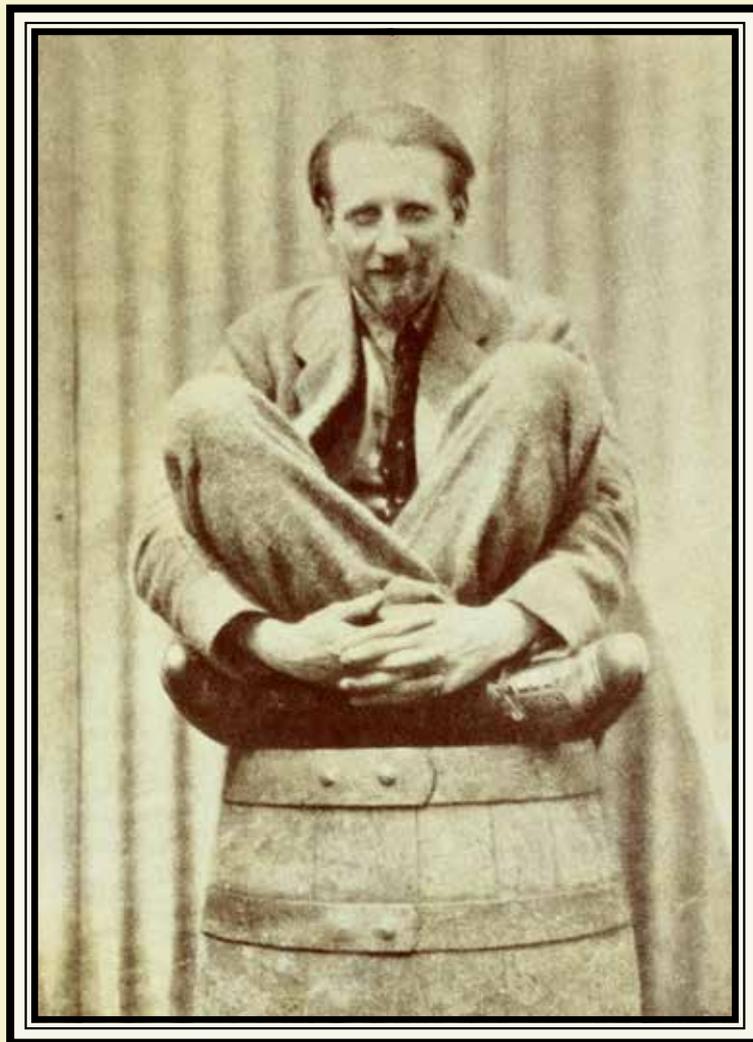


*Peter Warlock Society*

# Newsletter 110

**Second Moeran and Warlock Edition  
Spring 2022**



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# Peter Warlock Society

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# Editorial

## Welcome to *Newsletter 110!*



Welcome to Newsletter 110. As always, I hope that you are all keeping well in these continuingly difficult times.

This Newsletter is, believe it or not, my 26th edition as Editor. I suppose I ought to have celebrated having edited 25 issues in Newsletter 109. However, I noted that the former longest serving

Editors, John Bishop and Brian Collins, produced 23 and 25 editions respectively. This means that I am now the Society's longest serving Newsletter Editor – an achievement of which I am extremely proud. And I'm not done yet!

I should like to thank all of you who sent me Christmas cards or email messages, to thank me and the Society for the Christmas card and gift of Luci and Eleanor's Soprano CD. It was good to hear from you all and very much appreciated. You may have seen that the CD was reviewed very positively by Terry Blain on page 79 of the February 2022 edition of *BBC Music Magazine*. It is also reviewed by Derek Foster on page 31 of this Newsletter.

Let's take a look at the rest of this edition. Following on from the previous Moeran/Warlock edition of *Newsletter 109*, John Mitchell has been investigating the curious circumstances surrounding the advertised BBC Radio broadcast that Moeran was to have delivered in March 1943 about his friend Peter Warlock. Moeran didn't deliver the talk, but who did? Find out on page 4.

### Update on progress being made on various projects

I don't want to preempt my Chairman's Report to be delivered at the forthcoming AGM in Steyning on 14 May, but I promised to provide some updates in this edition of the Society's Newsletter. Here are some titbits!

Significant progress has been made on the 'Warlock Orchestral Vocal Project'. I shall have some very exciting news to present to you at the AGM, as well as news of another significant CD recording project.

We have also made satisfactory progress with regard to the creation of a new website for the Society. A designer has been chosen and work has started.

John has also contributed an article about a recording of Colin Taylor's song *Gifts*. See page 9. Whilst on the subject of Colin Taylor, our President, Barry Smith, has sent us some 'informal snaps' of himself as a young man, taken by Taylor, together with a letter accompanying the photographs.

And, of course, there are reviews including the AGM weekend, the Launch of the Soprano CD and Soprano Songbook and a CD featuring five Warlock songs,

We were saddened to learn of the recent deaths of Keith Glennie-Smith, Norman Bailey and Lionel Carley. Keith had been a member of the Society for many years. Norman (bass-baritone) will be remembered by many for his vinyl LP, simply titled *Peter Warlock Songs*, accompanied by Geoffrey Parsons. Lionel was President of the Delius Society and member of the Peter Warlock Society. Obituaries and tributes start on page 36.

One lucky member of the Society will soon be snapping up an offer of a free copy of *Delius*, Warlock's biography of the composer, generously donated by John Bovington. See page 47 for details.

My sincere thanks go, as always, to those who have contributed to this and past editions of the *Newsletter*. Remember, I am happy to receive material for the *Newsletter* at any time, but to guarantee consideration for inclusion in the Autumn edition, **31 August** is the deadline. My full contact details are on the page opposite. I hope you enjoy reading this edition and I look forward to seeing you at the AGM on 14 May (see back cover for details).

Keep well, stay safe!

Michael

Three of the revised volumes of the *Critical Edition* have been type set ready for publication. All eight volumes should be in print before end of 2022.

We are slowly moving forward with plans to perform and/or publish the late Anthony Payne's *Aspects of Love and Contentment*, a suite consisting of eight songs by Warlock arranged for soprano voice, flute, clarinet, horn, harp and string quartet.

Good progress has been made on several other projects and I look forward very much to describing them and discussing them with you at the AGM. ■

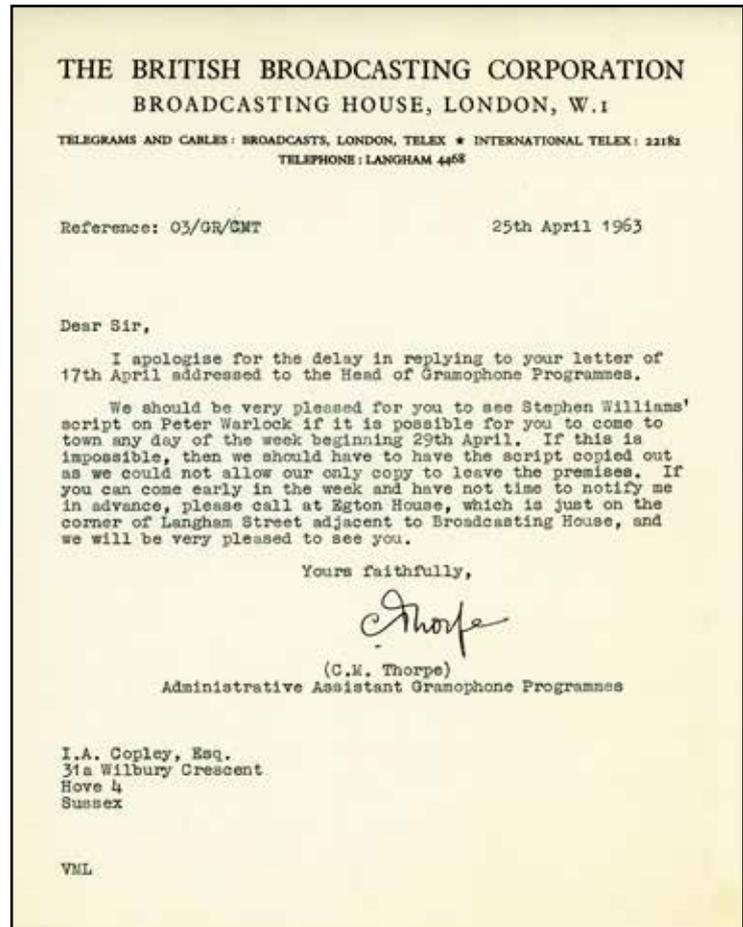
## Articles

### *The Man who stepped into E. J. Moeran's Shoes*

**John Mitchell** explores the 'Broadcast that nearly wasn't'.

In the Autumn 2016 *Newsletter* (No.99, pages 28 & 29) there appeared a fascinating article by Barry Smith about an announced BBC radio broadcast that almost did not happen. To briefly recount the circumstances, the *Radio Times* of 26 March 1943 published details of a programme scheduled for the end of the following week where E.J. Moeran was due to give a talk about his old friend Peter Warlock. According to Robert Nichols (writing to Arnold Dowbiggin), Moeran 'fell by the wayside', and presumably never produced a script of his talk for the BBC. The Corporation, one imagines, was in a bit of a quandary at the eleventh hour and got a Stephen Williams to produce and give the words and music presentation instead. The 30 minute programme went out at 10.30 pm on the evening of Saturday, 3 April 1943.

Readers of Barry's article may well have been curious to know more of the content of Stephen Williams' talk that so incensed Robert Nichols (who described Williams as a 'son of a bitch'<sup>1</sup> for the condescending nature of what he had to say about Warlock). Recently, when trawling through the Warlock Archive of the late Ian Copley, I came upon a couple of letters to him from the BBC pertaining to this. Copley had clearly discovered that the latter had a transcript of the Williams talk, and one of the letters (dated 25 April 1963) sets out options for him to view it. The other letter (16 May 1963) confirms what Robert Nichols had surmised: that the BBC had no copy of Moeran's script (indeed, if Moeran had ever produced one in the first place as Nichols had implied in his letter to Dowbiggin). A little later I subsequently found amongst Copley's papers a neatly typed transcript of the Williams broadcast, something which I suspect the BBC may have provided for him. The transcript appears below, and as will be seen, the spoken part of the programme was not overlong, with the greater amount of the half hour being devoted to recordings of Warlock's music. There were eight of these musical illustrations, the details of five of them specified in the transcript.



The letter received by the late Ian Copley from the BBC regarding the 'Moeran' talk that was eventually delivered by Stephen Williams.

**Home Service Programme, Saturday, 3 April, 1943**

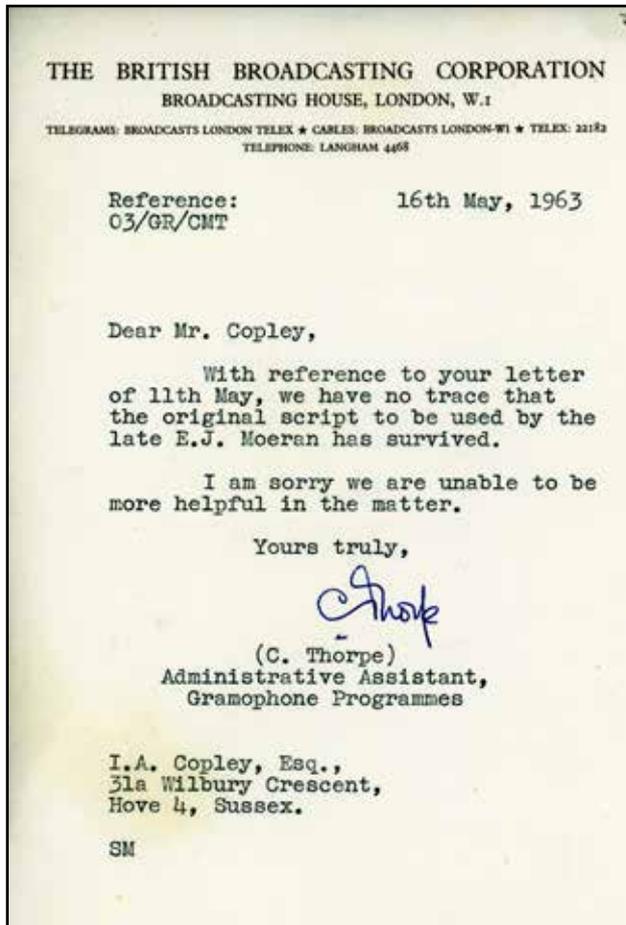
**10.30-11.00 p.m.**

**PETER WARLOCK**

**Presented with gramophone records by Stephen Williams.**

I never knew Peter Warlock, so I can't introduce him to you. I know his music very well but it's sometimes a dangerous thing to build a man's portrait from his work. W.B. Yeats once said to me that a man never put himself into his work (Yeats himself, of course, was a living contradiction of this because no one ever looked and talked more like the poet he was). Nevertheless, I'll let Peter Warlock introduce himself to you, through his music – this little bit from the *Capriol Suite*. **Recording: Capriol**

*The Man who stepped into E. J. Moeran's Shoes* (continued)



The second letter received by Ian Copley confirming that the BBC had no record of any script written by Moeran.

No, I never knew Peter Warlock, so I can't give you the first-hand personal impression that his friend E.J. Moeran could have given you. But I've met many men like him, and I don't think it's a type difficult to understand. To me, Peter Warlock was an artist who wanted to be a genius but was cursed with too much intelligence. That sounds like a paradox, I admit; but I've always thought, rightly or wrongly, that genius is above intelligence. I think it's a kind of visitation. It comes to a humble tinker named Bunyan, it comes to a little Cockney chemist named Keats, and to the son of a poor orchestral player named Mozart. It didn't come to a man named Peter Warlock, or Philip Heseltine, to give him his real name. And perhaps that was why, at the age of thirty six, that accursed intelligence, that self criticism of his told him that it was no use going on being a mediocrity, leading a life of rather fragile

brilliance; and drove him to take on the gravest responsibility that any man can take on – to take away his own life. He took it on December 1930; and went to a sleep far more profound than any he'd ever imagined in his music.

**Recording: Sleep**

Philip Heseltine was born in 1894 in a famous hotel in the Strand. "I was born on the embankment", he used to say with suitable gravity – and it was very nearly true. He went to Eton and Oxford – and hated them both. All his life he was a rebel. All his life he used to hate everything he imagined Eton and Oxford stood for – conventionality, respectability and that sort of academic learning which those who haven't got it call pedantry. He was a brilliant English scholar. Perhaps there's no need to say that: his editions of the Elizabethan song books prove that – also his own acutely sensitive settings of Elizabethan lyrics, with their obvious relish of lovely words.

**Recordings:**

Yes, he certainly had a relish for lovely words. In his youth he worshipped Ernest Dowson, Arthur Symons and W.B. Yeats and later came under the spell of D.H. Lawrence and James Joyce. He loved words, especially robust, juicy, full-throated words – like Wells' Mr. Polly – and found a gargantuan delight in translations of Rabelais. He used words skilfully too. This is what he wrote looking at the moon one night from Westminster Bridge.

I watched the moon set in a sea of golden gloom  
 Like a soft horn-tone, merging in the twilight chord:  
 Yet in the sickle image of the moon a sword  
 Lurks, and the horn but echoes trumpet shrieks of doom  
 And men exult to drink the darkness of the tomb,  
 To pay the great price for the steely mastery,  
 And scorn to live and dream, and taste the ecstasy,  
 The moon sheds, sinking in a sea of sable gloom.

It's not great poetry; it's not even good poetry; but it does show a taste for romantic images and the penetrating beauty of expressive words. In music at this time, his supreme hero was Delius, and I think the Serenade he wrote for Delius' 60th birthday reflects this hero worship.

**Recording: Serenade for Strings**

## ***The Man who stepped into E. J. Moeran's Shoes*** (continued)

And so Philip Heseltine was a rebel. But he was not a strong enough rebel: and that was probably why he created 'Peter Warlock', an Elizabethan born out of his time, a roistering, buccaneering figure, a Falstaffian drinker, a merciless scoffer at everything that was bourgeois: who made his headquarters at that famous West End restaurant where the poets of the nineties used to meet: who ruffled round the town among a group of noisy poets, painters and composers, himself always their centre of levity. This was the Peter Warlock who used to decorate his walls with scandalous but brilliant limericks, the Peter Warlock who wrote such full blooded songs as this.

### **Recording: *Captain Stratton's Fancy***

Augustus John has described Warlock: "A tall, blonde young man with a strange derisive smile for ever about his pale handsome features ... I was impressed with his admirable conversational powers, his wide and curious scholarship and his gargantuan brand of humour." John goes on to say that Warlock's sardonic smile was due to his contemptuous amusement "At the endless spectacle of human imbecility." It was in one of these moods I'm sure that Warlock set to music this sardonic poem *The Fox*.

### **Recording: *The Fox***

By all accounts, Warlock was a man of wild affectations and eccentricities. He would suddenly begin to dance in an acrobatic Russian style in public houses, on restaurant tables, in Piccadilly Circus, in The Queen's Hall and on railway stations. He set himself up as a most erudite critic of beer, and after his death they found among his papers extensive correspondence on this subject with such institutions as The Ministry of Health, The Institute of Brewing and The Brewers' Society. He also professed an extravagant fondness for cats – perhaps in imitation of Baudelaire – and would often hold forth on strange, fantastic vices with a disarming frankness that left his friends quite dumb. I don't think we need take his extravagancies too seriously – I mean the beer, the cats and all the rest of it. They seem to me to be just symptoms of a nervous, restless energy (like his limericks) which was disgusted at not being able to find its perfect expression in music, the art he most loved.

A few nights before his death Cecil Gray met him going to The Queen's Hall to hear his *Three Carols* for chorus and

orchestra. This was some of the music he heard – perhaps the last music he ever heard.

