

THE INTERNATIONAL CONCERTINA ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

NO.158

Sept. 1968.

The next meeting of the I.C.A. will
be on the afternoon of

Saturday September 28th.

from 2.30 to 5.p.m at Conway Hall,
Red Lion Square, Holborn, W.1.
(Committee at 2 p.m. please)

Concertina Classes at I.L.E.A. Institutes

Enrolment week commencing Sept. 16th
Classes week commencing Sept. 23rd

Battersea Institute, Latchmere Road, S.W.11.
Close to Clapham Junction Station and
Battersea Town Hall - Thursdays 7.15.
to 9.15. p.m.

INSTRUCTOR: F.E.Butler.

Holloway Institute, Hornsey Road, N.7. at
the junction of Hornsey Road and Seven
Sisters Road, nearest station Finsbury
Park - Mondays 7-0 to 9-0.

INSTRUCTOR: F.E.Butler.

Fridays 8-0 to 10.0.

INSTRUCTOR: Harry Crabb.

NOTE on the courses. Each class endeavours to provide tuition
for all grades of players on all types-of instrument.
Nevertheless a pattern of teaching has emerged, and enquirers
will find that Battersea has most beginners on the English
concertina, while the Monday class at Holloway has some
advanced performers on that instrument. Both classes play
from orchestral parts and seek a high standard of
musicianship.

The Friday class has most 'Duet' players and specializes in
popular music arranged by Mr. Crabb especially for this class.

FEES

The fee for the three term session is 35/-. There is a
reduction for students drawing retirement pensions.

This Newsletter is issued for the I.C.A. by the Secretary,
Frank E. Butler, 60, Mayfield Crescent, London, N.9. England.

THE BRITISH MUSIC-HALL SOCIETY

Peter Honri was to have spoken at the September meeting of the above Society, and of course the I.C.A. sent a coterie of supporters to welcome him. They were deeply disappointed however, because it was announced that Peter Henri had broken his nose whilst filming a rugby football sequence and was not fit to appear.

All I.C.A. members will wish him a speedy return to comfort and health, and no impairment of the good looks which are almost as much an asset to him as his concertina playing.

As a substitute the audience had another I.C.A. member - Cyril Jackson, now running a single act after many years with the Bedlams. Cyril Jackson it will be remembered completed the whole season with Expo 67 in Canada last year.

Cyril Jackson's act has some features which I.C.A. members will recoil from Waldegrave Hall, as well as much new material. He marched on playing "Keep the home fires burning" on a saxophone with flames blazing up from his top hat. His comical musical act, did however include serious performances of "Bells of St. Mary's" and "Charmaine" on an English concertina. Not all should be reported because an element of surprise enters many of the items, but he played also the recorder, the musical saw and bag pipes, and in a last burst of versatility gave us a complete one-man-band.

The speaker for the evening was Billy McComb, the Canadian magician from Belfast, with twenty years of T.V. and cabaret to his credit, who talked entertainingly on his favourite subject - himself - and did some baffling tricks without prepared apparatus, borrowing his needs from the audience. If you can stand seeing your pound notes burnt before your eyes, book Billy McComb for an entertainment. You will gain a packet of Polos - and find your money inside.

NEWS OF THE MEMBERS

Eileen Jones sent greetings to members from Skye, where she spent two days of her holiday tour of Scotland. She was driving on to Durness in the extreme north-west, which is one of the places almost impossible to visit without private transport. We hope she knows enough geology to appreciate her good fortune.

Ben Fenton has his bags packed for return from Durban, and is all set for return to the Isle of Man. Durban, the "City of the Sun" has acclimatized him to the Manx winter, by providing eight weeks of unusual weather - raw cold winds from the ice-capped hills.

Jim Harvey reports having a lovely time visiting players in Lancashire, where he met nearly all members in that county, including Mr. Hargreaves of Orrell and Mr. de Pellette of St. Helens. He was glad to find Mrs. Rigby well on the mend. Jim attended a practice of the Bootle Band of twenty seven concertinas, and was amazed to find three small boys therein playing Duet Concertinas (one of 72 keys). Nine concertina bands were in the Orange Men Parade, and two were entirely of girl players. Jim says he has nice photos of them, but he docs not say if he means the nine or the two.


TYPES OF ENGLISH CONCERTINA

In response to enquiries, the following notes have been compiled. As manufacturers have from time to time made instruments to special specifications, players may well come across concertinas not to be found in the list below. This list does not include "Duet" and "Anglo" models.



48 Treble Compass from  to  C 8ve higher.

56 Treble Compass from  to  E 8ve higher

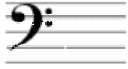
Note that the additional notes are at the upper register.

56 Tenor Compass from C.  to  C. 8ve higher

The fingering is the same as for the 48 treble but extended downwards.

48 Baritone Compass from G.  to C. 

This is built exactly like the 48 treble, and is fingered the same, but every note sounds an octave lower. It is customary to write the music in treble cleff, remembering that it sounds an octave lower than written. Treble players can then play either instrument with equal facility. Players reading bass fluently need to keep a mental image of pitch, recalling that "middle C" is the second finger of the right hand.

Bass Usually compass from C.  upwards

Some instruments are from  G upwards

and even one note lower. They are built exactly as the 48 treble, but sound two octaves lower. Again, it is usual to write the parts in treble cleff, remembering that the notes sound two octaves lower. "Middle C" is the second finger of the left hand, high up on the left side. Some bass instruments are restricted to low notes only. Bass instruments are single action, that is they sound the notes on closing the bellows only, the opening of the bellows serving to fill them with air. Owing to the size and weight of the bass reeds, it is not practicable to make them double action.

Baritone-treble

Compass from G.



upwards

This instrument is extended downwards to the lowest note. The key giving middle C is played with the first finger of the left hand, and all other keys are placed in relation to it as on the 48 Treble, but all this part of the compass is high on the key-board. It follows that notes from about



lay comfortably under the fingers, but lower notes lay well back, and it is difficult to play very fast passages on them.

Again, it is emphasized that other instruments exist. There is a baritone bass, built like a baritone, but extended downwards, and a piccolo, built like a 48 treble, but sounding an octave higher.

All these variations are to be regretted, as lack of standardisation has worked against the possibilities of mass production. Similarly, the customs of notation (i.e. writing everything in the treble clef) are to be deplored, but the practice is fairly well established. It arises from brass band, and from Salvation Army practice, both of which bodies liked their instrumentalists to be able to change from part to part without the necessity of learning a new clef.

These notes were compiled in answer to enquiries. They will not replace the general description of concertinas which it is hoped to issue this winter.