



NEWSLETTER No. 45

October 2009

www.wso.org.uk

Chairman's Notes
from Malcolm Rowson
(Tel: 01926-491785)

e-mail

rowson@donax.demon.co.uk

Verdi Requiem

Once again the WSO is pleased to renew its association with the Royal Leamington Spa Bach Choir. On Saturday 7 November 2009 at All Saints Church Leamington and joined by the Portsmouth Choral Union they will give a grand performance of the *Verdi Requiem*. The conductor will be Nigel Stark of the RLSBC and the four fine soloists are: Claire Seaton [soprano] Susanna Spicer [mezzo soprano], Andrew Mackenzie-Wicks [tenor] and Michael Bundy [bass]. It is significant that our organisations combine this season because our founder Dr. Stanley Vann, now retired to York, will celebrate his 100th birthday next February.

WSO Web Site

The WSO web site www.wso.org.uk is undergoing change. The menu list has moved to the left in order to give faster access, and the various sections are being up dated.

Michael Taylor

Michael Taylor, one time member of the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and longstanding member of the WSO double bass section has retired from the orchestra after almost 25 years continuous service. Incredibly he travelled from near Gloucester during all that time and must have attended around 750 rehearsals. We thank him for his huge commitment and wish him well for the future.

Afternoon Family Concert in Guy Nelson Hall

This year's WSO Family concert takes place for the first time at the Guy Nelson Hall, Warwick School, on Sunday 13 December. It keeps to its traditional time of 3.00pm until 5.00pm in order to encourage the younger family members to attend. There is less room in this hall than at our previous venue, the Royal Spa Centre, so it would be wise to book early.

Our programme this year features the most popular of all music for narrator and orchestra, *Peter and the Wolf* by Prokofiev. This engaging fairy story with its enchanting and exciting musical characterisation will be told by our 'resident' narrator and Shakespearean actor, Jeffery Dench.

Prokofiev is one of the more modern composers whose style is instantly recognisable whether it be *Romeo & Juliet*, his glistening piano concertos or his numerous symphonies. *Peter and the Wolf*, composed in 1936, is no exception. It was commissioned by Natalya Sats and the Central Theatre in Moscow and was intended to cultivate the 'musical tastes in children from the first years of school'. Prokofiev was intrigued by this task and completed the work in just four days representing the characters in the story by different instruments or sections of the orchestra. Sadly he managed to type cast some of the instruments in a way that for the players is not too encouraging, for example the horns were wolves and the oboe a duck! It had its first performance in Moscow on 2 May 1936 and ironically in the author's words,



Jeffery Dench -
Narrator

The rest of the programme is varied and not to be missed, from the energetic dances of Dvořák and Strauss to the gentler moments of Greig's *Anitra's Dance*. All the pieces will be introduced by conductor Guy Woolfenden, there will be the usual quiz with prizes for the younger members and a grand finale of carols for orchestra and audience.

ORDER YOUR TICKETS NOW!

From, Ticket Secretary,
Mrs. Diana Billington,
on 01926 850385,
or by writing to her at
21, Fishponds Road,
Kenilworth. CV8 1EX,
or by e-mail at
boxoffice@wso.org.uk.

WSO Dinner

The annual dinner for WSO members, supporters and friends will be held at Kenilworth Golf Club on Friday 22 January. Full details will be published nearer the time.

Always Delivers!

A profile of Amanda Laidler, WSO Publicity Officer

Amanda joined the ranks of the WSO in 2002 as a non-playing officer of the society. A chance meeting with Guy Woolfenden some time before, when she was director for the Sibford Millennium Pageant for which Guy had composed the music, and a chance visit some time later to one of the WSO concerts led her to answer the plea in an edition of this Newsletter for a Publicity Officer! We bit her hand off when she offered because she had professional experience of the work and was keenly interested in music. Since then she has not only organised publicity, working in tandem with ticket secretary Di Billington but also has been responsible for the press previews, much of the brochure design, WSO web site reorganisation along with web master Andrew Holtom, the design of the concert programmes and now the lay out of the Newsletter. This has been no mean feat and gives some insight into what goes on behind the scenes in keeping an organisation like the WSO on course.

Amanda is no newcomer to a variety of activity. As daughter of an RAF test pilot she had 18 different homes and 8 different schools by the time she was 19, including time spent in Germany, Holland and Italy. At 18, whilst doing a secretarial course, she persuaded the stage management team at the Oxford Playhouse to take her on as a casual, which began a great course in stage crewing, and also dressing, "I've dressed lots of 'names' including Celia Johnson, Barbara Murray, Tom Baker, Ian Carmichael and Leslie Phillips – learning quite a lot about the theatre business along the way!"

From Oxford she moved to Surrey and the Farnham Maltings and then to the Horseshoe Theatre Company in Basingstoke, before moving to York which became home for almost twenty years. During that time she worked as a theatre marketing officer, theatre manager, then for Opera North, and eventually as a freelance for Wexford Festival Opera and Opera Ireland, as well as being stage



anager and assistant director employed professionally by large amateur companies. She was on the stage management for the York Mystery Plays on the last occasion that they were performed out of doors.

In 1994 Amanda, husband Nic and daughter Amy Cate moved to South Warwickshire - yes she did just have time for family life! Nic had been appointed to the Shakespeare Birthday Trust and had responsibility for all the annual celebrations while Amy aged 4 began school; and Amanda settled happily to unaccustomed domesticity. As time has gone on Amanda has resumed her punishing schedule of activity and daughter Amy has followed in the family theatrical tradition with a strong emphasis on music. At 17 she takes one of the lead roles in *Anything Goes* at the Royal Spa Centre Theatre from 20 – 24 October this year with mother as producer.

These days Amanda divides her time between marketing and education for Longborough Festival Opera, teaching drama and musical theatre to young people, writing and directing amateur musicals and plays "sometimes professionally, sometimes for fun." And she runs Teenage Taxi Services! In an explanation of why she is prepared to devote so much time to the WSO, her answer is, "It's important that orchestras continue to be there for the next generation – both player and audience." When asked about what she had enjoyed most with the WSO her reply was "Foreign visits". The trip to Germany

had been an excellent time for really getting to know members of the WSO.

What does she like doing in her spare time?! Amanda mentioned that she likes cats and enjoys working with computers. She then added that despite all the deadlines in her work, "I'm not actually given to punctuality." Nevertheless she always delivers on time except in the case of Amy who with a touch of the family impatience arrived 11 weeks early!

WSO PROGRAMME SPONSORS

Warwickshire Symphony Orchestra would like to thank the following sponsors for their support during the 2009-10 season:

Castle Hotels
Daffern & Co Accountants
Daphne Hinton
Eastgate Carpets
Intelligent Filing
My Home Filing
Presto Classical
Rod Waspe Stationers
Torry's DIY
Turner Violins
Valerie Floral Artist
Wall's TV
Warwick Music
Wright Hassall Solicitors



Beyond the Stave!

"There is one god – Bach- and Mendelssohn is his prophet."
[Hector Berlioz 1803-69]

"He [Berlioz] makes me so sad, because he is really a cultured, agreeable man and yet he composes so very badly."
[Felix Mendelssohn 1809-47]