### **Recording:**

When Warlock came away from the concert and met Gray afterwards he was in a black mood, crying out that it would be better to have done with everything once and for all rather than tolerate the mediocre, the second rate, the imperfect. That accursed intelligence of his was at work again, that merciless self criticism which seemed to eat away all his confidence. And a few mornings later there was a smell of gas coming from his flat, and it became evident that self criticism had won the battle.

His last action was a kindly one: he pushed his cat out of the room in which he was to die, with a basin of food. And so ended Peter Warlock. Perhaps he got to his own country, and perhaps they treated him better than they treated him here.

When I get to my own country  
I shall lie down and sleep  
I shall watch in the valleys  
The long flocks of sheep,  
And then I shall dream forever and all  
A good dream and deep.

### **Recordings:**

#### **End of Programme**

Who was this Stephen Williams who seemingly stood in at the last moment to obviate the need for the BBC to cancel the scheduled broadcast? We know from his talk that he never knew Warlock personally, but that he was seemingly well acquainted with his music (and, interestingly, that he had met Yeats – an intriguing tangential link, perhaps!). A Google search came up with two candidates, the first to attract my attention being Stephen Williams (1908-1994), a pioneer broadcaster in commercial radio. He was Radio Luxembourg's first station manager when its English Language Service commenced in 1933, but was forced to leave his post during the Second World War. He returned to England to work for the BBC as the organisation's Entertainments Liaison Officer. This last aspect seemed to make him a hopeful possibility as his employment by the BBC coincided with the programme being aired in 1943.

*The Man who stepped into E. J. Moeran's Shoes* (continued)

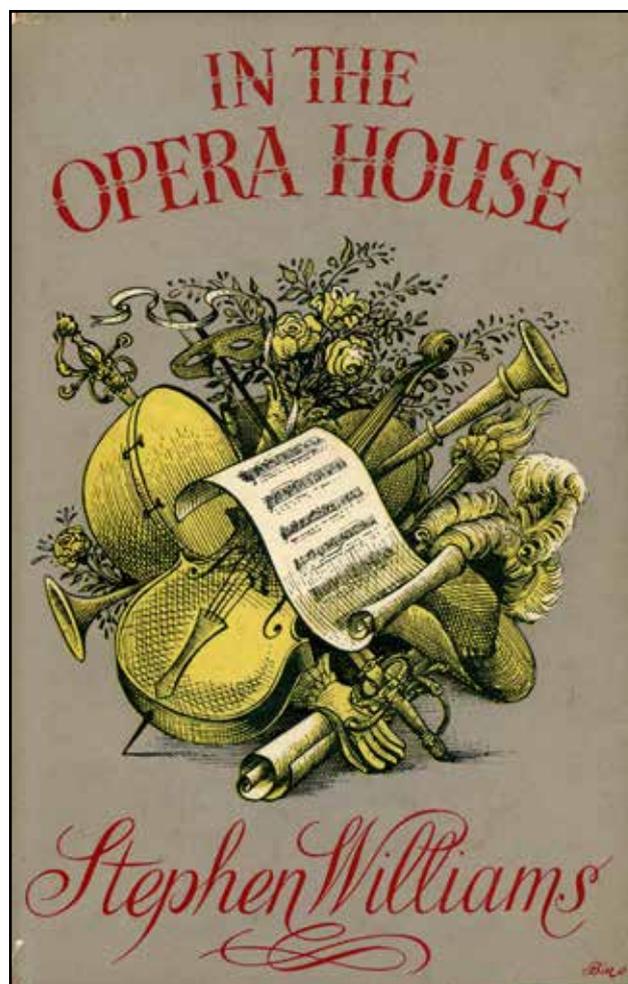
However, there was another contender who seemed even more promising: the Stephen Williams (1900-1957), who was a music and drama critic. From the early 1940s onwards he broadcast extensively on operatic subjects on the BBC's Third, Home Service, Light, and Overseas Programmes. He published several books on opera during the 1950s, one of which contains a paragraph which pretty well clinches him as being the man I was looking for. In the third sentence of the Warlock programme transcript above we read: 'W.B. Yeats once said to me that a man never put himself into his work', and in Williams' *In the Opera House*<sup>2</sup> (cover illustrated right) there appears the following:

"No man ever put himself into his art," W.B. Yeats once said to me on a spring evening in Fitzwilliam square, Dublin, as we sat with two flame-coloured glass goblets of wine winking jocosely between us and with Chinese masks leering at us in fixed and glassy impropriety from the opposite wall. It was one of those unforgettable evenings of glittering, torrential talk that one could get only, at that time, in the capital of the land that bred "the greatest talkers since the Greeks". Yeats was damnably, exasperatingly convincing – as he always was until you got into the clear air. But was it true, what he said?

There is little doubt in my mind that the presenter of the programme was harking back to that memorable occasion he shared with Yeats in Dublin.

There can also be little doubt that Williams had clearly dipped into Cecil Gray's *Memoir of Warlock* for much of his information, and I am sure many readers will recognise several items that have been directly lifted from it. For instance, the parts of the transcript dealing with Warlock's love of cats; his spontaneous breaking into a wild dance in unlikely places; and his obsession with the perfect beer & correspondence with the Institute of Brewing, etc., have their origins in Gray's book on pages 252-3; 258; and 260 respectively. Moreover, the quote from Augustus John comes word for word from his Foreword to the book (page 12), and if further proof were needed, Warlock's poem about the moon was obviously sourced from its appearance on page 81.

Whilst sympathising with Nichols' and Poston's annoyance with the tone (and perhaps the content too) of the broadcast, one can also understand the limitations of the position from which Stephen Williams was coming. He was asked by the BBC to prepare the talk at very short notice,



with Moeran having pulled out at almost the last moment. Timing-wise, it was during the War years, with all that might have implied, and Gray's *Memoir of Warlock*, which had been published nine years earlier, may well have been the only source of information Williams had easy access to. It may be hard for us to envisage how things were back then before the advent of 'Life With Google', something that now allows us to do so much of the legwork of research in the comfort of home!

Stephen Williams, apart from the radio broadcast, had another tenuous connection with Warlock, and whether this was coincidental or not is a moot point. In 1950 he co-authored a book akin to Warlock's (or to be precise, Rab Noolas'!) *Merry-Go-Down* that had appeared eighteen years earlier. There is a slight difference of emphasis however: Warlock describes his anthology as 'A Gallery of Gorgeous

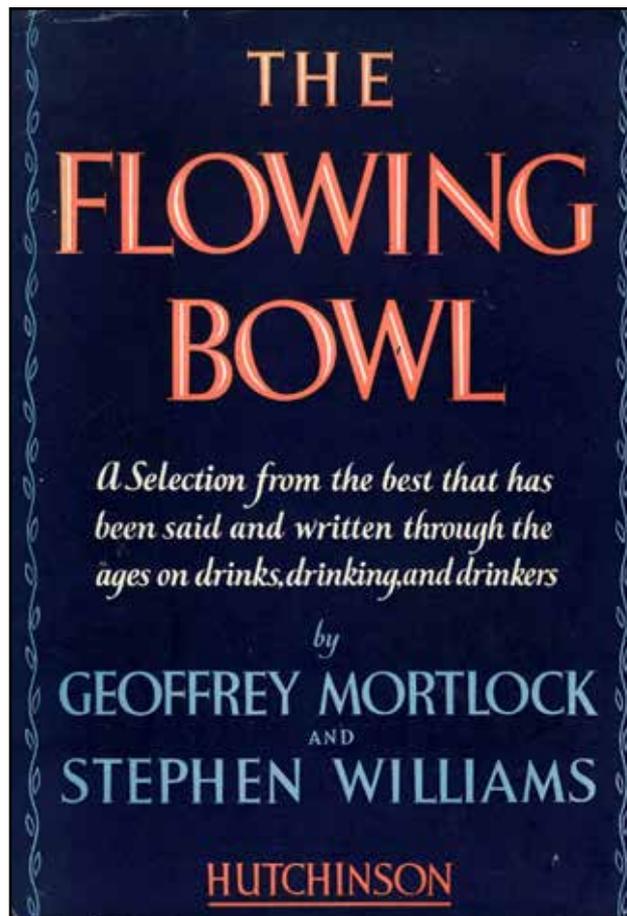
***The Man who stepped into E. J. Moeran's Shoes* (continued)**

Drunkards through the ages collected for the use, interest, illumination, and delectation of Serious Topers, whereas the Geoffrey Mortlock/Stephen Williams *The Flowing Bowl*<sup>3</sup> purports to be 'A Selection from the best that has been said and written through the ages on drinks, drinking, and drinkers'. Whether the co-authors knew of Warlock's earlier venture into the field can only be guessed at<sup>4</sup>, but of the well over two hundred entries in *The Flowing Bowl* only about half a dozen of them are also included in the *Merry-Go-Down* (and as it happens two of these – *The Eight Kinds of Drunkenness* and *She tells me with claret she cannot agree* – are ones that receive delightfully characterful readings on the *Merry-Go-Down* LP record!). In a short introductory paragraph, the authors of *The Flowing Bowl* recorded that 'We freely admit that this, like every other book of its kind, is an expression of personal and arbitrary choice ...' but one

wonders whether in the main they tried to avoid duplicating anything that had been anthologised previously. One definite drawback for readers of *The Flowing Bowl* is that it was not illustrated in a similar manner that the *Merry-Go-Down* volume was with all those wonderfully humorous woodcut drawings from Hal Collins! ■

**Notes**

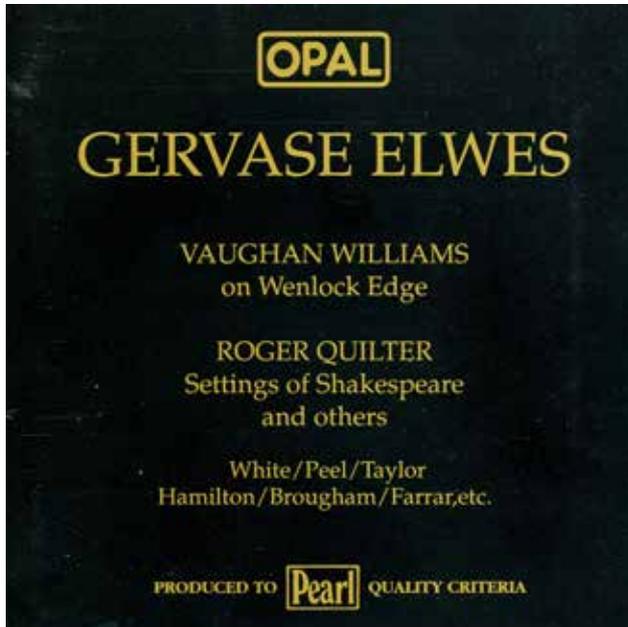
- 1 Commiserating with Nichols, 'Can't you kill him?' was Elizabeth Poston's response!
- 2 Stephen Williams: *In the Opera House* (Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., London, 1952), page 183.
- 3 Geoffrey Mortlock and Stephen Williams: *The Flowing Bowl* (Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., London, 1947).
- 4 But the subtitles of both books containing the phrase 'through the ages' is possibly suggestive!



See also Letter from Robert Nichols to the *Radio Times* regarding Stephen Williams' broadcast and William's reply on page 44.

**Colin Taylor's Gifts**

**John Mitchell** explores Peter Warlock's responses to some songs composed by his former tutor at Eton, Colin Taylor.



I imagine that, like so many of us during the present Lockdowns, restrictions, etc., because of the Covid pandemic, I was not alone in finding I had a bit more time on my hands. A positive aspect of this is that it facilitated digging out and playing some CDs that have been languishing in the storage cabinet for years, if not decades, since last being heard. One such was an Opal CD featuring the tenor Gervase Elwes, with recordings he made between 1911 and 1919.

I seem to recall I purchased it mainly for the premiere recording of Vaughan Williams' song cycle, *On Wenlock Edge*, made in March 1917, with the London String Quartet and Frederick B. Kiddle (piano). Elwes had given the first performance of the work in November 1909, and his interpretation was one that was highly regarded by the composer. Apart from that accolade, the recording is astonishingly good for its age of over a hundred years. There is fairly little in the way of hiss and crackle, and considering that it was made in the acoustic age (i.e., before 'microphoned' recordings came on stream in the following decade), the balance between singer, strings and piano is surprisingly good<sup>1</sup>.

After *On Wenlock Edge* that begins the Opal CD, the remaining tracks are voice and piano songs largely by composers that were active at the time – some well-known,

such as Quilter and Stanford, other less so, such as Janet Hamilton. Playing the CD again after a gap of so many years, I noticed that one of the lesser known composers was simply noted down on the track listing as 'Taylor'. I didn't think too much of it at the time, but after a bit of delving I discovered this composer was none other than Colin Taylor! – Warlock's music tutor at Eton, and subsequently good friend and regular correspondent for the rest of his life.

The song had the title *Gifts* and was a setting of a lyric<sup>2</sup> by the Scottish poet James Thomson (1834-1882)<sup>3</sup>. It was published by Stainer & Bell in 1911 in their *Modern Songs* series, and perhaps unsurprisingly it is fairly typical of its time. However, its three stanzas are quite varied in their treatment of similar material, and the final one works up into quite a dramatic climax (albeit one that is possibly a bit too drawn-out). One assumes it may have reached a certain level of general popularity for the recording to have been made c.1918/19.

What adds weight to this is that *Gifts* had a performance at one of Henry Wood's Promenade Concerts shortly afterwards (and according to the BBC records, this was the only single occasion that Taylor was ever featured at the Proms!). The song was included in a mixed orchestral and solo song concert<sup>4</sup> given on Wednesday 22nd October 1919 at the Queen's Hall, with Elwes as the soloist with his regular accompanist, Frederick Kiddle. Apart from the Taylor song, the varied programme included music by Saint-Saëns, Grieg, Weber, Albéniz, Grainger, Dunhill, Berlioz and Sullivan.

Warlock was living in London's Warrington Crescent at the time, and it seems quite likely he would have attended the Prom by way of supporting his friend on such an auspicious occasion. Indeed, he seems to have taken an ongoing interest in Taylor's music, as there are many references to it in his letters to him. A mention is made as early as October 1912 when Warlock recorded that:

I am sending back your MS song, with many thanks, also a piano duet arrangement of your 5/4 piece<sup>5</sup>. I have managed to get all the notes in, but I am afraid I have not made it very playable...[28/10/1912]<sup>6</sup>

A picture emerges over the following years of Warlock not just taking an interest in Taylor's music, but also of

## Colin Taylor's Gifts (continued)

providing some practical assistance in such areas as checking proofs, making fair copies in his very legible musical hand, and sending off manuscripts to music publishers or their readers. This must have been especially valuable to, and appreciated by, Taylor after he had emigrated to South Africa. A few extracts from Warlock's letters give a flavour of this:

I made a copy of *Your Heart* etc, and sent it to Chappell, but I have received no answer as yet. [29/12/1913]

Your MMS arrived the day before I left Cornwall and I had just time to read them through and send them off to the publisher's reader ... I like the Fiona Macleod songs very much – the declamation is so free and natural and the simple harmonic background always so appropriate. I envy you your rhythmic freedom: I am always tied by so-many beats to the bar! I think they ought to become quite popular in a good sense – as Quilter is popular in a circle, that is, I think, largely increasing in numbers. [15/8/1917]

I corrected proofs of *Holiday Hearts*<sup>7</sup> some weeks ago, and I shall always be pleased to do anything I can for you here, in the way of placing MSS and reading proofs. [16/2/1925]

I am only too pleased to do anything I can for your work at any time, so please don't hesitate to send me any MSS or proofs you want dealt with. [25/6/1925]

One topic that crops up in Warlock's letters is that of potboilers. I first became aware of the term<sup>8</sup> many years ago when first reading Cecil Gray's Memoir of Warlock, and how Gray judged that a few of Warlock's songs may have deserved that epithet. Colin Taylor had knowingly written



The music staff at Eton

(l. to r.) Mark Clapshaw; Colin Taylor; Edward Mason; Thomas Dunhill

some such himself, but to distinguish them from his more serious music he penned them under the name of Cecil Trent. Warlock's reflections here are interesting:

I am sorry the pot is not boiling so successfully lately, but I am most anxious to see your new part-song<sup>9</sup>: I loved it when you played it to me. [25/7/1913]

... you know I have always maintained that, even consciously, one can write what one knows to be bad and yet know it to be the real expression of some facet of one's self ... [13/6/1918]  
The chief danger in writing very simple ditties is unconscious plagiarism. [22/8/1918]

You must not get into such states of grisliness over your composition: nor draw such hard-and-fast lines between 'pot-boilers' and works of art. The one may be as good, and even as true, as the other. One feels potboilerish – if you can

## Colin Taylor's Gifts (continued)

understand what I mean – often and often. Potboilers – the best of them – are full of genuine emotion – not perhaps the highest we are capable of feeling but genuine for all that. You know what I think about the priggish and artificial distinction between popular and ‘art’ music. There are moments when I am overwhelmed with emotion by such songs as *Until*<sup>10</sup>, or Denza’s<sup>11</sup> *May Morning* – and your *Love’s Ecstasy*, which I can never forget, is as good as any of them. [24/9/1917]

Warlock appears to have had a special affection for Taylor’s *Love’s Ecstasy* (to which Taylor had written the words as well as the music under his Trent nom de plume):

I’m afraid I don’t know any good potboiling words, but surely the poetic genius that rose to the heights of *Love’s Ecstasy* can inspire itself again with its own music! [11/2/1914]

I always used to get the most marvellous ecstatic quivers up my spine over that work, and should very much like to re-make its acquaintance if it is yet published<sup>12</sup> – as it ought to be....[19/7/1918]

