't forget, if overseas can send their money in sterling, it will not be eaten away in bank charges to convert it.

I was asked to give a quick explanation of the change in the AGM. date. The reasons are that first, the Association's financial year is 1st January to 31st December. It has been increasingly difficult to get the accounts finalised and audited in time for the previous date, and accounts have had to have been accepted by the meeting subject to audit. Second, if a decision has to be made regarding the level of subscription, the Treasurer has the advantage of audited accounts for the previous year, together with interim accounts for the current year so that he (or she) can make a reasonable forecast for the final accounts to show a surplus or loss. A less tentative recommendation can be made to the meeting which, if passed, will come into effect only 3 months later, rather than 10 months later.

Finally, the questionnaire results were given. The answers to question 9, which did not appear in the last Newsletter, were as follows:-

As far as music for concertina is concerned, is your main area of interest:

Folk/Traditional	Classical	Popular	Music Hall	Jazz	Other
179	51	37	26	10	19

### Harry Minting

This memoir is a compilation of scraps of gossip from Harry himself, enriched here and there with detail of which I have personal knowledge. The dates are reasonably accurate, but I have no means of checking them.

Harry Minting was born and bred in the Finsbury district of North London. It is probable that he attended the Hugh Myddleton School. From an early age he was sent to Ernest Rutherford to learn to play the concertina, at which in due course he excelled, reading fluently, or playing from memory, or by ear, or just plain busking as the occasion demanded. He carried his concertina throughout war service, and had some amusing stories of his adventures thereby.

In 1954 he started the Harry Minting School of Concertina Playing, housed for some years in a studio rented from Dineleys (now Trinity College of Music). His teaching followed simple methods, mainly scales and the parts of Fiddler's Tune Book (essential for folk dance). The class proving very popular, he established part of it as a beginners class, entrusting the care of it to Frank Butler,

Meantime, Harry was a founder member of the I.C.A. I expect he was on the committee. He was certainly prominent. He was briefly with the London Concertina Orchestra under Alf Edwards, returning briefly to resume control for a few weeks in 1956.

About that time he accepted the post of concertina tutor at Holloway Institute, where there was already a class under Harry Cowling mainly of Duet players. Harry became Secretary of the I.C.A. in 1956, resigning after the Third Festival in 1957. He was responsible for both the 1956 and 1957 Festivals.

He accepted the position of Manager of Wheatstone's factory, at first at Kensington, and then moving to Islington, and remained in charge until the company was absorbed by Boosey and Hawkes. Whereupon, after some manoeuvring, Harry bought a music store in SE. London (Lewisham), where he sold and repaired instruments, and sold sheet music and records. The cares of this business were heavy and he relinquished his Holloway class, passing it to the care of Frank Butler, previously associated with him in teaching.

Harry had been in and out of Cecil Sharp House for years, and had many contacts and friends there. While he was at Wheatstone's, he wrote a simple tutor on conventional lines for the Mayfair Concertina.

He retained his interest in the I.C.A., but was seldom able to attend meetings. I remember he came to one of my Saturday one-day courses, arriving at 9 pm. Our principal piece for study had been a duet for two violins arranged as a double concerto, in the style of Mozart. Harry took over Principal I and John Hutcherson took Principal II, and together they performed it brilliantly, with accompaniment from some forty other players. Harry was sight reading.

Harry served the I.C.A. well. We mourn his departure to the ranks of "old timers we have known".

Frank Butler

Dear Editor, I noted with sadness the report in the September Newsletter of the death of Harry Minting, the first Secretary of the I.C.A. Harry provided my first contact with the concertina. He came, along with Bobby Ralph Alexander on piano accordion and a local pianist, to provide the music for our Saturday night folk dances at Sanderstead back in the 1950's. My violin playing was in no way good enough for dancing, and it was with Harry's encouragement that I changed to the concertina. In course of time I joined the band on stage, an experience I found most useful and enjoyable. I joined the I.C.A. in 1957, four years after it was established. I am sure

Frank Butler and Vena McDougall will remember Dinely Music Studios, near Baker Street, where classes were held in the earlier 1950's. All a long time ago now. Incidentally, Harry Minting put his agility and delicacy of touch to good use in the war making safe the mechanism of unexploded bombs and the like.

