

THE INTERNATIONAL CONCERTINA ASSOCIATION  
NEWSLETTER

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No. 153

April 1968

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The next meeting is at

HOLLOWAY INSTITUTE

on the evening of

SATURDAY April 27th.

from 6.45 to 9.30 p.m.

Nearest Underground Station, Finsbury Park.  
Holloway Institute is in Hornsey Road, close to  
the junction with Seven Sisters Road.

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The meeting is an extension of the concertina  
classes held in the institute, and is arranged  
by courtesy of the Principal, C.T.Bird, Esq.

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Special feature

It is hoped that Tommy Williams will be able to  
talk to us on his Concertina Life and Times,  
illustrated musically on his "Duet" instrument.

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

April 1968. P.2.

THE LONDON MUSICAL COMPETITION FESTIVAL, 6th April, 1968.

This was an interesting occasion. As "there is not an I.C.A. Festival until 1969, the Association offered to subsidise concertina entries, and to press members to give greater support to The London Festival. Forty entries were secured, and we were delighted to see friends from far afield worthily showing their musicianship.

Concertina classes started late, and lasted from about 5.45 to 10.25 p.m. It was noted that as is usual, competitors with other instruments did not think it worth their while to wait and hear the concertinas. This was a pity, as the general standard was high, and may be the best yet.

We had a little less chance for gossip than with an I.C.A. Festival, but the usual friendly atmosphere was evident. As we normally have the same players competing, this is commendable.

The adjudicator - Leonard Smith, F.T.C.L., L.T.C.L., was in great form needing the wisdom of Solomon in performances often so nearly matched, showing the great range of his knowledge and experience, and giving sound advice and judgement with good humour and tact.

The Rodin Cup was offered for the best solo at Advanced Level on either Duet or English Concertina, and was awarded to Lavinia McDougall (see report on Class 100). The adjudicator later said to the Secretary that in several successive festivals he had watched Mrs. McDougall's progress through the classes from Elementary to Advanced with admiration. We who know how much of a helping hand she has also given to others were the more delighted with her success.

This is not to belittle the wonderful performances of ether competitors, and the close marking shows how difficult a task the adjudicator had.

Just a few other special mentions. Fred Watts of Luton has passed from beginner to winner of the Intermediate Test Piece in a very short time. He confessed later that he was so un-nerved that he nearly gave up half-way, and was astonished to find himself the winner.

Splendid, too, to find Charles Parslay the well deserved winner of the Advanced Class with Test Piece. He has been a stalwart for many years, and has emerged with a new sense of musicianship with delightful results.

The three Duet players were closely matched in choice of piece and talented performance. Three remarkably different pieces too. It is wise to sit with the right hand towards the audience.

Violet Fordham is finding her way through the ranks quite happily, and ought to have a special mark for deportment.

The Kensington Group were in fine form, and had their expected successes. Sickness and other misfortunes meant the withdrawal of the Battersea Class and all its soloists, except Edith Wheeler. Holloway Class played well and secured good marking.

At the close a word of thanks to the Adjudicator, and to the more than capable accompanist, Felicity Young, was enthusiastically applauded.

It was nearly as good as an I.C.A. Festival, and we hope the organiser, Mr. Kenneth Ranger was equally satisfied. We are all grateful to him for efficiency, courtesy and co-operation.

Results, and extracts from the adjudicators comments.  
London Music Festival, April 6th (in order of performance).

Class 94 "English" Elementary, playing Bouree by Handel.

Eva Tyson.	Very nice performance, a little uneven.	78,
Doris Webb,	Nicely played, mostly well controlled, good shape. Could have made more of the finish.	80.

Class 95 "English" Intermediate playing Rondino by Beethoven/Kreisler.

F. Watts.	Comfortable pace. Very good and plentiful contrasts of tone. Rather forced tone at the end, but nice playing, well shaped.	85.
E.A.Garner.	Kept going well, a little too detached, but very good.	70.
Violet Fordham.	Nice style, well controlled, a good try at shape and dynamics. Good phrasing, musical and sensitive.	83.
A. Crook.	Well controlled and generally good shape. Quavers inclined to tumble.	81.
Edith Wheeler.	Nice performance, well controlled with good phrasing,	81.
Olive Linsell.	Nice start, but don't snatch at the notes. Well controlled, pleasing performance, better shape than most.	82.

Class 96 "English" Advanced, playing Menuett by Mozart.

Harry Firth.	Nice start, good contrasts, tone and phrasing. Well done, most pleasing.	83.
Lavinia McDougall.	Good crescendo, beautifully managed. Splendid playing with good feeling.	87.
C.Parslay.	Good start, really splendid pianissimo, well controlled and shaped, lots of sensitivity, very nicely played.	88.
J.Jukes.	Could do with bolder crescendo and began to lose pace, but charming performance.	85.