Warlock also singled out for special praise a few of Taylor’s more serious songs composed under his own name:

Herewith MS and spare proof of *The Windmill*<sup>13</sup> – which I like very much indeed. The words are quite delicious and the music fits them. The song ought to have a big sale – and as there is sure to be a second edition needed before long, will you forgive me if I make one criticism – the only one I could make of such a delightful thing – and that is that you might consider the question of knocking out the four accidentals (without any alteration of notes)? It seems to me that they just detract from the charming simplicity of the song; the tune is pure Phrygian mode – a rare thing in itself – and a perfectly-made accompaniment without the use of a single black note is still rarer, and, in this case, I think, would be more appropriate and beautiful. [28/8/1925]

Another Taylor song that impressed Warlock was *The Downs* [See p 16]:

Of the two songs you sent me and which I am now returning, I think *The Downs* is excellent – it has a splendid line and sweep, like the downs themselves and is keyed at just the right emotional pitch. A good singer could make a great effect with it, and, except for the slight difficulty of the piano part, there is nothing to hinder its publication by any good firm<sup>14</sup>. [24/9/1917]

It struck me whether Warlock may have recalled the successful flowing nature of this song when he came to compose *Consider* a few years later (albeit with the latter having a more sophisticated and intricate piano accompaniment). We know that at least one of Taylor’s compositions had a marked influence on Warlock, and that was his *Three Madonna Songs* for unaccompanied women’s choir:

... *Call for the robin-redbreast and the wren*<sup>15</sup>, for 4-part female chorus, this ... being dedicated to you, the more appropriately because your delightful *Madonna* songs were the first examples I ever saw of good music for this rather troublesome combination. [4/12/1925]

On the other side of the coin, Warlock was not totally uncritical of Taylor’s music, one example of this being his setting (seemingly) of Shelley’s *Love’s Philosophy*:

The other song seems to me unsatisfactory and, if I may say so, slightly watery. The poem surely cries out for full-bloodied, pot-boiler treatment, on broad lines without any rhythmic subtleties – 6/8 and a plain tune! Delius and Quilter have made settings of it without much success<sup>16</sup>. But this is only my private and personal view, plainly stated, since you asked for it: I don’t know why you should ask for it since, as a matter of plain fact, you know a great deal more about composition than I do. Except in moments of conceit, I don’t regard myself as a composer at all – as yet. Perhaps at the age of 35...! [24/9/1917]

During the late 1920s the Warlock/Taylor correspondence appears to have tailed off significantly. There are no extant letters from Warlock to Taylor for the years 1928 and 1930,

Colin Taylor's Gifts (continued)

**THE WINDMILL**

ANONYMOUS COLIN TAYLOR  
(1925)

Allegretto moderato ♩ = 120 *mf*

Voice The

Piano *mf* sempre assai ritmico e eguale *molto*

*secco*

5  
wind - mill is a cou - ris thing Com - pleat - ly built by art of man, \_\_\_\_\_ To

9  
grind the corn for man and beast That they a - like may have a feast. \_\_\_\_\_ The

13  
mill she is built of wood, \_\_\_\_\_ ir - on, and stone, \_\_\_\_\_ There - for she can - not go al -

16  
loan; \_\_\_\_\_ There - for, to make the mill to go, \_\_\_\_\_

*Ped.*

Colin Taylor's Gifts (continued)

# THE DOWNS

JOHN GALSWORTHY

COLIN TAYLOR  
(1919)

Con brio, sempre rubato

*f* *lunga*

accel.

Voice

Piano

Oh! the Downs high

*rit.* *a tempo* *rall.*

\* Ped. \* Ped.

4

a tempo

to the cool sky;

*ten.* *leggiero*

\* Ped. \* Ped. \*

7

*mf*

And the feel, the feel of the sun - warmed

*mf*

\* Ped. \* Ped.

10

rall.

moss;

*sonore ma delicato* *dim.* *pp*

8<sup>va</sup>

\* Ped. \*

## Colin Taylor's Gifts (continued)

with only one in 1927, and two in 1929. In the first of those from the latter year Warlock apologises to Taylor for the long delay in replying to one of his letters:

I am an execrable correspondent – if one may call a correspondent one who does not correspond at all – but in extenuation I can only plead that, as far as my own activities are concerned, there is less and less of any interest to correspond about as time goes on....I must apologize most humbly for not returning your MSS earlier. At the moment, I am sorry to say that they are stored in a warehouse with most of my other property, but I hope to get everything out in the course of the next month or two, and I will post them to you as soon as ever I can. It is no trouble at all to correct your proofs. [19/1/1929]

Warlock's last surviving letter to Taylor was written at a time when he was heavily engaged in preparations for the Delius Festival later that year. In a somewhat downbeat reference to his creative talents Warlock simply states:

I have definitely abandoned musical composition – it is more than a year since I wrote even a pot-boiler, and the demand for any but purely educational music in this country is absolutely nil: but I am glad to say that I have found plenty of other work in the last few months – indeed, I have never been so busy. [15/8/1929]

Little did he know then that he would go on to produce those last three gems: *The Frostbound Wood*, *After two years* and *The Fox!* ■

### Notes

- 1 At the time of writing the CD is still available via Amazon UK. Alternatively the Elwes recording of *On Wenlock Edge* can be heard on Youtube, along with a selection of some of the other song recordings he had made before his tragic early death in an American railway accident in 1921.
- 2 Beginning "Give a man a horse he can ride,"
- 3 Not to be confused with the earlier James Thomson who penned the words of *Rule, Britannia!*
- 4 A format not so often come across nowadays, but not uncommon at the time.
- 5 This was at a time when Warlock was also making several piano arrangements of Delius works.
- 6 dates in square brackets are those of Warlock's letters to Taylor from which the quotes are made.
- 7 Four pieces for piano published by Augener in that year.
- 8 Something created purely to make the money by catering to popular taste.
- 9 A setting for male voice choir of Ben Johnson's *So sweet is shee*. Published that same year by Curwen, it was dedicated to Philip Heseltine (perhaps because he admired it so much?).
- 10 Probably the 1910 song by Wilfrid Sanderson (1878-1935); there is a fine recording of it on Youtube sung by Richard Tauber.
- 11 Luigi Denza (1846-1922), probably best remembered today for his 1880 song *Funiculi, Funicula*, composed to celebrate the opening of the first funicular railway up Mount Vesuvius.
- 12 It failed to get published but Warlock's manuscript copy of the song is lodged in the British Library.
- 13 The song, published by OUP in 1925, utilises words affixed to an old Sussex Mill-post. Taylor took Warlock's advice and the four accidentals were dropped from the published song.
- 14 It went on to be published by Curwen in 1919.
- 15 The third of Warlock's *Three Dirges* of Webster.
- 16 An opinion that many might disagree with, especially with regard to Quilter's setting of *Love's Philosophy!* Taylor's setting (if it were indeed of this lyric – Warlock's letter is not specific here) remained unpublished.

### Postscript:

Several of Colin Taylor's songs are available via an archive service at [www.prestomusic.com](http://www.prestomusic.com) including *The Windmill*.

*The Downs* is less readily obtainable, but a copy of the song is held in the Society's Archival and Music Repository.

For the pianist, Presto Music can also supply several items, including *The Crescent Moon* and *Puck*.

*Dr Barry Smith, as photographed in April 1967 by Colin Taylor*

Barry very kindly sent us scans of the letter he received from Colin Taylor in 1967 together with Taylor's photographs – one minus a nose!!



Simonshof  
Stellenbosch / Ap: 25-67.

How wicked of me to cut off your proboscis! I'm sorry to have kept you waiting for your snaps, my dear Barry, but the spooly has only today been developed. I will send you the film in due course, in case you might care for further prints. I'm looking forward for another visit from you when you can make

it, but I know how fully occupied you are; so don't worry. Occasionally I'm lucky enough to hear your jolly chorus on the air — always a pleasure.

Good wishes & good luck

Sincerely - Colin Taylor -

Please don't acknowledge -

## Reviews

### *The PWS Annual General Meeting Weekend, 9 October 2020*

St Nicholas Church, Stevenage

**Michael Graves** tells all.



The *Rump & Wade* restaurant at the *Cromwell Hotel*, and the avenue through Bury Mead which leads to the church. This walk is described in E.M. Forster's book *Howards End*.

### Preparations and the Social Lunch

It was a very hot day in Stevenage, most unlike October! Those who had travelled from London couldn't believe it. Apparently they had left the city in a 'cold fog'. Stevenage would appear to be permanently bathed in an unworldly cocoon of heat, as the two preparatory visits undertaken by Claire and me were both made in sweltering heat – the first visit was actually on the hottest day of 2019 when rail tracks buckled and travel chaos reigned! Interestingly the main industry in the town of Stevenage is that of satellites – maybe there are alien forces at work!

The day began with the purchasing of sandwiches and sweetmeats for the afternoon tea. Once procured, I made my way to St Nicholas Church to put everything in the fridge and start preparations for the day. Jonathan Carne and Naomi Johnston soon arrived and we moved the piano into place and set the stage area generally. They were

very keen to start rehearsing as there would inevitably be pressure on available time for others to rehearse also.

It was soon midday and fourteen Warlockians arrived, mostly on time, for lunch at the *Rump & Wade* restaurant in the *Cromwell Hotel*. After so many months of lockdown and restrictions it was obvious that all were delighted to be meeting once again and there was a really good atmosphere with lively chat. The staff were very pleasant and solicitous, but the food was very slow in coming – one full hour after we had arrived. Fortunately, on the other hand, everybody was very satisfied with the quality of the food when it finally came. Phew!!

Most of those who had lunched decided to walk to St Nicholas Church for the AGM through Bury Mead, a delightful walk that is described in E. M. Forster's *Howards End*. But more on that later.

*The PWS Annual General Meeting Weekend* (continued)**The Annual General Meeting**

We arrived at the church to find that the Korros Ensemble, who were billed to play music by Elizabeth Poston in the evening's concert, had arrived just a few minutes earlier. They were clearly delighted to be in the church where Poston occasionally played the organ (apparently in her Wellington boots). Having set up Camilla's harp, they started to rehearse. As our meeting was taking place in an adjoining meeting room we were, effectively, serenaded by the Korros Ensemble, which was a delight.

The meeting itself was well attended by members from all parts of the UK and two from America. Vice-Chairman, David Lane had sent his apologies, being unable to attend due to circumstances beyond his control and our Hon Secretary, Claire Beach, also sent her apologies due to sustaining injuries as a result of an accident. The members present were sorry to hear of Claire's indisposition and asked for their good wishes to be passed on to her.

The formalities of introductions and apologies were soon dealt with and the minutes of the previous AGM were agreed as being accurate by those who had attended that meeting. As there were no matters arising, I then delivered the Chairman's Report, the complete transcript of which is reproduced in *Newsletter 109* pp3-8. The Hon Secretary's Report was read by Hon Treasurer, John Mitchell, (see *Newsletter 109* p8-9). Claire had spent a great deal of time during 2020/21 working on a draft specification for the planned revision of the PWS website, a copy of which was circulated to members for discussion. Some useful comments and suggestions were offered and taken on board. John then delivered his own Treasurer's Report (*Newsletter 109* p10-11).

The elections followed. Due to the recently introduced biennial rotation, these were for just four members of the committee, ie. trustees of the Society – David Lane (Vice-Chair), John Mitchell (Hon Treasurer), Bryn Philpott and Silvester Mazzarella (Committee Members). All were elected *nem con*.

Bryn Philpott then outlined three forthcoming events:

- i) the launch event for the Convivium soprano CD and the Soprano Songbook volume
- ii) the English Music Festival Christmas Concert weekend in Corbridge,
- iii) a Christmas concert to include a Warlock carol.



The Korros Ensemble

*Left to right:* Eliza Marshall (flute), Camilla Pay (harp) and Nicholas Ellis (clarinet).

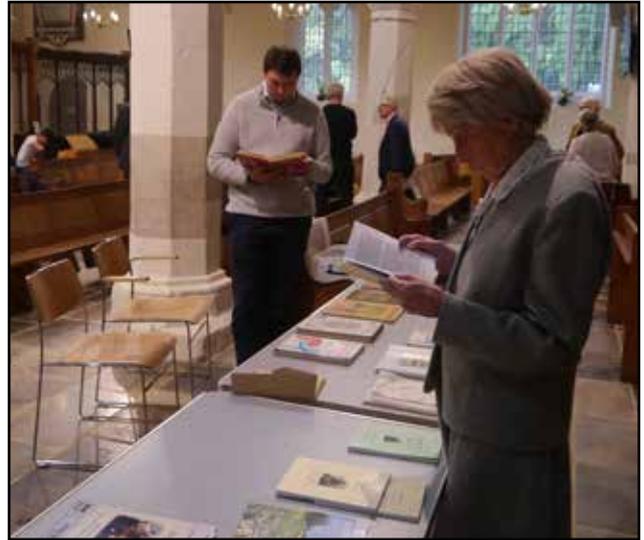
The location of the 2022 AGM was discussed. John suggested Steyning as a contender. 2022 is the 100th anniversary year of the completion of Warlock's song cycle *Lilligay*, the words of which came from an anthology edited and published by Victor Neuburg's Vine Press in Steyning. Warlock is known to have visited Neuburg there on more than one occasion "rusticating with my poet-printer in Steyning". All present approved the suggestion.

AOB produced a query from Anthony Ingle regarding the Google internet search for Peter Warlock Society. Apparently the first five results from his searches featured Malcolm Rudland and his postal address. Anthony suggested that we ought to address this inaccuracy.

Finally, Frank Bayford thanked the committee for all the work they did for "our wonderful Society" and made specific reference to the quality of the Newsletters.

There was a short break after the meeting before John Alabaster's talk on Elizabeth Poston.

**The PWS Annual General Meeting Weekend (continued)**



*Clockwise from top left: Eliza Marshall with John Alabaster; members mingle and peruse items on the sales and archive table; Giles Davies with Camilla Pay; Jonathan Carne (left) with Nicholas Ellis.  
(Photos: Michael Graves)*

**The Talk on Elizabeth Poston, Peter Warlock and Friends by John Alabaster.**

The talk was well illustrated with numerous photographs and images as well as examples of Poston's music. We were fortunate to have the assistance of a young man from St Nicholas church who sorted out all John Alabaster's technical needs including the digital projector, TV screens and sound system. He did an excellent job.

A slightly abridged transcript of John's authoritative talk can be found on p24.

**Evening Concert**

A complimentary tea prior to the concert was well received, partially because it took away the problem of people having to make their way down to the town for a snack. There was a congenial atmosphere with lively chat all round.

However, a rather alarming problem occurred just a few minutes before the concert was due to start. The 'boys' (Paul Martyn-West, Jonathan Carne, Bob Branick and Anthony Ingle) had manoeuvred the electronic piano just a couple of feet forwards on the stage area. The piano was switched

*The PWS Annual General Meeting Weekend* (continued)



Society members who performed (*left to right*) Jonathan Carne (piano), Paul Martyn-West (tenor), Naomi Johnston (soprano), John Mitchell (piano), Anthony Ingle (piano), Giles Davies (baritone).

(Photo: Michael Graves)

back on, but there was no sound. The technician had gone home after John's talk, so we had no back up. There was much button pressing on the instrument in the vain hope of restoring the sound, all to no avail. The rear panel was removed to gain access to the innards. Still no success. Then the problem was fixed as suddenly as it had occurred. A small switch underneath the keys, designed to silence the instrument, was discovered and this had been inadvertently switched whilst the piano was being moved. The sense of relief was palpable!! A few minutes later the concert began.

The performers, other than the three members of the Korros Ensemble, are all members of the PWS and I should say from the start that the standard of performance across the board was of a very high standard.

Naomi Johnston (soprano) and Jonathan Carne (piano) opened the first half with two of Warlock's songs, *Sleep* and

*Pretty Ring Time*, the former being the transposed version taken from the recently published *Soprano Songbook*.

Giles Davies (baritone) and John Mitchell (piano) followed with a set consisting of several of Warlock's transcriptions of Elizabethan songs: *There is a garden in her face* (Campion), *I die whenas I do not see her* (Danyel), *What then is love but mourning* (Rosseter), *L'amour de moi* (Anon: arr. John Goss) and *Tobacco* (Hume). The latter was an absolute 'gas' as Giles performed it with 'operatic' zeal, whilst sporting an outrageously ostentatious pipe.

Paul Martyn-West (tenor) with Jonathan came next with two of Warlock's songs, *Cradle Song* and *Robin Goodfellow* and Hal Collins' *Forget not yet*, which was a delight.

Naomi returned, again with Jonathan, for Elizabeth Poston's arrangement of *Bonny at morn* and her song *Sweet Suffolk Owl*.

*The PWS Annual General Meeting Weekend* (continued)



The Korros Ensemble: (left to right) Eliza Marshall (flute), Camilla Pay (harp), Nicholas Ellis (clarinet)  
Camilla receives accolades from her fellow members of the Ensemble, as well as the audience,  
for her performance of Poston's *Forma* for harp. (Photo: Michael Graves)

Song then gave way to instruments as the Korros Ensemble came onto the stage to place chairs and music stands and re-position the harp. Camilla Pay (harp) was to start their set by playing Elizabeth Poston's *Forma* for solo harp. Eliza Marshall (flute) took her seat, remained still, eyes closed. Nicholas Ellis (clarinet) sat behind Camilla to turn pages. Camilla read from Poston's original handwritten score which, apparently, included some crossings out and corrections and she had, in some cases, to interpret the amendments in order to determine which notes were originally intended. The piece was magical – original, inventive, avante garde.