Dorothy Tutt

### Concertinas on the Move

I have received a report of a concertina stolen from Rob Malaney. It is a 56 button Wheatstone English with raised ebony ends and leather bellows, serial number 31394. It was in a brown leather case, recently refurbished. If you come across this instrument, contact Rob on 0772 312764.

For sale:

Wheatstone Crane Duet, 64 key Aeola, ebony ends, 8-fold bellows, full octave overlap, low D on left hand. Good condition. Case. Very rare instrument. £625.  
Lachenal English, 48 key treble, wooden ends, steel reeds, concert pitch. Beautiful original condition. Case.. Plays well. £525.

Lachenal Anglo, 32 key C/G, metal ends, steel reeds, concert pitch. £425.  
Available from Steve Simpson, Tel.: 031-555 2477.

Lachenal English 48 key wooden ends, metal buttons, concert pitch, good condition £400.

Lachenal McCann 46 key Duet, wooden ends, metal buttons, concert pitch, good condition £150

Lachenal Crane 48 key Duet, wooden ends, bone buttons, concert pitch, good condition £350

Fostex 4 track recorder plus power supply unit £125

Boss Dr. Rhythm DR220A drum box excellent £80

Phone: Ray Homewood 0934 732882 evenings, 0703 515870/1 daytime.

Ray adds that he is not giving up playing, but merely restricting himself to the anglo for the time being, a combination of financial pressures and the instruments being under-used. I know the feeling well.

### Concertinas at Witney 27-30 September 1991

The fourscore people converging on Witney for the weekend had concertinas in common; the same people leaving Witney were linked by music. That was the achievement of the amazing trio who led the weekend and encouraged us all to be active participants. Any of the sessions could have been called stretching the limits. (One of the limits soon reached by the habitual "twiddlers" was to press buttons without making a sound.) Those wedded to the dots were amazed to find that they too, could learn a tune by ear with the help of John Kirkpatrick while ear players were involved in what for many of them was the novel experience of playing structured music under the guidance of Dave Townsend. "Meglification" is not a word commonly known. It should be. It is the process, practised by all the leaders but especially by the versatile Frenchman Jean Megly, of transmogrifying tunes. "There are no such things as wrong notes", he says and vividly demonstrates how these things which don't exist can be used as a starting point for variation and mutation.

In the workshops the depth of knowledge shown by the leaders illuminated the subject but the erudition was worn lightly and crept in under the guise of entertainment. Evocations of Hector Berlioz in full dress military uniform conducting with a sabre, hobby-horses with accompanying drums and stamping Auvergnats all played their part.

Many of us lesser mortals experienced frustration at not being able to achieve the techniques on offer but I think most people felt they had been shown things that they could practise at home. The weekend was a short time into which many things were packed.

Each activity gained from the contrast with the others and many of the points raised in Charlotte Oliver's session on "Confidence in Performance" pulled together lessons from the whole weekend. Practical workshops showed techniques to be practised both from the viewpoint of a particular system of instrument and from that of a particular type of music but once the practice has been done, and one is "out there" it is possible to still the internal voice which sabotages the inexperienced performer and tries to trip up the professional. Craftsmen are not ones who never make mistakes but who can put things right, and criticism by oneself and others should be objectively listened to, assessed and dealt with accordingly.

Popeye eats his spinach. What does Trevor Vale eat? At the concert on Saturday night we were treated to many goodies among which was an amazing display of music-hall style playing by Trevor who whirled his 81-key duet around while playing the mouth organ.

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Throughout the evening there were muffled curses as people tried to get their tape recorders to work. One would not have wanted to miss anything. Harry Scurfield broadened our horizons with his anglo playing, and Reuben Shaw moved everyone with the beauty of the sounds he produced on his duct.

Charlotte Oliver (Bass and voice) and Iris Bishop (Duet - mostly) were highly entertaining. "Telstar" on bass and miniature was a knock-out.