Class 98 "Duet" Concertina - own choice,

D. Pullan, Czardas by Monti.	Could "go to town" a bit more on the opening, not enough gypsy about it. But a jolly good pace, with right hand going about a thousand to the dozen, Good shape and well managed.	86.
Paddy Russell, Mozart Sonata in C.	Good playing in the correct style and well controlled, with good contrast and phrasing. Quite sensitive.	85.
Maurice Harvey, Greig's Spring.	Spellbound. Good pace and tone, nice line and shape, most musical. Just a little more forte wanted.	87.

Class 99 "English" Intermediate - own choice

E.A.Garner. Evening Serenade.	Very well played, wanted longer phrases.	79.
Violet Fordham. Menuett by Burmester.	Nice pace, right mood, could have let go in the middle, but generally well controlled.	85.
A.Crook. Alter Refrain.	Some nice playing, could be a little more free	80.
Edith Wheeler. Andante Expressive	Nicely contrasted good playing.	83.
Olive Linsell. Sicilienne.	Good tone and contrast. Wants a shade more lilt and full trill.	82.

Class 100 "English" Advanced, own choice.

Lavinia McDougall.	Cavatina by Bohme. Incredibly sensitive playing. A difficult piece to bring off, but everything wanted came. The climaxes really stood out, and there was a magnificently played diminuendo .	90.
Charles Parslay.	Air by Bach. A sensitive performance, with some small criticisms.	86.
C. Jeffery.	Kreisler Menuett. Nice pace, well sustained, but slight blurring.	88.
H. Firth.	Czardas by Monti Good phrasing and sense of style, nicely played.	89.
T. Jukes.	Greig's Fairy Dance. Managed the lightness and tripping well, not quite rhythmic.	85.

Class 101 "Two Concertinas" - own choice

Lavinia McDougall and Albert Crook.	Not always together, but nicely played.	83.
C. Parslay and H. Dawson.	Good ensemble, trio too heavy, but pleasing performance.	85.
Violet Fordham and Fred Watts.	Good feeling for the dance, choice of parts not wise.	80.
Edith Wheeler and Lavinia McDougall.	Ensemble good, needs contrast and rhythmic control.	82.
Maurice Harvey and Tom Jukes.	Right spirit, nice contrast and sensitive accompaniment.	86.
Harry Firth and Donald Pullan	Trills nicely together and neat cadenza	83.

Class 102 Three or Four Concertinas

The Kensington Quartette in Light Cavalry. Good dramatic stuff, the change into allegro well managed, with splendid horse ride in the middle, good solid bounce with sense of excitement.	85.
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Class 103A Five or more concertinas Test Piece - Slow Movement from Beethoven's First Symphony

Holloway Institute Class.	The main criticism is lack of rhythmic control and inattention to the conductor, which causes the piece to run away. Both piano and sforzando came off well	80.
Kensington Group	Settled down to nice control, with triplets nicely done, but speed increased almost to jig. Nice on the whole.	85.

Class 103B Five or more concertinas, Own Choice.

Holloway Institute Class - Menuett from Clock Symphony	Good Contrast, but not enough rhythmic control. Wanted to get on without the conductor	81.
Kensington Group - Handel's Concerto Grosso No.2.	Well together, a good allegro start, and on the whole well managed. It could have been broader, and the largo and adagio should have had different speeds.	83.

WHAT IS THE GAELIC FOR CONCERTINA?

Gina Mercer is playing her concertina to the Manx Folk, featuring "Farwell to Slieve Mourne" and "Mountains High", as well as singing "Eriskay Love Lilt". In compliment to the land of her adoption she is arranging Gaelic Tunes to play on the concertina at the numerous social events which she says make time pass with incredible speed.

But then, both she and her husband (whom we remember for his help on the piano are learning Gaelic, and she has already been presented with the "silver faining" for her prowess. The "gold faining" is given to those who become fluent, and this tiny ring badge - silver or gold - is much to be prized. The Mercers are also going to a festival in Brittany, where they will hear Breton, Cornish, Irish, Scottish and Manx Gaelic. They must be gluttons for Gaelic.

Closing a long and delightful letter, Mrs. Mercer comes down heavily in favour of classics on the concertina. She welcomes folk music as rewarding and very cheeful, but says "pop" debases the concertina to squeeze-box, and concludes with "No! A thousand times no!"

NEWS OF THE MEMBERS

We are glad to record continued support from two more of our friends in the U.S.A. Leonard Laieski, and also Mrs. Wilbur Gershenson. Mrs. Gershenson shortly moves to Chatham, in New Jersey, and says that she hopes to find more time to practice "in the peace of suburbia".

Bill King, rusticated (of his own choice) to Uckfield, Sussex, misses playing with the Kensington Group, to whom he sends his regards. We recall him helping the beginners at Hitchin, and wonder if he can start a Sussex group.