The Korros then played Poston's *Trio* for flute, clarinet and harp, consisting of four movements: *Piacevole*, *Molto Moderato*, *Dolce delicato*, *Vivace scherzando*. There was a

predictably French feel to this music, partially due to the instrumentation. Flute and harp particularly are the sounds we associate with late 19th and early 20th century French composers. However, one is also mindful of Bax's chamber works scored for flute, harp and instruments, similarly French in feel. As with *Forma*, the *Trio* was very impressive and clearly the work of a fine composer. Both works have been recorded by the Korros and are available as a CD or as a download. (Details on page 32.)

The late James Griffett (tenor) will be known to many members of the Peter Warlock Society for his recording of *The Curlew* and several of Warlock's songs, arranged for voice, string quartet and instruments by Fred Tomlinson. James had been a member of the PWS for many years, but also, as a boy, had been a chorister at St Nicholas when

## ***The PWS Annual General Meeting Weekend*** (continued)

Elizabeth Poston on occasions played the church organ. Warlock's pet name for Poston was Chopcherry, so it was fitting that the second half of the concert started with James' recording of the song *Chopcherry*, which was followed by four of the *Nursery Jingles* from the same album.

Anthony Ingle then played the two Poston piano pieces, *Lullaby* and *Festa*. These, in comparison to the harp solo piece *Forma* and the *Trio*, were fairly lightweight, but pleasant enough in their own way and eminently suitable for the occasion. Anthony then played Maurice Jacobson's incredibly challenging arrangement of *Capriol* for solo piano. Brave man!

Naomi and Jonathan returned with the three Belloc songs, *Ha'nacker Mill*, *The Night* and *My own country*.

Giles and John then concluded the concert, starting with *Sweet and Twenty*. *The Frostbound Wood*, which followed, was taken very slowly and was totally spellbinding. Then came *The stranger 'lighted from his steed* (van Dieren) and Rebecca West's *June Twilight*. The *finale* was *Captain Stratton's Fancy*. It was a typical, effective and triumphant concluding song for a really excellent concert.

Our sincere thanks go to all the performers and particularly to John Mitchell who planned the programme and organised the musicians and all the practicalities. ■

### **Sunday: The Walk through Forster Country and visit to *Rooks Nest House*.**

Anne Conchie, of the Friends of Forster Country, very kindly offered to lead us on a short walking tour of Forster Country. This turned out to be a poignant event due to the recent granting of planning permission for a huge housing development that would obscure the view so beloved of Forster, Poston and many local residents today.

We met Anne (*pictured right*) at a prearranged spot in St Nicholas's church yard where she outlined her plan for the morning. We were a party of nine – John Mitchell, Jonathan and Naomi Carne, Anthony Ingle, Bob Branick, Karen Jones, Michael Walshe and his son. We proceeded to walk the circular route round the first part of the country walks, which took about an hour and a half. The weather, in contrast to Saturday, was quite dull, the views not quite as inspiring as they might have been the day before. However, it was interesting to see the countryside that so inspired Forster, Poston and so many others. Although the views aren't spectacular, as Anne readily admitted, it is more a case of the area being very pleasant with gentle undulations progressively unfolding towards the Chilterns. The efforts of the FoFC to halt extensive building programmes have unfortunately failed and the views we enjoyed will shortly be no more.

Anne then took us on to *Rooks Nest House*, where the new owner, Chris Naylor, was waiting to welcome us.



*The PWS Annual General Meeting Weekend (continued)*



*Top: Warlockians meet for Anne Conchie's tour of Forster Country (left to right): Michael Graves, Anthony Ingle, John Mitchell, Jonathan Carne, Kevin Walshe, Michael Walshe, Bob Branick, Karen Jones and Naomi Carne (Johnston).*

*Above left: The stile leading to Forster Country (right).*

*(Photos: Anne Conchie and Michael Graves)*

*The PWS Annual General Meeting Weekend* (continued)

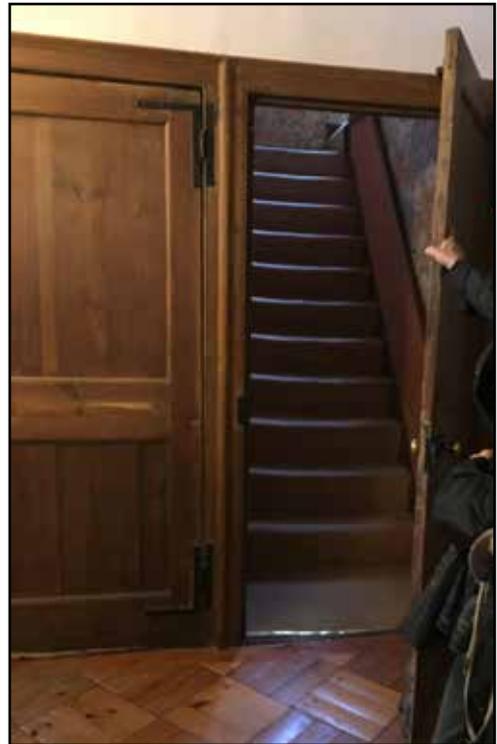
**Rooks Nest House**

The tour of the house and gardens proved to be most interesting. Chris Naylor, the current owner, was very welcoming and first invited us into the hall, which was more like a room. The house, of course, was the model for E.M. Forster's book *Howards End* and descriptions in the book can easily be identified. Indeed, the very first page of the book contains a description of the house exterior and also the hall.

It isn't going to be what we expected. It is old and little, and altogether delightful – red brick. Hall itself is practically a room. You open another door in it, and there are the stairs going up in a sort of tunnel to the first floor.

There has always been a feeling that the paintings and pictures in the house belong to the house rather than respective owners and we were shown many that had been 'handed down' through the years.

The grounds of the house, which amount to several acres, are delightful and we even saw Elizabeth Poston's beloved bee hives, which are still in place. Our thanks go to Chris Naylor for a most enjoyable visit. ■



*Clockwise from top:*  
The hall, as described in *Howards End*;  
Portrait of E.M. Forster, still hanging in the house;  
Elizabeth Poston's bee hives, still untouched;  
the front of Rooks Nest House.

*(Photos: Michael Graves)*

**Elizabeth Poston : Just 'One of the Girls' in Peter Warlock's Life?**

St Nicholas Church, Stevenage

**John Alabaster** presented this fascinating and informative talk following the Annual General Meeting.

Welcome to Forster Country, the childhood home of E. M. Forster. But this area could almost equally be called Poston Country because this was where the musician, Elizabeth Poston was born and bred. And with Elizabeth we have a connection with her friend, Philip Heseltine, alias Peter Warlock who, through her, also knew something at least of Hertfordshire including, perhaps, her home territory here but not enough to call Warlock Country.

The connection between Elizabeth and Philip (or Phil, as she called him) seems to have been quite a strong one, because, of all his many girlfriends, the one who regarded herself as his No. 1, was Elizabeth.

Who, you may ask, was she and why should she make such a claim? And was it true? And what was she to him? And he to her?

Well, let me tell you something about her to help you make up your own minds. I'll try to give you an overall picture of Elizabeth and then focus on her early years up to when she knew Warlock and finally mention key events after his death.

She was born in 1905 into a well-connected, property-owning, privileged but socially responsible, upper middle-class family, here in rural Stevenage and, after the death of her father in her early childhood, lived for the rest of her life with her widowed mother at *Rooks Nest House*, just a few hundred yards up the road from St. Nicholas Church.

She remained unmarried having once written, 'I had never made any vow against marriage, but I had long, long been persuaded it was a state for me of too much hazard, too little promise to draw free from my individual place and purpose'. Her 'place' was certainly here in rural Forster Country and her purpose focussed on being a musician.

She continued, 'I remember when I was three being asked when I intended to marry, and surprising my playmates by solemnly replying, 'When I think I shall be happier than I am being single'. That is quite something for someone so young to have said and is an early sign of a very single-minded character.

I had the pleasure of knowing her during the last 20 years or so of her life, principally because she was founder-president of the Stevenage Music Society, of which I was a member.

I soon learned that, although she did not oppose the Society's ambitions of performing big works, her preference

was certainly for the small-scale, particularly song, (one recalls, immediately, her dozen or so carefully researched, scholarly and beautifully produced song books).

I remember, after our concerts, she would join us at home, sitting on our piano stool and regale us with extraordinary tales of her remarkable life, often focussing on the amusing and the bizarre.

She had a wonderful sense of humour and delighted in telling of occasions such as during the Hoffnung Festival performances where pop-guns replaced canons for the re-scored 1812 overture while she played a medieval portative organ that hooted like an owl and went wildly out of tune as the corks popped out of the organ pipes because of over enthusiastic pumping by one of the celebrities drafted in to help. On a more serious note, after Gerard Hoffnung's untimely death, she arranged an extra performance at the Festival Hall in support of a Trust Fund to help educate the children.

As well as more serious London-based music activities, Elizabeth was very much part of Stevenage and neighbouring Hertfordshire towns and villages, composing and performing for local institutions and festivals, including for the organ here in St Nicholas Church, wearing, it has been said, a spotted scarf and wellington boots.

She was locally active, not only in music, but in local society in general. She, with her mother was also an active member of the Horticultural Society, winning prizes and acting as a judge.

There is a telling story here too for, when proposed as Vice-President for the Peter Warlock Society but asked for a subscription, she firmly declined to pay; she sent a donation instead.

Elizabeth had a clear view of right and wrong and, when necessary, did not shrink from expressing it unequivocally, but civilly.

She was equally sensitive to any wrong she may herself have committed, one memorable case being when she, ignorant of an arrangement agreed by her handy man for a curly-headed boy to help with her donkeys, came across the lad at his chores and told him bluntly that he was on private property and she 'really did not want little girls helping! He later described how his incandescent inner fury at her misidentification was soon calmed by an amused apology, made with what he described as 'a marvellous and

**Elizabeth Poston : Just 'One of the Girls' in Peter Warlock's Life? (continued)**

mischievous twinkle', and so began a long friendship and another story, he looking after Elizabeth's chocolate brown jenny donkey, Fairy and training her for competitions, while she helped him with his first published writing.

She loved her donkeys, her dogs and her honeybees, and, perhaps above all, *Rooks Nest House* and the surrounding countryside to the west, for this was so closely associated with E. M. Forster and his novel *Howards End*, based largely on the house and featuring members of her own family. For her, as for Forster, the house was not just bricks and mortar.

I should mention that there was sometimes some confusion between *Rooks Nest House* and neighbouring *Rooks Nest Farm*. To her amusement, the local press once described her as the well-known pig farmer, and she was even more amused on another occasion to receive her neighbour's pig-castration papers. It made her wonder whether farming might have been more profitable than writing for the harpsichord.

She was passionate about her garden and nature, scattering her pocket diary with entries about the annual cycle of the farming year. And she was not averse to doing her own haymaking.

These passions of hers – house, garden, nature – she was always ready to share with casual visitors to whom she invariably gave a warm welcome.

But, friendly as she was, she was also a very reserved person and rebuffed attempts to probe into her private life. When once asked whether she had ever met the musician, Sir Arnold Bax she said, 'such questions touch on personal matters and I hope you will not think me churlish in preferring to leave them unanswered, except to say, I knew him'. Polite but firm! And, as you know, she resisted, equally firmly, and politely, similar enquiries by some members of the Peter Warlock Society.

With her home being so important to her, perhaps the worst thing to upset the gentle rhythm of her life here was the establishment after the Second World War of Stevenage New Town. Of all the places chosen for new towns, Stevenage was the smallest, projected to be the largest! It caused her immense anxiety, worry and work. All that she loved became vulnerable to urban development. She witnessed the demolition of the large country house, *Malloes* not far away where she had been born, on top of which *Rooks Nest House*, too, was threatened with compulsory purchase.

Fortunately, Forster and many friends worldwide raised their voices to protect what came to be known as Green Belt Forster Country. Soon after her death in 1987, The Friends of the Foster Country was established to continue the battle which I think we have finally lost because planning permission has now been granted for 800 houses to be built there, to obscure the view west to the Chilterns so beloved by Forster and many others.

When the centenary of her birth was celebrated here in 2005 and her huge archive of over 100 box files of correspondence and virtually all her items of music became available to me, courtesy of Simon Camion, her literary executor and copyright holder, I began to realise just how large and diverse a range of friendships she had had.

I see her friends, not so much as a circle as such, but more as a constellation, for they all seem to have been in separate orbits about her, each often unaware of the other in their quite different ways. She once remarked, 'In the end the thing boils down to friends, the precious, lasting and great'. Whether they were *au pairs* or aristocracy they were treated with the same respect and consideration.

The correspondence also showed, just how comfortable she was with French and German and interested she was in other languages, Irish and Swedish among them.

I also became much more aware of her impressive work at the BBC, first during the war as Director of Music for the European Service, including engagement in intelligence in broadcasting musical coded messages to the resistance movement in Europe and then, when recalled, after the war, to help set up the Third Programme, subsequently making many broadcasts, including incidental music composed for a huge number of projects – we think of Forster's *Howards End* and *A Room With a View*, Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Hardy's *The Woodlanders* and Gammer Gurton's *Needle* – some 65 in all, a huge output.

All these projects seemed to have had behind-the-scenes tales attached; some sad, many amusing: With *Howards End* she had been hesitant about composing for the film because the first Mrs Wilcox in the book identified with her own mother; indeed, she found the burial scene of the Mrs Wilcox most upsetting, particularly because her mother had died earlier that year. And yet, at the same time, she also saw the funny side of things when the film crew tried to get an in-compliant horse to stand on a mark for filming.

**Elizabeth Poston : Just 'One of the Girls' in Peter Warlock's Life? (continued)**

*Room with a View* she said was 'fun to do ... You weren't meant to single out a good deal of the music, which I put there not to intrude but to underline and to continue when words left off, though in longer sequences such as Lucy's walk through the olive grove, it had its own end in the Enchanted Lake (pond) where everyone meets the moment of truth.' To that end, she used Forster's clues, starting with the *Rhine Maiden* (his own suggestion), progressing to the awful *Barcarolle* from *Tales of Hoffmann*, via Debussy and *L'Après-midi* to Schubert and *The Trout* and so to *Pop Goes the Weasel*. And finally, *Nearer my God to thee* when the Rev. Beebe has to face getting out of the water. Perhaps you remember the scene?

*The Tempest* was one of her most long sought-after and satisfying projects and she delighted in trying to create the magical atmosphere required of 'This Enchanted Isle', searching for the right sounds, distinguishing between hiving and swarming bees, getting a soprano piccolo note from bats, some marvellous owls, and intriguing dog-barks, and finally, a cock who crowed in D major.

With *The Woodlanders*, the funny part came when she had to supply music for The Village Band playing in church for a wedding and at a dance. Scored for flageolet, double bass and wuffing serpent, she could hardly contain herself, the sound was so weird, on top of which she had scored it with short octaves, producing an excruciating sound and giving everyone hysterics. She said 'It was incredibly funny.'

She did write large choral works and two operettas but no symphonies or concertos. The small-scale was what appealed to her most and, apart from songs, she produced a number of instrumental chamber works, one of which, *Concertino da Camera* was notably described as pouring new wine into old bottles (i.e., new music into old instruments – oboe d'amore and viola da gamba). This was the piece she chose when asked to describe how she composed. Until recently only the title page was available in the archive so we could not follow her method to illustrate her method of composing *Story*.

So, my enduring image of Elizabeth is of a tall, imposing character, of pleasant appearance who, as her friend Dr. Sylvia Watkins once said, 'looking a million dollars' even when (as was often the case) wearing a head scarf, a French shepherd's old coat and corduroy slacks. She had both dignity and warmth.



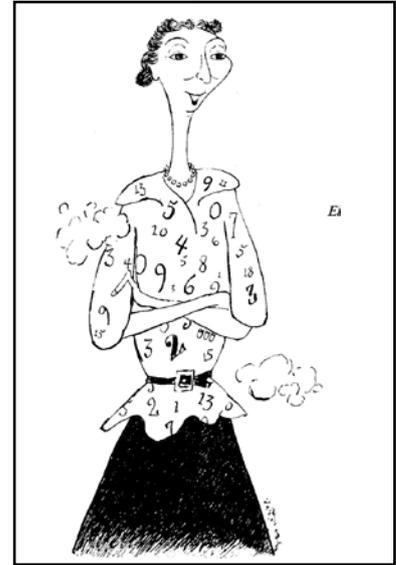
Elizabeth Poston, 'looking a million dollars' even when wearing a head scarf and a French shepherd's old coat.

Her voice was attractive, and she was an eloquent broadcaster. She said she loved the fluency and beauty of English speech – the music of the words. And was interested in 16th and 17th century poets. She was a well-read and erudite but self-effacing scholar. Above all she was a country-lover, and a warm and generous friend.

So that is how I remember her.

But what was she like when, at the tender age of 18 or 19, she first met Peter Warlock, always referred to as Phil or Philip, and became a close friend?

I think we can be sure of at least two most important things. The first is her love of her home, rural environment, so much so that, on one occasion when sent away to boarding school, she absconded to return home; she was very much in tune with rural life, mixing with the local farm children, acquiring the Hertfordshire vernacular; and perhaps above all, relishing the sounds of the countryside – bees we've mentioned, but there was the hoot of owls, squarking rooks holding their parliaments on her lawn, the pinging of milk into a pail, the 'subdued whirring of harvest', even the sudden slurping sound of worms slithering into their burrows when disturbed. She had a keen ear.

*Elizabeth Poston : Just 'One of the Girls' in Peter Warlock's Life?* (continued)

Elizabeth Poston in the grounds of *Rooks Nest House* and Hoffnung's cartoon sketch of Poston.

The second attribute we can be sure of is her love of music, especially song and, of course, playing the piano.