The first item of course, was the world premier of Dave Townsend's "Church Green", An Overture for Concertina Band. We had been sent some of the music in advance of the weekend and worked on it during the day. It is a piece in the modern style, drawing on traditional themes ("Go and 'List for a Sailor" being one). It was fun to do and the small audience who had braved the atrocious weather seemed to appreciate it and stayed for the remainder of the concert. Almost everybody who attended the weekend took part in the performance. It must have been one of the biggest concertina bands to be heard in recent years.

Jean and John did not disappoint us and gave good measure both individually and together in various combinations. (What do you mean, you've never heard Schoenberg on the bass Anglo?) They and the other performers showed the versatility of these little boxes and proved that the weekend was about music and its enjoyment.

Lyn Law

Sounds like a mistake to miss the next(?) one. HAR.

### Correspondence

From Alan Tong: I am overcome by emotion at winning first prize in an international music competition. Now, however, I have come to terms with the accolade and am bracing myself for the onslaught on my sensibilities that fame will inevitably bring.

As for the prize, I am uneasy at accepting it because, sadly, my present life style could not easily accommodate sudden wealth. Therefore, after much thought I have decided to donate my award to Frank Butler in appreciation of his tutor that only four years ago set me on the path to this success.

And from Ann Drury: Could I ask for help in dating a Lachenal English concertina. It is a Tutor model with the buttons stained black on the outer rows and red for the "C"s, the unstained remaining buttons have the letter of the note they play stamped on them. It is brass reeded with rosewood ends, the bellows are of dark green/black leather and the bellows papers are white with gold crosses and dots. There is a serial number 63778 printed on to the cloth dust guard under the left side fretwork, and the concertina came with a close-fitting hexagonal case lined with purple velvet. On the inside of the lid there is an oval black paper label with the words "Lachenal & Co., Patent Concertina Manufacturers, London W.C." printed in gold lettering. Any information about it would be of great interest.

Finally, from Arthur Clements: I should like to comment that I agree with Frank Butler's comments regarding the merger of the two classes "Test Piece" and "Own Choice".

When they were individual classes I always entered both, but there was time between the classes to relax, and more time.

I congratulate the committee on the questionnaire results, and this should encourage discussion.

#### Diary

NOVEMBER 10th: Concertina Workshop at 47 Freshfield Road, Brighton. 11.00pm-12.30pm. Contact Charlotte Oliver on Brighton 603633 or at above address. Cost £2.00 per head.  
JANUARY 5th: W.C.C.P. New Year Party at Butleigh Court Towers, Glastonbury, 12.00-6.00pm  
FEBRUARY 2nd: W.C.C.P. meeting at Ruishton Village Hall, 12.00-6.00pm.  
MARCH 13th-15th: 9th Concertina weekend at Kilve Court, Somerset, with Bertram Levy.  
MAY 3rd: W.C.C.P. AGM. at Ruishton, 12.00-6.00pm.  
MAY 23rd-25th: Chippenham Folk Festival - to be confirmed.  
JULY 5th: W.C.C.P. meeting at Ruishton, 12.00-6.00pm.  
AUGUST 3rd-6th: Sidmouth Folk Festival, W.C.C.P. drop in at All Saints Church Hall, 10.00-12.30pm.  
SEPTEMBER 6th: W.C.C.P. meeting at Ruishton, 12.00-6.00pm.  
OCTOBER 17th: I.C.A. AGM. Venue to be announced.  
NOVEMBER 1st: W.C.C.P. meeting at Ruishton, 12.00-6.00pm.

North East Concertina Players meet on the 2nd Sunday of the month at Gosforth Park Racecourse, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Details from Ian Munro, 17 Almond Place, Kilmarnock. Tel.: (0563) 27573.

Scottish Concertina Group meets on 3rd Sunday of the month. Details from Ian Munro, above.

West Country Concertina Players can be contacted through Pauline Wallace, 2 Coles Cottages, Petton Cross, Shillingford, Tiverton, Devon, EX16 9BS. Tel.: (03986) 414.

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