W.Pearce of Eastwood retired three years ago, but not noticeably. Nevertheless, he regrets that he could not enter the Northern Group in the London Festival. Dorothy Nicoll and Elsie Smith of Burnley now play with the group. Mr. Pearce took Albert Firth to see Mr. Stanley of Birmingham, a meeting of two giants of Duet playing, aided and abetted by Mr. Stanley's sister with a warm welcome on an enjoyable visit.

Change of Address (from June 1st.) Mrs. Wilbur Gershenson, to 15, Jackson Avenue, New Jersey 07928, U.S.A.

Brig. Thornett of the Salvation Army tells us that he is to visit Wigan on the week-end of October 12 and 13th. Members will recall his exceptionally high standard of Duet playing, and will want to hear the new additions to his repertoire - "Sheep May Safely Graze", and "Andante Cantabile".

Peter Honri, 32 Complins, Holybourne, Alton, Hants, appeals for any recollections of "concertinas on the halls" for his articles on THE CALLBOY. He writes, edits, and plays the concertina and rugby, being skipper of Alton's 4th XV.

J.M.Beckett, 6 Marmont Park, Belfast 4, N. Ireland wants to know how a Triumph differs from a Duet. Letters please. He plays Irish traditional melodies and accompanies songs, all by ear, as he is self taught, but he realises the value of reading music, and is learning to do so.

Will Gardham of Batterseas was robbed of the pleasure of competing in the London Festival, by an emergency operation. And this after he had put off other functions, and pestered Mr. Ranger to let him know his time of competing. We share the disappointment of this enthusiast, and wish him a speedy return to full health, and future triumph.

CONCERTINAS AT HOLLOWAY INSTITUTE

A recent report of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, on facilities for enjoying the arts in certain London Boroughs, praised the concertina classes of Holloway Institute, speaking highly of their activities, and saying they were well known locally. There was also mention of the guitar classes, and commendation of Mr Bird's welcome for the less sophisticated forms of art.

A. G. DIMMOCK.

The I.C.A. regrets to announce the passing on March 5th 1968 of A.G.Dimmock of Nazeing, Essex. He was an early member, but had not attended a meeting for some years, largely owing to ill-health. He had called on the Secretary a few years ago, and his pleasant personality would have ensured him a welcome had he been able to take part in I.C.A. affairs.

Change of address . Alan Chadburn, now writes from 21 Hamilton Drive, Studley, Warwick, as he has not yet been able to return to Africa. His playing is for the moment limited to nursery rhymes for his little daughter, a worthy cause, surely.

Chris Turner of Hockley hopes to be seeing more of us. He will be welcome.

Helen Bland has warmest thoughts of the I.C. A. and would often be with us but for a full book of engagements. We envy her audiences, and hope they continue appreciative.

J.W.Mycock enjoys his Newsletters and regrets that at 86 is no longer able to play. He started playing a Melodian when he was ten, then bought an Anglo 20 key from Greaves of Sheffield for £2. 5.s. his final instrument being a Wheatstone 56 key bartione treble.

H.T.Fletcher, now at 23 The Glebe, Wrattling Road, Haverhill, Suffolk, regrets that he will not now/able to take advantage of full membership. /be We are sorry too, as we enjoyed his company at meetings and the occasional class.

NEW MEMBER We welcome G. Penrith of 12 Yew Tree Road, Walton, Liverpool 9, who is a member of the twenty or so bands in and around Liverpool. He was introduced by Mr. Preston of Oldham.

Mr. W. Preston of Oldham is 78 years of age, and has been buying, selling and repairing concertinas for sixty year's. He is a good friend of the I.C.A. also, being responsible for the introduction of several members, including P.B.Koval of Ashton under Lyne, who in his opinion is at 21 the best concertina player he has ever heard. Mr. Preston now feels that he must give up, and wishes to dispose of his stock, which includes fifteen concertinas, and some rare instruments which could be museum pieces. We hope to give a list in a later Newsletter.

FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE I.C.A.

April 27th	Evening	Holloway
May 25th	Afternoon	Conway Hall
June 29th ++		
July 27th	Afternoon	Conway Hall
August 24th	Evening	Conway Hall
September 28th	Afternoon	Conway Hall
October 26th ++		
November 30th	Evening	Conway Hall
January 25th 1969	A.G.M. Afternoon	Conway Hall
February 22nd ++		
March 29th	Afternoon	Conway Hall

++ Probably evenings at Holloway, to be confirmed.

THE I.C.A. LIBRARY OF MUSIC

THE I.C.A. LIBRARY OF MUSIC is now in -the care of Mr. J. Hutcherson, 45 Valentine Avenue, Bexley, Kent, from whom copies may be borrowed by post. Members must refund outward postage when returning borrowed music. We are grateful to Mr. Hutcherson for taking over the task of Honorary Librarian.

OTHER ITEMS

of news, which would have filled the vacant spaces in this Newsletter have had to be omitted owing to lack of time. It was essential to get the Newsletter printed and despatched in time for the April meeting.