She remembered being two when she heard her first song and she later remarked that it was 'via the contours and rhythms of song that we are able to arrive most naturally at language'

She could not have been much older than two when her mother, sitting at the piano, sat Elizabeth in her lap and rested the child's hands on hers as she played, the scene illustrated in her *The Baby's Song Book*. She started playing herself when she was four and was 13 when she composed the first of her own songs, the title of which, *Shall I wasting in Despair* was the first line of a sonnet by the 17th century poet George Wither (1588-1667). So here was an early sign of her interest in early writers. She was soon also collecting books of dance tunes and nursery rhymes.

At 17 she wrote *Sweet Suffolk Owl*, which we will hear tonight; the text for which is also by a 17th century writer, Thomas Vautor (1619), discovered when she was rummaging in the library of the local MP, Julius Bertram.

Another attribute would have been her interest and facility in languages, having been brought up to converse with foreign visitors in their native tongues – French, German and Russian – and having lived during her formative teenage years with her mother in France and Italy. Consequently, it is no surprise to find later, in *The*

*Children's Song Book*, her translations of half a dozen songs in various European languages.

After excelling at school in music (and languages), she went on to the Royal Academy of Music where she continued to do well, collecting medals (bronze and then silver) for piano, aural-training and sight-reading (the latter with distinction) and, more importantly, had published a dozen or so of her songs. One of these, *The Bellman's Song*, we will also hear tonight, again the text was early – Ravenscroft (1611).

When she was 20, one of her published works, the vocal duet, *Salve Jesus* was performed at a Royal Academy of Music concert, the programme of which included works by Peter Warlock and Arnold Bax. So she was already in very good company!

A year later, the BBC broadcast an orchestrated version of her *Aubade* and two years later a programme of her music, which was very favourably reviewed. Still in her early 20s, she was very much in the ascendant professionally.

Furthermore, she had attracted plenty of attention from the opposite sex. Later in life, speaking of her student days, she recalled that her greatest friends had been her professors and that most of those capable of love had been in love with her at one time or another; she also cryptically mentioned meeting, 'the Neutral Friend', Philip Heseltine and 'never looking back.'

**Elizabeth Poston : Just 'One of the Girls' in Peter Warlock's Life? (continued)**

Of her friendship with Phil, she explained to his mother after his death that she 'came to know him well and in a rather different way from a good many people who knew him'. She and Philip had a lot in common: they had similar family backgrounds, shared many views on art, attended concerts together, explored the English countryside together, both were attracted by 16th and 17th century poets, and both had an interest in languages. She was also able to act as his amanuensis and play over his piano accompaniments, not always an easy task.

That is a formidable list and I don't think Phil's other girlfriends fitted that mould.

The 11-year age difference between them might attract comment but is quite congruent with her tendency to turn, not so much to her contemporaries, but to older men. This, she explained, was the result of losing a relatively elderly father when she was only seven. At that time, former colleagues of his took a fatherly interest in her and later she formed friendships with a few other, older men, perhaps the most influential of whom would have been her tutor, Vaughan Williams; she called him, 'Uncle Ralph'. She said later, 'he was a real father relationship to me, one I never cease to miss, so wise and so loving.' She dedicated her *The Nativity* to him. Another such friend, much later in life, was the master printer, Arthur Hope, who, she said was 'a sort of VW of the printing world', and 'like a father to her'.

We know that Elizabeth regarded herself as Phil's No. 1 girlfriend, but did she regard Phil as her No. 1 boyfriend? She did attract her admirers at the time she knew Phil; one was deeply in love with her. It is clear, however, that, as her mother understood and expressed in one of her consoling letters, Elizabeth was not able to reciprocate and the relationship had to remain platonic and did so for a number of years thereafter.

Much of our judgement of the depth of the friendship between Phil and Elizabeth (Chopcherry or Cherry, as he sometimes called her) can come from events after his death in December 1930.

We get the flavour of her grief from her letter to one of Phil's friends, Bruce Blunt (see *Newsletter 105 p35*), in the June following his death; it was discovered recently and kindly shared with us by John Mitchell. Written from Austria where she had been sent for her health, it expressed her thankfulness at being away from everything. Perhaps

she was immersing herself in the Salzburg Festival that summer. She said she had begun to think of working again on carols, which she described as, 'the only thing left really worth while to do – perhaps the more so since it is now so long that the power to do any has been denied me.' Closing, she wrote, 'The times & all that Philip took with him from the world will never come into it again. It is something to have known them. Beyond that, there is nothing to be said. Far too much has been said & done already – & still seems to be continuing so. It makes me sick.'

These last two sentences express her vexation at what she felt was a misrepresentation of Phil and his music and, when she finally recovered her health, it inspired her to put the record straight as she saw it.

Subsequently, over many years, she arranged works after him, dedicated works to his memory, quoted from his *Capriol* and promoted his music – arranging and making transcriptions and doing recordings and performances.

She also wrote criticism and made broadcasts about him including two notable long series of programmes. In her broadcast, *Dispelling the Jackalls*, she famously castigated the misrepresentation as being 'at second hand from the second rate' and there is little doubt that Cecil Gray, whose book she said was 'misleading and inaccurate', was a prime target of her criticisms.

Elizabeth felt she knew Phil better than anyone else and intended to include him in her *Autobiographia* though she never completed the task.

She once admitted that he was a gentle lover and there is no doubt that he had had a profound and lasting effect on her whole life. Ursula Vaughan Williams testified to it from first-hand.

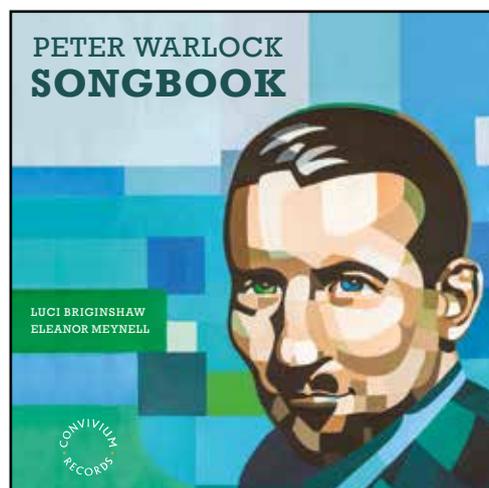
When she was in her late 60s she confessed to a friend, that the French folk song, *A La Claire Fontaine* which she had translated and arranged for *The Faber Book of French Folk Songs* was her particular love, and that she had been rather obsessed with it for a long time – so simple and moving, the chorus, in particular,

'*Il y a longtemps que je t'aime/ Jamais je ne t'oublierai*' (Long is the time I have loved you/Oh, never can I forget). It makes one wonder who, among the many friends she had loved, might have been the object of her obsession.

So, was she Phil's No. 1 girlfriend? And was he her first and her No. 1 boyfriend? I leave it to you to decide! ■

**Combined Launch Event:** Tuesday 2 November 2021, The University Women's Club, Mayfair  
**Luci Briginshaw (soprano) and Eleanor Meynell (piano): Peter Warlock Songbook CD  
 and Peter Warlock: A Soprano Songbook publication.**

Claire Beach

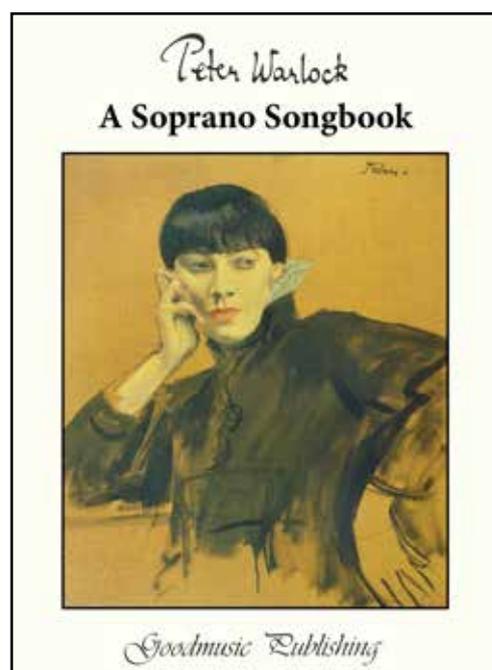


In a quiet square in the heart of central London, hidden behind the non-stop traffic of Park Lane and the ever-open shops of Oxford Street is the anonymous façade of the University Women's Club; one of those buildings that you could walk past daily without knowing it was there. In the lovely drawing room of the club, with its hand painted murals, Luci Briginshaw and Eleanor Meynell launched their new CD, *Peter Warlock Songbook*.

Before the recital David Lane read a welcome message on behalf of Michael Graves, the PWS chairman, who was unable to attend. Luci and Eleanor thanked us all for coming – more of us than they'd expected – and dedicated the concert to Everard and Shirley Meynell, thanking them and the Peter Warlock Society for their contributions to the CD.

Luci told us that she and Eleanor would be performing 14 of the 28 songs on the CD, with an introduction to each pair. She mentioned that the songs would be performed in chronological order, as on the CD, and would demonstrate how stylistically varied Warlock's songs were. Luci provided a very personal introduction to each pair of songs, which she has meticulously researched.

The first song was *The Everlasting Voices*; Luci observed that although Warlock wrote 'rewrite ending?' on the original score, the C major chord at the end does actually make sense. The clear, declamatory performance of this song contrasted well with the dark and controlled *Heraclitus*. This works particularly well for the soprano voice, as the low vocal line brings out the compassion of the words before the long piano coda. In *Take, O take those lips away*, Luci suggested that the shift of harmony at the end under the phrase from the beginning makes sense of the final words. The low parts of the melody sounded especially good, and Eleanor let the final chords ring out to emphasise the mood. *The bayly berith the*



*bell away* brought out the echoes between piano and vocal line, and Luci's voice suited the plaintive words of the hesitant young girl, slowing towards the end.

Luci felt that Warlock's *A Sad Song* was a particularly fine setting of Aspatia's Song from *The Maid's Tragedy*, and demonstrated why a soprano voice was so suitable to bring out the heart-breaking falling phrases of the melody,

Peter Warlock Songbook CD launch (continued)



while Eleanor brought out the little trills that I'd never noticed before in the piano part. They threatened to play *Dedication* twice, as they enjoyed it so much (but didn't). Here Eleanor's bold piano combined with Luci's effusive vocals for a well-acted performance; it was fun to watch them almost being carried away towards the end!

*Sleep* was also beautifully performed, bringing out the bitterness of the lyrics, the piano solo passages particularly sensitive. *Autumn Twilight* is thought to have been Warlock's favourite of his songs. It's not easy to follow his instruction 'very quietly', but Luci and Eleanor did so, admirably, with controlled voice and lots of piano pedal to create an

## Peter Warlock Songbook CD launch (continued)

agreeably murky atmosphere. A more straightforward song, *Rest, sweet nymphs* followed; a gentle and heartfelt lullaby. This contrasted well with the dramatic *I held love's head* with its rather jazzy chords and clashes.

Luci's theory – that in *Cradle Song* the voice is the nurse, and the piano is the cradle – makes perfect sense when you hear her sing the song with Eleanor's rocking accompaniment. Another song well suited for soprano, here the pair really brought out the unsettled mood, making the hairs stand up on the back of my neck. As the final major chord sounded, I realised I had forgotten to breathe. This disquiet was swiftly dispersed, though, by the persuasive, gentle rippling of *The Contented Lover*.

*And wilt thou leave me thus* was taken quite fast, giving it an urgency and passion, enhanced by slurs in the vocal line and expressive piano counterpoint to convey the heartbreak of the words.

But the recital finished on a more cheerful note as we heard the exuberant *Youth* with its bouncy piano part and joyful melody which Eleanor and Luci consider the nearest

thing to a 1920s music-hall ballad that Warlock wrote: they obviously had fun with this one which was good to watch as well as to listen.

Luci and Eleanor clearly love these songs, and it really shows in their performance. The songs of Peter Warlock are not easy to sing or to play, but a casual listener would not have realised this as careful research and preparation made them sound effortless. In addition, the interplay between singer and pianist is a delight to hear and to watch; they are a real team and take a delight in each other's interpretations. They have proved beyond any doubt that Warlock's songs aren't just men singing about beer, and indeed some of the songs in this recital seem far more suited to the female voice. The programme was well put together, with its selection of songs from the CD and their arrangement in pairs. It was a joy to attend this recital and to know that Warlock's songs are still attracting new performers a century after they were composed. I would urge anyone who hasn't yet done so to listen to Luci & Eleanor's CD at once. ■

## Peter Warlock Songbook CD ~ Convivium Records CR062

Luci Briginshaw (soprano); Eleanor Meynell (piano)

**Derek Foster** reviews the CD referred to in Claire's review of the launch event above

This is a most enjoyable set of 28 Warlock songs, expertly presented. Many are rarely performed or recorded, in fact a few seem to be the only existing recordings at present, many are the only available soprano version, and Warlockians may value the CD for this reason alone. But there are more compelling reasons to buy this CD.

The soprano Luci Briginshaw has a honeyed tone with just enough vibrato (for my taste) and admirable intonation, needed in the chromatic passages and extended chords where any ambiguity of pitch would mislead the ear.

Her sensitive piano accompanist, Eleanor Meynell, provides not just a secure framework but a true partnership. There are places where I noticed a subtle *rubato* delivered precisely together by the duo and there is an obvious rapport between them.

Luci has provided excellent and informative sleeve notes, and certainly pointed me towards her interpretations. As

an example, I would not have known quite what the words of *The Bayly Berith the Bell Away* meant, but her notes about a young bride looking to the future mirror her vocal depiction of hope and apprehension. Full texts and details of authors are also included in the booklet.

The tracks are arranged in near-chronological order. As the sleeve notes say, the tracks show Warlock's artistic development, even though this is by no means a linear one. Michael Graves, on the CD cover, mentions the extraordinary diversity of Warlock's oeuvre. Although most of the settings are syllabic, or nearly so (not melismatic writing), some have the sung notes reinforced in the piano melody or lower part, some clash and need the careful intonation mentioned above. Some have simple harmonies, some highly chromatic. Some of the piano accompaniments are very sparse (as at the opening of *Heraclitus*), some virtuosic (*Dedication* goes full piano-concerto style).

## Peter Warlock Songbook CD (continued)

Warlock said 'Music is neither old nor modern: it is either good or bad music, and the date at which it was written has no significance whatever'.<sup>1</sup> While maybe this is a truism (but possibly indicative that he thought himself a little left behind from contemporary developments?), most of these songs can be placed firmly at the start of the 20th century. One or two could be thought to be from the Elizabethan period, but usually a few chromatic notes (or many more than a few) give the game away.

The stylistic diversity does not really show itself in the opening four tracks, all quite slow and with some Delius-like chromaticisms. *The Everlasting Voices*, dating from 1915, opens with high piano chords and I wondered if this had been transposed, but it is the original key. Warlock 'was very pedantic about original keys. He deplored transpositions'.<sup>2</sup> Nearly all the keys that I have been able to check on this CD (over half of the songs) are Warlock's originals. Only one of those, *Take, o Take those lips away*, is in a later issued version.

These earlier songs are interesting and show Warlock finding his way; *The Water-Lily* reminded me in parts of Ives.

In *Heraclitus* the long held piano notes at the start tend to fade, and Warlock's lost quartet arrangement, reconstructed by John Mitchell, seems a good alternative version.<sup>3</sup>

After these first items, the true voice(s) of Warlock is/are apparent, the writing is more assured, and there is considerable variety from one track to the next. There is much to enjoy here. Even if Luci 'wanted to exclude all those songs about beer', there are still rollicking, rumbunctious numbers such as *Robin Goodfellow* amidst more mellow and meditative items.

The attractive 'cubist' cover picture by Paul Briginshaw is based on a photograph of Warlock with a roguish grin, as if giving his approval to the venture. ■

### Notes

- 1 *The Occasional Writings of Philip Heseltine (Peter Warlock): Early music* (ed. 1998)
- 2 Fred Tomlinson. General Preface to PWS Thames Edition Songs Vol 1.
- 3 recorded by Charles Daniel and the Bridge Quartet on EM Records

### CDs and Songbook – how to get them!

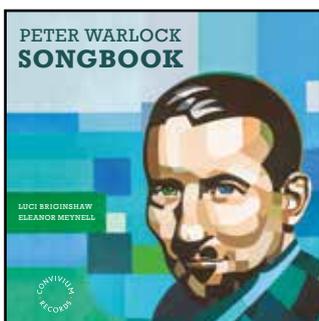


CD: *Nostalgica* ~ Korros Ensemble (see p20)  
 CD: £9.99 Shipped worldwide (Free UK P&P)  
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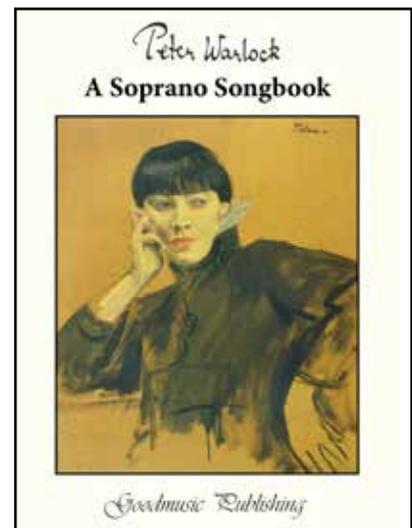
#### CD: *Peter Warlock Songbook*

CD: £9.99 Shipped worldwide (Free UK P&P)  
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The *Peter Warlock Songbook* CD and copies of *Peter Warlock: A Soprano Songbook* (music scores) are also available to paid up members of the PWS at £7 and £10 respectively – free UK P&P, overseas at cost. Contact John Mitchell whose details can be found on the inside front cover.



## Reviews

### CD Review: *The Holy Boy*

Timothy Dickinson (bass-baritone) and Duncan Honeybourne (piano)

John Mitchell



Timothy Dickinson (left) and Duncan Honeybourne

The title of this CD will be immediately recognised by those familiar with John Ireland's music: *The Holy Boy* was originally a piano piece, later adapted by the composer (and others) into various other formats, including a version for voice and piano (to words by his friend Herbert S. Brown). The latter concludes this splendid album that bears the subtitle *Christmastide in Albion*. Unlike so many Christmas CDs that are at least partly choral-based, this one is essentially of solo song, and English Song at that, admirably performed by Timothy Dickinson (bass-baritone) and Duncan Honeybourne (piano). A novel approach here has been to intersperse the vocal items with four carefully chosen piano solos, each relating to the Festive Season in one way or another. In the short introductory note, it is recorded that digging a little beyond the most well-known Yuletide fare revealed a whole wealth of material suitable for a CD of this type. Part of the inspiration came from *Sing Solo Christmas* (an OUP anthology edited by the singer – and former PWS member – the late John Carol Case), and some of the numbers there are included in the present compilation.

The recital begins with one of the most popular and well-loved Christmas solo songs: Michael Head's *The Little Road*

*to Bethlehem*, which nicely eases the listener into much that follows that is so less often, or, indeed, rarely heard. New to me was the second item, Ivor Gurney's *Carol of the Skiddaw Yowes*, which immediately struck me as a song that deserves to be better known than it is. Gurney's melody is almost folksong-like, having a wistful modal quality about it. The lyric refers to the sheep (yowes = ewes) on a Lake District fell, with the shepherds entreating Jesus to protect them and their flocks from the bitter cold. Following this is Charles Villiers Stanford's *The Monkey's Carol*, another wistful number where the entreaty this time is from an elderly organ grinder's monkey for a few coins from passers-by, whilst reflecting on the freedom of an earlier life in warmer southern climes that contrasted to its present captivity in the winter cold.

It is very pleasing to record that Warlock is the composer that most prominently features on the CD, with five titles included: *The bayly berith the bell away*; *Bethlehem Down*; *Balulalow*; *Tyrley Tyrlow*; and *The Frostbound Wood*. It occurred to me that maybe the first-named was a less obvious choice for a Christmas recital, for although there have been a number of claims about the meaning of the text, it clearly doesn't relate to the birth of Christ

**CD Review: *The Holy Boy* (continued)**

(perhaps the several references to 'the bell' may have been suggestive?). It is taken at a slower tempo than we usually hear it: Warlock marked it at dotted crotchet = 50, whereas in this performance it is around 40 – but it does work in this more drawn out and expressive way. *Bethlehem Down* has become so popular in its original choral guise that the solo version, completed during the closing weeks of Warlock's life, has tended to be overlooked. Its mood is significantly darker, and perhaps captures the essence of Bruce Blunt's poem in a more subtle manner than does the largely strophic choral setting. The accompaniment was really designed by the composer for the organ, with the piano specified as an alternative – indeed, it was heard with piano (played by Arnold Bax) at the First Peter Warlock Memorial Concert in 1931. As such it is rather awkward to play, with some uncomfortable stretches involved, and Duncan Honeybourne is to be congratulated on giving it such a good account on this recording.

Being rendered by a bass-baritone, unsurprisingly *Balulalow* is sung here in the less often heard low voice version, published by OUP in C major. Perhaps the main Warlock rarity in the programme is the solo voice with piano version of *Tyrley Tyrlow*, which, if known at all, is sometimes heard in the later choral adaptation with orchestra. I am not 100% sure, but I believe the recording here may be the first commercial one of the solo song. It certainly works brilliantly as such, albeit with the rhythmic displacements in the accompaniment at the end of the second and third verses causing something of an aural jolt on first hearing. Appearing in the original published score is a direction (presumably from Warlock?) that the title words should have the R's rolled, so as to be pronounced as 'Tyrrley Tyrrlow'. In this recording what we hear is more akin to 'Tirraley Tirralow' – which is kind of okay, but maybe not quite as the composer intended? The Warlock contribution suitably ends with an exemplary performance of *The Frostbound Wood* by Timothy Dickinson – paced in such a way to give a chant-like delivery of Blunt's poem, but with a few carefully judged nuances in a vocal line that is very largely confined to the compass of a fifth. The song is probably both Blunt and Warlock at their most personal and enigmatic, presenting its own challenges for an effective delivery, something which is very much achieved here.

After Warlock, the next most represented composer is his friend Arnold Bax, with four items included. Three of these are from his *Five Fantasies on Polish Christmas Carols*, composed in 1945 at the end of the Second World War. Bax had originally arranged these traditional Polish carols for unison treble voices and strings, which were meant '...to turn the blood of war into the balm of love'. The intention was that British children '...were to have sung them in aid of their starving Polish brothers and sisters'. They are referred to as *Fantasies* because to each one the composer has provided a substantial instrumental introduction and coda that add something extra to what might otherwise have been just a straightforward arrangement of the melody. The first one, *God is born*, for example, opens with a stately eight bar polonaise on the piano, and ends quietly with a little postlude based on the same material. Perhaps the most appealing of the three heard here is *Lullay, dear Jesus*, a lullaby with a gorgeous, simple tune that is wonderfully harmonised in a piquant way that only Bax knew how to do convincingly. The third carol, *Merrily to Bethlehem*, begins with a sprightly sixteen bar mazurka on the piano, prior to switching to the short *allegro vivace* carol in common time. Again, like the Gurney mentioned earlier, it is surprising that the work, with its attractive traditional tunes and Bax's imaginative treatment thereof, is not better known.

The other Bax item is one of the four piano solos included on the album: *O Dame get up and bake your pies*, which takes the form of a set of variations on a *North Country Christmas carol*. The choice of theme was deliberate here, with Bax inscribing the work To Anna and Julian Herbage in acknowledgement of pies baked and enjoyed 'on Christmas Day in the morning' 1945. Another of the solos, Gustav Holst's *Chrissemas Day in the morning*, is also based on the same tune, and it is interesting to note just how different the two treatments are. Holst's piece almost amounts to a toccata for a major portion of it, whereas there is much contrast between the deftly conceived variations in the Bax. The other two piano pieces also make use of traditional Yuletide material, the first to be heard being Percy Grainger's *The Sussex Mummings' Carol*, which utilises a tune noted down by Lucy Broadwood in the 1880s from the singing of some Christmas Mummings at Lyne, near Horsham. Although slow moving and expressive, it requires some skill to play well, as the melody is concealed in the

CD Review: *The Holy Boy* (continued)

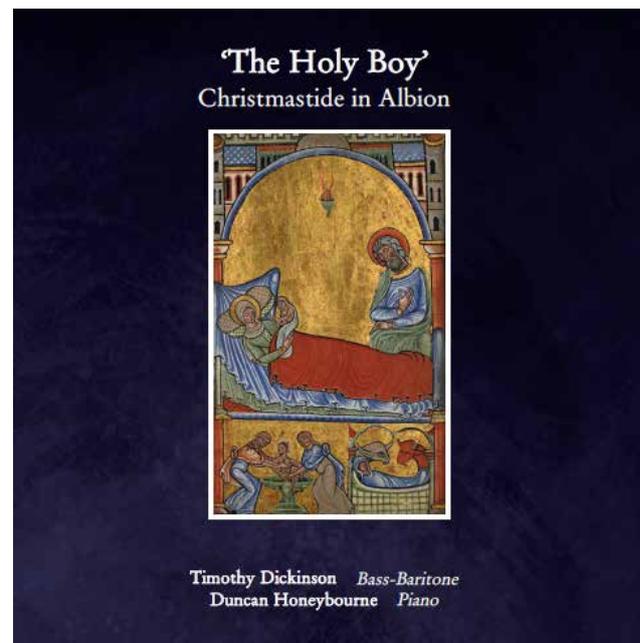
middle region of the pianistic texture – something that Duncan Honeybourne accomplishes with seeming ease. The final solo is Henry Balfour Gardiner's *Noel*, which starts off as a brisk romp in compound time, with the promise of a most satisfactory piece in the offing. However ... after a while there is a sudden slackening of tempo leading into what strikes me as an over-harmonised version of *Good King Wencelas* which, having known the work for well over fifty years, I still feel is rather out of place, and jars somewhat when it appears. In my opinion Balfour Gardiner has penned much better piano music elsewhere! Having got that personal gripe out of the way, it just remains to record that Duncan Honeybourne plays those quicker moving pieces with a brilliance that is impressive.

The remaining songs on the album come from Benjamin Britten, Vaughan Williams, Malcolm Williamson, another from Michael Head, and two from lesser known composers: Mark Hankey and Norman Fulton. Britten is represented by his *Corpus Christi* (from his early *A Boy was Born*), and perhaps unsurprisingly I found myself comparing it with Warlock's masterly choral setting. Britten's is one of innocence and simplicity, and whilst quite charming in itself, it doesn't capture any of the mystery and slightly disturbing imagery of the medieval text that Warlock's treatment achieves. From Vaughan Williams comes *The Oxen*, which is extracted from *Hodie*, originally for chorus & orchestra. This substantial Christmas Cantata dates from the composer's later years, but the music here harks back to his earlier style. The Thomas Hardy poem muses on oxen kneeling at midnight on Christmas Eve, prescient of the impending Nativity.

Malcolm Williamson's *A Christmas Carol* sets verse by G.K. Chesterton. It has a paradoxical nineteenth century feel to it although, as it moves along with a steady quaver movement in the accompaniment, much modulating unexpectedly as it does so, it very obviously emanates from the twentieth century! The other Michael Head song is *The Carol of the Field Mice*, with words by Kenneth Grahame from his classic *The Wind in the Willows*. In the wintry fifth chapter a choir of field mice turn up at Mole End to entertain the Mole and the Rat with a lyric centring around 'Joy in the morning'. Like much of Head's vocal music, it is strong melodically, and perhaps surprising it's not so often heard at Christmas as *The Little Road to Bethlehem*.

Mark Hankey's *Lucy's Carol* is delightful both in its easy-to-grasp-in-one-hearing tuneful music, and its cute words – the latter, apparently, being noted down from a four year old Lucy as she addressed her doll about a conversation she imagines between Joseph and Mary. The penultimate festive number on the disc is from Norman Fulton to verse that dates back to at least the sixteenth century: *Make We Merry*, the character of which calls for something in the way of bravura – which it gets from the composer's setting, and indeed from the rendering by the present singer and pianist! As mentioned earlier, the album concludes pleasingly with a lovely performance of John Ireland's *The Holy Boy*, a nice way to round off this enterprising Yuletide anthology in contemplative mood.

And so ... a very much recommended CD. Timothy Dickinson is in good voice throughout, with excellent intonation and clear diction (something of a must here, as the texts of the songs are not reproduced as they so often are in vocal/choral albums nowadays). Duncan Honeybourne is a fine accompanist, as well as demonstrating a splendid technical prowess in the solo items. Together they make a great team, and one hopes we may, in due course, hear more from them! ■



*The Holy Boy* (PFCD170) price £12.50 is available online at:  
[https://primaface.ascrecords.com/holy\\_boy.html](https://primaface.ascrecords.com/holy_boy.html)

## Obituaries

**Keith Glennie-Smith: 14 January 1927 - 27 February 2021**

**John Mitchell**



Celia and Keith Glennie-Smith at the May 2001 AGM in Gloucester.

(Photo: John Mitchell)

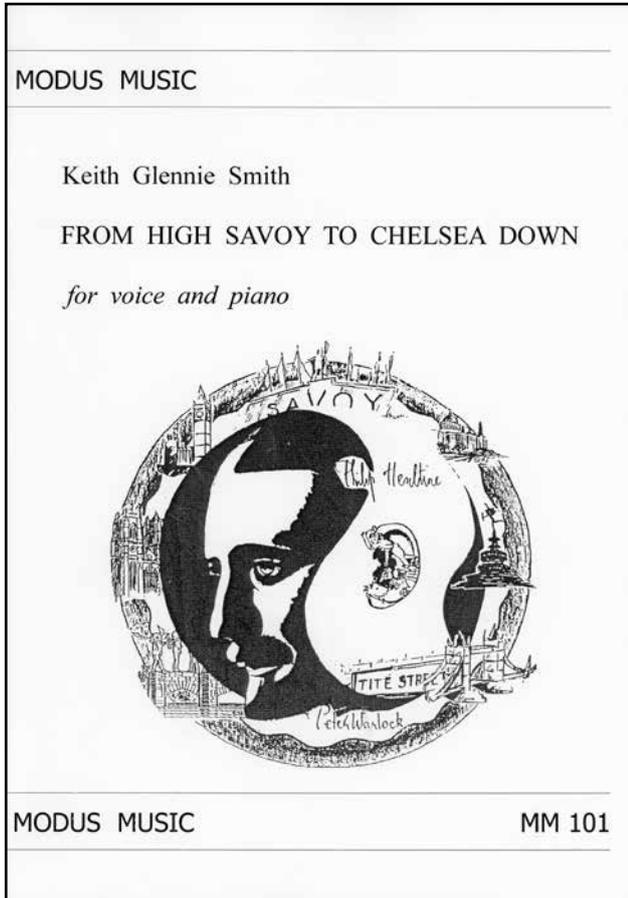
We are much saddened to report the death of PWS member Keith Glennie-Smith, which occurred last year not very long after his 94th birthday. I don't have a record of exactly when he joined the Society, but he had certainly been a member for the best part of thirty years.

My acquaintance with him, which went on to develop into a firm friendship, began quite unexpectedly. The occasion was the Warlock Centenary Celebration Day at the Savoy Hotel, London, on 30 October 1994. Frank Bayford and myself stayed on for the concert of Warlock's music in the Savoy Theatre, and sitting quietly in the stalls during the interval, we were suddenly engaged in conversation by Keith, who happened to be seated immediately behind us. It did not take long to establish that, apart from sharing a keen interest in, and love of Warlock's music, like Frank and I, he was also a composer. What became more relevant was that he had written (and to quote his own description) *A Cycle of Nursey Jingles for Peter Warlock's 100th Birthday*. Ten of these little songs had already been composed decades earlier (c.1950) with words by Eleanor Farjeon, and to which a final

recently penned one (to his own words) was added. Entitled *From High Savoy to Chelsea Down*, all of the lyrics are about places in London, with the first and last songs alluding to Warlock's birth and death in the capital. Keith wanted to get the songs published, but realised that he needed a bit of editorial assistance – what he always delightfully referred to as 'music-scaping'! I was able to assist him in this area, and with Frank's typesetting services, the work was published in 1995 by Modus Music, with a cover illustration provided by Keith himself (he was also a talented artist).

Keith was born a Londoner (Crystal Place in 1927), and had some piano lessons when he was younger. He described himself as 'An amateur (in every sense of the word)', something which belied his real musical gifts, and ability to compose attractive music without having had any formal musical tuition. His chosen career was in medicine, specialising in Anaesthesia. He qualified at St. Thomas' Hospital Medical School in 1951, and in the following year he served in the Korean War as part of the Royal Army Medical Corps. As a keen photographer, he was

Keith Glennie-Smith (continued)



The cover of *High Savoy to Chelsea Down* and the first page of the third song, *The Strand*.  
(Courtesy of Modus Music)

able to record the everyday life of the Korean people and soldiers during his time there. In 2007 the Seoul National University Museum staged an exhibition of these photos, and for the occasion Keith recorded a musical vignette of his time in Korea:

Every Sunday I was picked up by the Padre in his Jeep with a harmonium on the back seat, and we did a tour of the units where I played the hymns: always ending at the Royal Engineers' camp for a 5 star curry lunch. One of the young officers there told me that they had a broken old harmonium in the Quartermaster's stores. Would I like it? Two days later it was delivered to my tent in a 3 ton truck. I took the whole thing to pieces, found out how it worked, and it travelled with me for the rest of my time in Korea. Luckily for my confreres, I always pitched my tent almost outside the camp perimeter. Japanese printed music was

brought back to me by those returning from leave – and poor old Beethoven, Mozart and Chopin were harmonium-tortured long into the cold Korean nights. My cat, Nozzie, slept inside the instrument.

On his return to the UK Keith in due course went on to gain a Fellowship of the Faculty of Anaesthetists in 1960, and in 1963 he was appointed as the Consultant Anaesthetist at Poole General Hospital, where he spent the remainder of his career. He had a particular interest in acupuncture, in which he led the way in pioneering its use for the relief of pain in surgical procedures.

Music he referred to as the 'principal life support and prophylaxis against the stresses and anxiety of his work'. Although he felt his tastes in music were quite catholic, he took a special interest in lesser known twentieth century composers, including Gabriel Grovlez; Federico

**Keith Glennie-Smith** (continued)

Mompou; Désiré-Emile Inghelbrecht; Ivor Gurney; York Bowen, Madeleine Dring; Paul Ladmirault – and of course, Peter Warlock! There is little question that, as a composer himself, Keith was much influenced by ‘our composer’, and indeed it seems highly likely that Warlock’s *Candlelight* provided the model for *From High Savoy to Chelsea Down*. Having successfully got the latter into print, over the coming years, with more time on his hands in retirement, he began to focus on other compositions that had languished in the proverbial bottom drawer, often for many years. Eight of these were suitably ‘music-scaped’ and issued by Modus Music, listed here in chronological order of publication:

- Sicilienne for Cecilia* – version for flute and piano
- Sicilienne for Cecilia* – version for clarinet and piano
- This Joyful Birth* – for SATB unaccompanied
- Russian Roulette – for piano
- The Little Commodore* – for voice & piano
- Fanfare-Minuet* – for flute, cello, & piano
- The First Mercy* – for SATB unaccompanied (Yes...the very same Bruce Blunt poem set by Warlock!)
- Long ago and Faraway: A Jazz Memory* – for piano

The last named made it into print in 2015, and Keith had indicated there were still more items in that bottom drawer that he felt might be suitable for publication. Unfortunately, then in his late eighties, his health wasn’t in the best shape, with his eyesight having deteriorated, which put a stop to any further endeavours in this direction.

Keith was a noted Francophile, something that is often reflected in his music, such as the *Sicilienne* and the *Fanfare-Minuet*. Because of a convenient ferry link between his home in Poole (Dorset) and Brittany, Keith and his wife, Celia, purchased a holiday home in there, spending many happy summers in this rural setting during those retirement years. Keith was able to get involved there in local music making, taking part as an accompanist in several concerts.

The PWS and its activities were always of great interest to him, and he was an avid reader of our Newsletters. He was unable to attend many Society events, but I recall he did put in an appearance at AGMs in 2001 (Gloucester) and 2010 (London – on board ship!).

Apart from those times, I only met him on one more occasion when he and Celia visited me at my home near

Canterbury in 2014, but despite this, he and I kept in fairly regular contact. It was always a real pleasure to chat with him on the phone about Warlock, and music matters in general, and he invariably took a warm interest in my wellbeing. I can easily imagine in his professional life he would have had a superb ‘bedside manner’! I had the impression Keith tended to be somewhat modest about his achievements, for it was only later I discovered, for example, that he had attained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the RAMC, and that in 1977 he produced a film, *Back for Half One ..*, (on a medical topic), listed by the British Film Institute.

He will be much missed. ■



Keith on board the *p.s. Tatteshall Castle* at the May 2010 AGM.  
(Photo: John Mitchell)

**Postscript:**

Anyone interested in acquiring scores of Keith’s music listed above should contact John Mitchell (see details on the inside front cover) in the first instance as, at the time of writing, Modus Music is without a proper online presence.

**Norman Bailey: 23 March 1933 – 15 September 2021**

**Giles Davies** writes 'To the Memory of a Great Singer' together with personal recollections of his former tutor, whilst studying at the Royal College of Music, 1989-93.



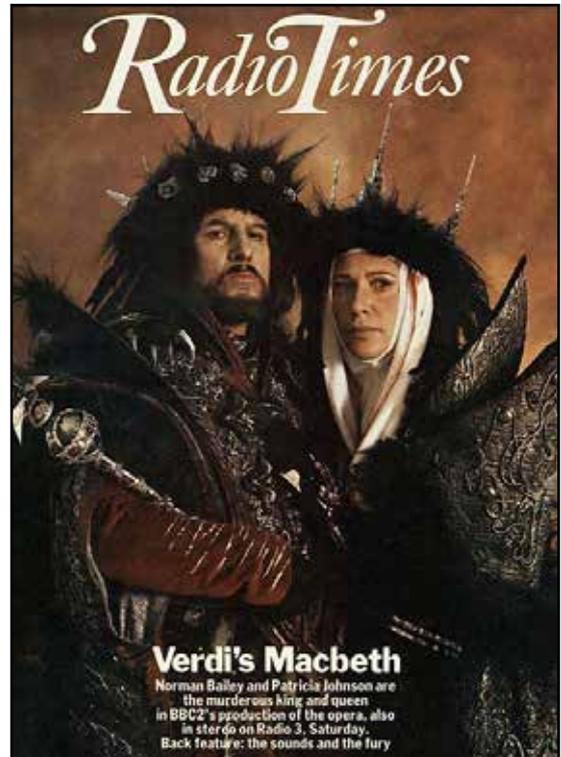
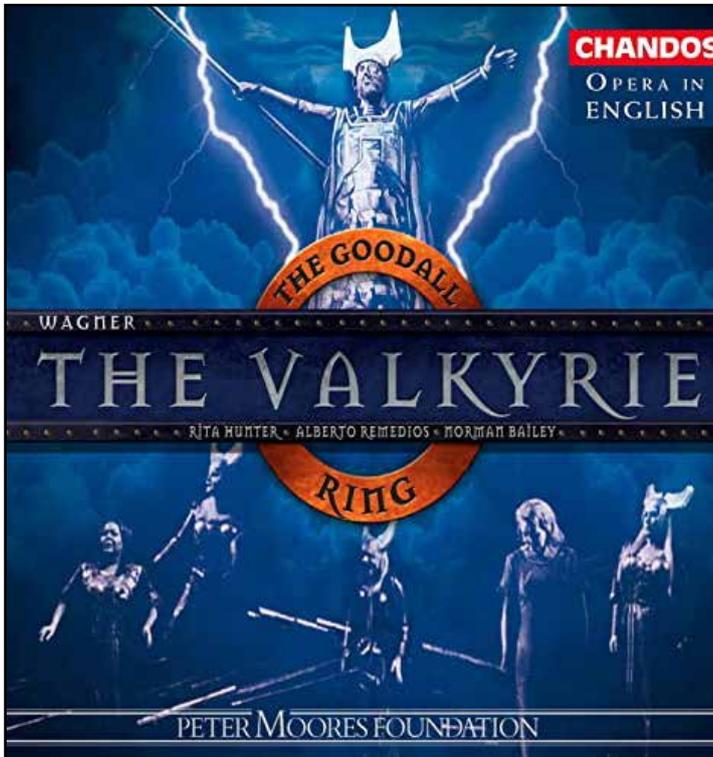
*Norman Bailey as Macbeth in the BBC TV production of Verdi's Macbeth*

The legendary Operatic Bass-Baritone, Norman Bailey, was born in Birmingham on 23 March, 1933. Following the Second World War, his family emigrated to South Africa. He began a degree in Theology, but changed direction to music and his first theatrical experiences were in amateur Gilbert and Sullivan productions. From 1958-1960 he attended the Vienna Academy of Music. His first contract was with the Linz Landes Theater, followed by engagements in Wuppertal and Dusseldorf. His signature roles at this time included both Verdi's 'Simon Boccanegra' and 'Rigoletto'.

In 1967, he made his debut at La Scala, Milan, and made his Sadler's Wells Opera debut in the same year as Count Almaviva in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*. But it was to be his performance of Hans Sachs in Wagner's *Mastersingers* at Sadler's Wells the following year of 1968, which was a major breakthrough for him artistically. The celebrated Wagner *Ring* project in English with a translation by Andrew Porter followed, as the company transferred to the larger London Coliseum.

Bailey sang his first complete Wotan and Gunther in *The Ring*, conducted by Reginald Goodall with whom he had a long association. Throughout the 1970's, he made appearances at Covent Garden, The Met, La Scala and Bayreuth. Towards the end of his career, he devoted much of his time to the Coliseum with English National Opera, notably in Nicholas Hytner's production of Handel's *Xerxes*, and David Pountney's ground breaking productions of Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, and Dvorak's *Rusalka*, under the baton of Sir Mark Elder. His final farewell on stage in the UK was as Schigolch in Berg's *Lulu* at the Glyndebourne Festival, in which the soprano Christine Schäfer gave a memorable interpretation of the leading role. He was also an excellent voice teacher, and joined the Vocal Faculty at the Royal College of Music in London. He was awarded a CBE in 1977 and appeared on BBC Radio's *Desert Island Discs*. His wife, Kristine Ciesinski, a famous Salome in Strauss's Opera at ENO in the 1990's, tragically died in a glider accident in the USA in 2018.

Norman Bailey (continued)

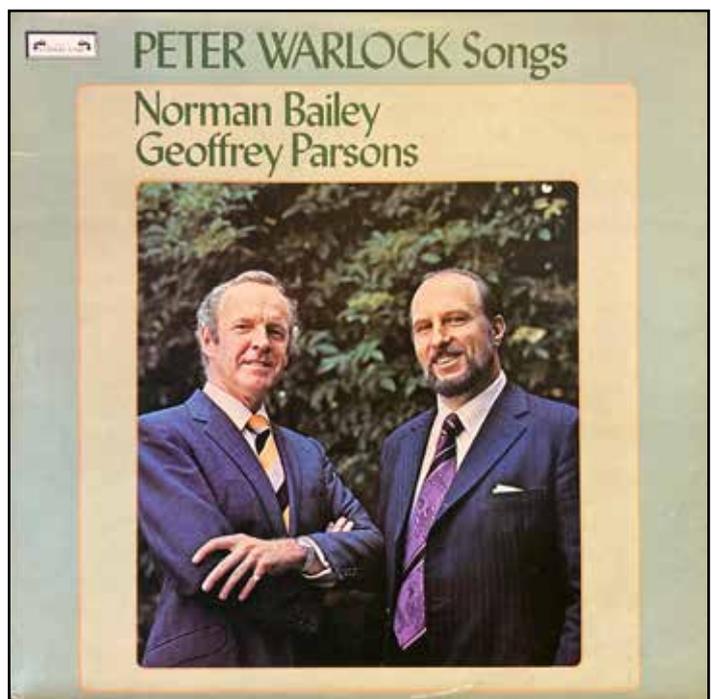


On studio recordings, he will be remembered by Wagnerians for his superb portrayals of Wotan in *The Ring*, (Klemperer and Goodall), Dutchman in *The Flying Dutchman* (Solti) and Hans Sachs in *Mastersingers* (Solti).

He recorded two albums of German songs and an album of Warlock songs featuring a male ensemble for the Sociable Songs. In 1981, he featured memorably on a recording as the Speaker in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* (Haitink).

Bailey was also noted for bringing opera to a wider audience through his television performances, particularly his role as the murderous king in Verdi's *Macbeth*.

Throughout his life, he remained devoted to the Pacific Baha'i faith. Prior to his death in Idaho, USA, at the age of 88, he was awarded the Wagner Society's Reginald Goodall Award, for his services to the Operas of Wagner. ■



Clockwise from top left: Bailey was particularly noted for his performance of Wotan in Goodall's recording of Wagner's *The Valkyrie*; Norman Bailey and Patricia Johnson on the cover of the *Radio Times*; The vinyl LP *Peter Warlock Songs*

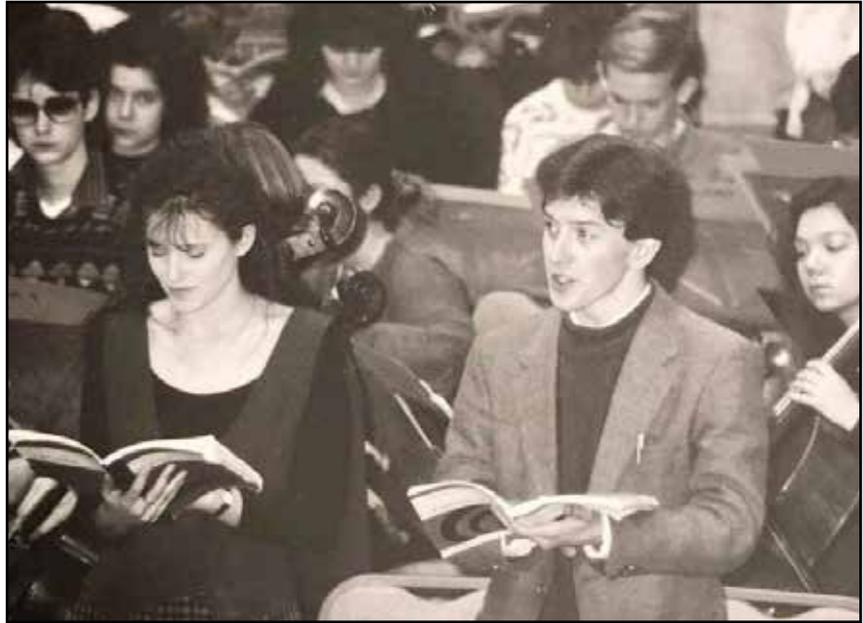
## Norman Bailey (continued)

**Recollections of a Singing Student at the Royal College of Music, 1989-93.**

Having received a distinction for Grade 8 voice and secured a place at the Royal College of Music in London, I prepared myself for meeting my Professor, Norman Bailey. I knew he was something of an Operatic legend in dramatic roles, as my father had worked with him in Europe. My first lesson prior to the start of term, was at his home in South Croydon. I recall two huge canvas paintings, one of the Flying Dutchman's ship in stormy seas from Wagner's Opera, and one of his wife, Christine Ciesinski in one her most famous roles, Staus's *Salome*.

Our first session was entirely breath work and exercises, but it was clear from the start that we'd get along. Offstage, Norman was calm and unassuming, and no time was ever wasted on idle chat. As I was an undergraduate at the RCM, it was unusual for Norman to accept students other than those on the Postgraduate Opera Course. At this time, my repertoire was mostly Songs and Oratorios, and as Norman had studied in Vienna and spent some years in the Austrian and German Opera Houses, I was most interested to study the great Lieder composers with him. These were formative years where I gave my first recital performances of Schubert's *Die Schöne Müllerin*, Schumann's *Heine* and Eichendorff Songs Cycles and English repertoire by the Elizabethans, Purcell, Vaughan-Williams, Warlock and Ireland.

I had heard Norman's various song albums, and had been intrigued by his Warlock album with accompanist Geoffrey Parsons, which included some of the Sociable Songs with male ensemble. Norman warmly recorded the sessions on this album, and seemed to have enjoyed recording the Sociable Songs in particular. I also had the pleasure of taking part in a couple of Song Masterclasses with Geoffrey Parsons, working on Beethoven's Cycle, *An die ferne geliebte*, a personal favourite. Norman was a great help and support in helping me prepare for my first Mozart role onstage, the Count in Mozart's *Figaro*. On future



Giles Davies singing Haydn's *Oratorio* in 1991, aged 21, with fellow RCM student, soprano Joanne Pullen.

occasions he would always greet me most warmly backstage at ENO after performances, and discuss the finer points of rehearsing and staging.

Norman didn't teach a 'method'. His teaching was rooted in Italian *belcanto* and correct breathing. We would always work on the entire vocal range, and exercises using *Falsetto* in order to achieve a balanced mixed 'head tone' for *mezza voce* and *sotto voce* singing. One of his strengths as a teacher was demonstrating phrases, and how to maximise breath power but without ever forcing the tone.

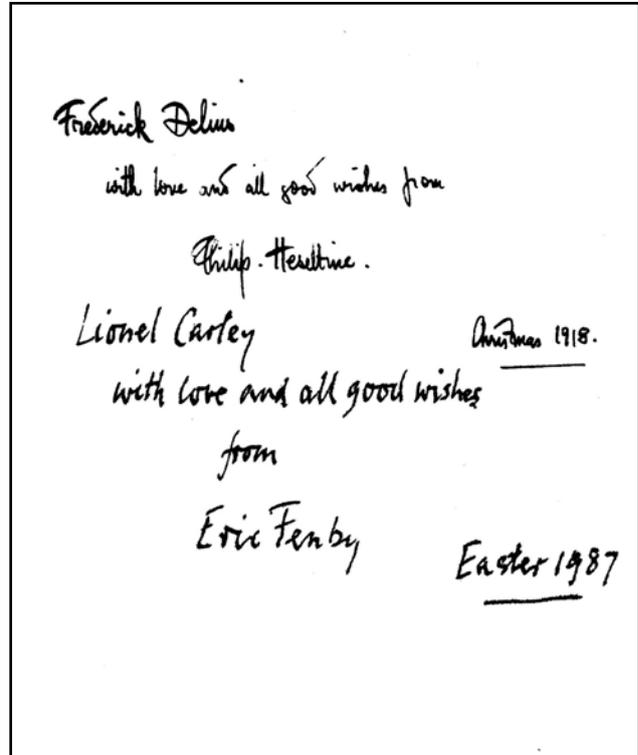
Norman disliked College Politics, and would roll his eyes whenever he had to attend a Faculty meeting. During these years I was fortunate to be able to see his work live on stage at ENO, as Ariodates in *Xerxes*, Wood Sprite in *Rusalka*, Father in *Hansel and Gretel* and Forrester in *The Cunning Little Vixen*. Unfortunately, in the latter production he twisted his ankle very badly on the steeply raked stage, always a performers worst nightmare! As a result he had to rest for a few weeks.

I will always have a special affection for this immense legend of the Operatic stages around the world, and feel forever indebted to him for all the knowledge and vocal skills he passed on to me during my four years at the RCM. ■

## Obituaries

**Lionel Carley** ~ PWS member and President of the Delius Society, 14 May 1936 – 28 December 2021

**Roger Buckley**, Vice President of The Delius Society



Lionel Carley, who has died at the age of 85, was a linguist and music historian who became widely celebrated for his scholarly writings on Delius and Grieg. Despite his erudition, his many firm friends appreciated his kindness and good humour.

Lionel was born in London in 1936 and was educated at the universities of Nottingham, Strasbourg and Uppsala, initially studying French and German, followed later by Latin and, finally, Swedish. Lionel returned to England and in 1962 he completed a doctoral thesis at Nottingham; this took the form of a critical edition of an early mediaeval version, in Anglo-Norman French, of a Late Latin military treatise. The stage was set for his later scholarly activities.

From then, and until his early retirement in 1992 (taken in order to concentrate on his writing), Lionel's main career was in the Government Information Service, initially with the Central Office of Information and later the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

The first of Lionel's many major works on Delius appeared in 1975 with his *Delius: The Paris Years*. This was followed in 1983 and 1988 by his two-volume *Delius: A Life in Letters*, a major work which remains unique as a source

of information on the composer's life and mind. Another three books on Delius appeared, the last of them a chronicle of the friendship between Delius and Grieg, and Lionel's final book was published in 2006: *Edvard Grieg in England*. He had written, in 1998, that his next major writing project, with research virtually completed, would be a new life of Delius. Sadly this never appeared; both we and posterity are the poorer.

In addition to the major works, there were around 100 essays, chapters, exhibition catalogues, programme notes, translations, and journal articles. Lionel was also an accomplished lecturer and was much in demand in this rôle.

Lionel Carley became President of The Delius Society, of which he was a founder member, in 2005. His involvement with the Delius Trust included 55 years as Archivist and 30 years as Adviser.

The task of cataloguing a person's achievements may be straightforward, but to explain Lionel's affability and immense popularity is less so. The fact that he was so self-evidently a generous man, always approachable and ready to share his immense bank of knowledge, was perceived and appreciated by all with whom he came into contact. ■

## Lionel Carley ~ a tribute

Michael Graves



Left to right: Michael Graves, Lionel Carley, Kate and Richard Packer, in Lionel's home in Sheepscombe, July 2020  
(Photo: Úna McDonald)

I met Lionel thirteen years ago on the occasion of a Peter Warlock Society Social Lunch we held at the *Air Balloon* inn near Gloucester. After the meal, Lionel invited us back to his home at *The Old School House* in nearby Sheepscombe for afternoon tea. I was immediately impressed by Lionel's collection of books, especially interesting were those with PH's signature (*see example opposite*) and also his fine Art & Crafts furniture. It was an extremely convivial day and I was very pleased to have met Lionel; at once an interesting, knowledgeable, modest, warm hearted man.

I met Lionel again on a few occasions when the Delius and Peter Warlock Societies came together for various events. His greeting was always warm and, I felt, genuine. I live in Wiltshire, about 20 miles south of Sheepscombe, and so was invited by Lionel to small gatherings in the Gloucester area, usually for lunch and afternoon tea, and I similarly invited Lionel and friends over to my home in Hullavington. *The Butchers Arms* in Sheepscombe and *The White Hart* in Castle Combe were our favourites. I gradually got to know Lionel better and, presumably, vice versa.

About six years ago Lionel invited me to Sheepscombe for lunch. It was our first opportunity to have a substantial conversation on our own and it soon became apparent that we saw eye to eye on any number of subjects including music, art, gastronomy, and politics (also a shared intense dislike of Mozart's music). Lionel mentioned that his work had taken him to Belfast in the 1980s. I had lived in Northern Ireland during the worst years of the troubles in the early 1970s and have been visiting NI regularly for the last 50 years. I was very interested to hear Lionel's account of his experiences there. His views of the political complexities and of the responses of the two communities to the on going evolution of political life in the Province accorded exactly with mine.

My wife, Úna, and I had lunch with Lionel and Richard and Kate Packer, in the 'inter-lockdown' month of July in 2020. Alas, it was the last time we saw him.

I had a tremendous respect and liking for Lionel. It is a friendship I shall always value and I count it a great privilege to have known him. ■

## Letters to the Editor

Further to John Mitchell's tribute to Dr. Keith Glennie-Smith (page 36), herewith a letter from Frank Bayford.

Dear Michael,

It was with much sadness that I heard that Keith Glennie-Smith had passed away. I met him when John Mitchell and I attended the Peter Warlock Centenary Celebrations at the Savoy Hotel in 1994. John has fully documented in his own tribute how we both met this very polite and beautifully-spoken fellow-member of the Society.

I saw Keith again in 2001 at Gloucester, when the PWS held its weekend there, and on that occasion he was accompanied by his charming wife, Cecilia. Although we never met again after that, we continued to keep in touch by letter. The topics were not only included 'matters Warlock', but many other subjects, not excluding updating each other on what works we were writing at the time.

I still have correspondence dating from 1995 from both him and John about the preparation and typesetting of his delightful song-cycle *From High Savoy to Chelsea Down*. When it was published in Modus Music, it had a cover with a splendid design by Keith himself, which included a facsimile of Philip Heseltine's signature. In one of his letters, Keith wrote 'The autograph is genuine – I found his signature in a second-hand book on counterpoint that I bought in Charing Cross Road at the time'. He also mentioned in the same paragraph that writing those nursery rhymes was the most wonderful and relaxing anodyne. He said that the song entitled *Hammersmith*, (now number six in the cycle), was actually his first setting in the series; he started it in December 1950, the 20th anniversary of PW's death and it represented his determination to get through the Final medical exams.

On one occasion, he very kindly sent me a complimentary copy of an enthralling book of his own photographs, which he had taken in Korea during the war there in the 1950s, when he had served in the RAMC. It is now a document of much historical interest.

I remember him as the perfect gentleman, courteous and refreshingly unassuming.

Frank Bayford

## From the Archives

Here is a letter sent to the *Radio Times* in April, 1943 by Robert Nichols regarding Stephen Williams broadcast about Warlock on 3 April 1943 (see John Mitchell's article page 4). Nichols was a close friend and great supporter of Heseltine from their days at Oxford together.

### Peter Warlock

May I, as a friend of Philip Heseltine, protest against at some of the statements in the recent broadcast of Stephen Williams? If the composer of *Lullay, my liking* was 'not a genius' but a 'mediocrity' why broadcast about him? He wasn't destroyed by 'intelligence' but by causes too complex to be rehearsed briefly, though among we may note the indifference of the public, which denied him the beginnings of a living due to a highly specialised competent professional man. Mr. Williams would have done better to stress some positive characteristics. Warlock's fanatical devotion to art, the holy war he made upon artistic pretensions, his championship of other neglected artists, his love of cats, his dancing, were not 'affections'. Lonely men are often fond of cats. If Phil was a bit tight and felt like dancing he danced. Why shouldn't he?

Robert Nichols, Cambridge

Reply in the *Radio Times* 30 April, 1943 by Stephen Williams, British radio announcer, presenter and producer and a pioneer of commercial radio for the UK.

### Was Warlock Affected?

In his recent letter to *Radio Times* Robert Nichols protests at my use of the word 'mediocrity' as applied to Peter Warlock. Mediocrities are nearly always more humanly interesting than geniuses. I did not class Warlock's pretension, or his war on artistic pretension, or his championship of other neglected artists as affectations – only his love of cats and his dancing. Even these I classed as examples of deflected energy. I'm very fond of cats myself, but if I frequently stopped cars in which I was riding to get out and stroke one, as I am told Warlock often did, I could not blame any Boswell of mine for calling it an affection.

Stephen Williams, W1.

Also from the Archives:

This is a page from the *Radio Times*, 28 March 1952 edition, detailing a programme scheduled for 11pm on 1 April 1952, almost exactly 70 years ago.

The programme was a 20 minute recital of songs by Peter Warlock sung by Alexander Young (tenor) and Henry Cummings (baritone), accompanied by Clifton Halliwell. The songs had been recorded by the BBC for the programme which was the last of a series of six programmes of songs by Warlock.

The programme included:

- Pretty ring time*
- And wilt thou leave me thus*
- Sweet and twenty*
- I held love's head*
- Thou gav'st me leave to kiss*
- There is a lady sweet and kind*
- Sigh no more ladies*
- Candlelight*

# Third Programme

464 m. (647 kc/s) 194 m. (1,546 kc/s)

<p><b>7.30</b> Godfrey Tearle and Claire Bloom in <b>'CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA'</b> A history by Bernard Shaw Introduced by St. John Ervine The play produced by Esmé Percy Assistant producer, Frederick Bradnum <i>For full details see Thursday (BBC recording)</i> Acts 1 and 2</p> <p><b>9.0 app.</b> Interval Sonata No. 3, in A minor, Op. 28 (Prokofiev) played by Colin Horsley (piano) on gramophone records</p> <p><b>9.10 app.</b> 'Caesar and Cleopatra' Act 3</p>	<p><b>9.50 app.</b> Interval Serenata, Op. 18 (1940) (Vagn Holmboe) played by the Danish Quartet (Gilbert Jaspersen, flute; Erling Bloch, violin; Asger Christiansen, cello; and Lund Christiansen, piano) on gramophone records</p> <p><b>10.0 app.</b> 'Caesar and Cleopatra' Acts 4 and 5</p> <p><b>11.0</b> SONGS BY PETER WARLOCK Alexander Young (tenor) Henry Cummings (baritone) Clifton Halliwell (accompanist) <i>Pretty ring time</i> <i>And wilt thou leave me thus</i> <i>Sweet and twenty</i> Two short songs: <i>I held love's head</i> <i>Thou gav'st me leave to kiss</i> <i>There is a lady sweet and kind</i> <i>Sigh no more, ladies</i> (Continued in next column)</p>	<p><b>Candlelight</b> (cycle of nursery jingles): How many miles to Babylon?; I won't be my father's Jack; Robin and Richard; O my kitten; Little Tommy Tucker; There was an old man; I had a little pony; Little Jack Jingle; There was a man of Thessaly; Suky, you shall be my wife; Arthur O'Bower; There was an old woman (BBC recording) Last of six programmes of Warlock's songs. (Postponed from February 9)</p> <p><b>11.20 LETTER FROM PARIS</b> Back from North Africa by Pierre Frédéric The speaker has recently returned from a two-months' tour of French North Africa, which he visited for the newspaper <i>Le Monde</i>. (The recorded broadcast of March 28)</p> <p><b>11.35 CESAR FRANCK</b> Prelude, Chorale, and Fugue played by Maurice Cole (piano) (Recording of broadcast on Dec. 11)</p> <p><b>11.55</b> Close Down</p>
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## Forthcoming Events

**Bryn Philpott** provides the details

**Saturday & Sunday 14-15 May 2022**

### The Peter Warlock Society Annual General Meeting

See back pages for details.  
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**Saturday 21 May 2022, 7pm**

Shaldon Singers Queen's Jubilee Concert  
St. Peter's Church, Bridge Road, Shaldon, Devon TQ14 0DD  
Shaldon Sinfonietta; Tim Crompton (Dir.)

Puccini	<i>Messa di Gloria</i>
Schubert	<i>Mass in G</i>
Warlock	<i>Capriol</i>

**Tickets £15, £12, £8, £6**

**www.wegotickets/event/541191**  
.....

**Friday to Sunday 27-29 May 2022**

### The English Music Festival

The English Music Festival is back in Dorchester-on-Thames. Concerts take place in Dorchester Abbey & Silk Hall, Radley College, Oxfordshire.

There is plenty of interest for lovers of English (British) music including one Warlock item:

**Saturday 28 May 2022 at 2.15pm**

All Saints Church, Sutton Courtney;  
Elysian Singers, Sam Laughton- Director

Concert includes  
English Folksong arr. Peter Warlock and Cecil Armstrong  
Gibbs *Yarmouth Fair*

**Tickets £22.50 www.englishmusicfestival.org.uk**  
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**Sunday 5 June 2022, 3 pm**

Gemma Summerfield (soprano), Sebastian Wybrew  
Wigmore Hall, 36 Wigmore Street, Marylebone, London W1U 2BP.

Warlock *Take, o take those lips away*  
(recital also includes songs by: Canteloube, Beethoven, Franz, Owens, Wolf, Rachmaninov, Smith, Brahms, Strauss, Mahler, Debussy)

**Tickets: £16 (concessions £14)**

**Tel: 020 7935 2141 www.wigmore-hall.org.uk**  
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**Friday 24 June 2022.**

### Music of the British Isles

The Camarilla Wind Ensemble: Julian Sperry (Flute), Rachel Harwood-White (Oboe), Nicholas Ellis (Clarinet), Katie Pryce (Horn), Louise Watson (Bassoon)

The Assembly Room of Chichester

Edward Elgar	<i>Chanson de Matin</i>
J.B.McEwen	<i>Under Northern Skies</i>
Gordon Jacob	<i>Swansea Town</i>
Vaughan-Williams	<i>English Folksong Suite</i>
Peter Warlock	<i>Capriol</i> (arr. for wind quintet)
Edwin York-Bowen	<i>2 Pieces</i>
Susan Spain-Dunk	<i>Rhapsody</i>
Karl Jenkins	<i>Chums!</i>
Percy Grainger	<i>Lisbon &amp; Molly on the Shore</i>

**Tickets £18, under 25s free from Chichester Festival Theatre from:**

**<https://www.cft.org.uk/whats-on/chichesterchamberconcerts>**

**<https://www.chichesterchamberconcerts.com/24th-june-2022>**  
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**Sunday 26 June 2022 4pm (tbc)**

### Gregynog Festival

Llyr Williams (piano)

Beethoven	<i>Sonata 'Pathétique'</i>
Bartók	<i>Evening in the Country (10 Easy Pieces)</i> <i>Bear Dance</i> <i>No. 2 of 4 Dirges</i> <i>A little bit tipsy (3 Burlesques)</i> <i>Swineherd's Dance (For Children)</i>
Tchaikovsky	<i>Dumka, Op. 59</i> <i>Danse caracteristique (18 Pieces)</i>
Bartók	<i>6 Romanian Dances</i>
Warlock	<i>Folk-Song Preludes</i>
Bartók	<i>Allegro barbaro</i> <i>Rondo No. 1 (3 Rondos on Folktunes)</i> <i>Sonata</i>

Details to be confirmed. Please refer to the festival website for further information as it becomes available.

**www.gwylgregynogfestival.org**  
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**Forthcoming Events (continued)**

**Saturday 28 June 2022 6.30pm**

Grays Inn Summer Concert  
Anna Harvey (mezzo soprano), Mark Austin (piano)  
The Chapel, The Honourable Society of Gray's Inn. 8 South Square, London, WC1R 5ET  
English songs by Peter Warlock and Frederick Howe will be heard alongside the Wesendonck Lieder by Wagner, and Debussy's Chansons de Bilitis.

**Free (post concert supper £35)**

[www.graysinn.org.uk/calendar/summer-concert-13](http://www.graysinn.org.uk/calendar/summer-concert-13)

**Tel: 020 7458 7800**

**Saturday 9 July 2022 7.45pm**

The Musicians of All Saints; Julian Broughton (director)  
St Michael's Church, High Street, Lewes, BN7 1XU

Handel	<i>Concerto Grosso in G major, Op.6 No.1</i>
Warlock	<i>Serenade for Strings</i>
Amoret Abis	<i>Silvered by the Moon</i>
Dvorak	<i>Serenade for Strings in E major</i>

**Tickets £15 (Students £5)**

[www.musiciansofallsaints.co.uk/events](http://www.musiciansofallsaints.co.uk/events)

**Sunday 31 July 2022 7.30pm**

Sunday Night Dinner & Concert  
The 22's Australian Chamber Music Festival  
The Pavilion, Townsville, Queensland, Australia QLD 4810.  
Albinoni *Concerto for Oboe, Strings and continuo*  
Mendelssohn *Piano Quartet No.1 in C minor (1822)*  
Warlock *The Curlew (1922)*  
Paul Dean *Concerto for Chamber Orchestra (2022)*  
World Premier

**Tickets \$150 (includes dinner event)**

**Tel: 1800 44 99 77**

[www.afcm.com.au/2022-festival/festivalprogram](http://www.afcm.com.au/2022-festival/festivalprogram)

**Saturday 27 August 2022**

KrattFestival OÜa/a EE897700771004415263P. Süda tn 3a-6, 10118 Tallinn, Estonia.

Chamber Orchestra, Andres Kaljuste (conductor)

Mozart	<i>Sinfonia Concertante for Violin, Viola and Orchestra KV 364</i>
Warlock	<i>Capriol</i>

**info@krattfestival.ee**

*If you know of any concerts or events that include Warlock, or have a Warlock related interest, then please email details to [pwsnewsletter@yahoo.com](mailto:pwsnewsletter@yahoo.com), or phone 01666 837334.*

**Free to a good home:**

**A copy of *Delius* by Peter Warlock  
(1952 edition)**

**Contact: John Bovington  
Rose Cottage Farm  
Magpie Bottom  
Shoreham, Kent  
TN15 6XP**

**Tel: 01959 523336**

**First come first served**



## The Annual General Meeting 14-15 May 2022

The Steyning Centre, Fletcher's Croft, Steyning, Sussex BN44 3XZ

For Sat Nav use BN44 3YL

2022 is the 100th anniversary of the completion of Warlock's song cycle *Lilligay*, the words of which came from an anthology edited and published by Victor Neuburg's Vine Press. Warlock is known to have visited Neuburg there "rusticating with my poet-printer in Steyning". Close by is the Chanctonbury Ring, where Aleister Crowley, supposedly, practised his dark arts in the 1920's. Crowley and Neuburg believed the Ring to have 'powers', although it is thought neither of them actually visited it!

### Plan for Saturday 14 May

- 12.00am Lunch in the Bar of the *Chequer Inn*, High Street, Steyning. TBC
- 1.45pm Walk from the *Chequer* to *Vine Cottage* and then to The Steyning Centre
- 2.00pm Annual General Meeting, Steyning Centre
- 3.00pm Concert Pt 1
- 3.40pm Talk on Neuburg \* ~ John Mitchell
- 4.00pm Complimentary Afternoon Tea
- 4.50pm-ish Concert Pt 2

### Plan for Sunday 15 May

- 10.30am Meet at Bramber Castle
- 10.45am Drive (volunteers required) to Chanctonbury Ring car park & walk to the Chanctonbury Ring.
- 12.30pm Lunch at the *White Horse*, Storrington, where Bax composed the film score for David Lean's *Oliver Twist*. (Volunteers drive again.)

#### \* Talk on Neuburg

There will be a short talk on Victor Neuburg, who resided at *Vine Cottage* in Steyning during the 1920s. Warlock visited him there, and it was one of Neuburg's verse anthologies that inspired the composer's *Lilligay* songs. An informal concert will feature a centenary performance of the latter, and also piano music by some of Warlock's friends, including Moeran, Ireland, Colin Taylor and Bax.

**Recommended travel: By car is best, but for public transport:-**

**Train (direct) dep. 10:15 from London Victoria, arr. Shoreham-by-Sea 11:31**

**No. 2 bus (westbound) dep. 11:48 from Shoreham Station, arr. Steyning 12:07**

**For more information and advice contact Michael Graves**

(Confirmations and additional information will be emailed to members before end of April.)

**RSVP to Hon. Secretary, Claire Beach**

**Contact details for both Michael and Claire can be found on the inside front cover**