

Summer Concert

Saturday 25 June 2016

St Mary's Church, Banbury

Programme £1



Concert Dates for Your Diary

Banbury Symphony Orchestra

Autumn Concert

Saturday 26th November 2016

Finlandia – Sibelius

Symphony No.2 – Stenhammar

Symphony No.2 – Nielsen

7:30 pm – Church of St Peter and St Paul, Deddington

BanburyOrchestraTickets@gmail.com

Welcome and thank you for joining us for our spring concert.

We have a wonderfully varied programme of music from three great English composers of the last 160 years. Two of the works have a London theme – evoking not only the sounds, but also the sights of the town in the first two decades of the 20th century. Listen out for the Westminster chimes in the Vaughan Williams!

We have enjoyed exploring this repertoire immensely and we hope you enjoy our performance tonight.

We would love to see you again at our upcoming autumn concert with a definite Scandinavian flavour.

Peter Button
Chairman, BSO

Programme

Overture Cockaigne (In London Town) – Elgar

Symphony No.5 – Arnold

Tempestuoso

Andante con moto – Adagio

Con fuoco

Risoluto - Lento

Interval

'A London Symphony' (No.2) – Vaughan Williams

Prologue

(Lento) – Allegro risoluto

Lento

Scherzo (Nocturne) – Allegro vivace

Andante con moto – Allegro – Epilogue (Andante sostenuto)

Paul Willett – Conductor

Paul Willett is our Conductor and Musical Director. Paul studied violin, singing and piano as a student but his main instrument was the French horn on which he gained his Performance Diploma from The Royal College of Music at the age of 16. He then went on to read music on scholarship at The Queen's College, Oxford, and studied for his teaching certificate in Music and Physical Education at Reading University.

For several years Paul combined teaching and freelance playing. He has given solo recitals and performed concertos throughout the country. He was a member of The Five Winds, a group that performed both at home and abroad, and also on BBC radio. Paul worked as a brass teacher for Oxfordshire Music Service and was director of a Saturday Music School of 200 students.

Paul is currently the Director of Didcot Sixth Form College and he continues his music making conducting various ensembles, both adult and youth.



Anna Fleming - Leader



Anna was born in South Africa where she started playing the violin at the age of ten. While studying music at secondary school, Anna became a member of the South African National Youth Orchestra. After successfully completing her music degree, majoring in orchestral studies, Anna joined the Cape Philharmonic Orchestra in 1992.

Anna moved to England in late 1996. Keen to continue her orchestral playing, Anna joined the Banbury Symphony Orchestra in 1997 and became the leader of the orchestra in 2000, a post that she has held ever since. As a committed Christian, Anna plays an active role in church music. Focusing primarily on private violin tuition, Anna particularly enjoys helping adults to learn to play and she can be contacted on 01295 780017.

Overture *Cockaigne (In London Town)* – Elgar

For the whole of the 18th and 19th centuries, while Europe produced the baroque, classical and romantic composers from Bach to Beethoven to Wagner, England was known as the "land without music". We listened to it, we performed it, but we didn't write it. So when the first English composer of genius after Purcell (who wrote in the late 1600s) arrived in the person of Edward Elgar it is not surprising that it took him some time to find his voice and reveal his genius. By the time he was 40 Elgar's fame was still only provincial - a leading light of the Three Choirs Festival in the west country, but not known elsewhere. The Enigma Variations changed all that, and it was quickly followed by *Sea Pictures*, *Dream of Gerontius* and *Cockaigne*. *Gerontius* was soon performed all over Europe and when Richard Strauss publicly described Elgar as "a composer of real genius" England realised that the 200 years "without music" was over.

Cockaigne was written in early 1901 in the aftermath of *Dream of Gerontius*. Though it was soon successful the premiere of *Gerontius* had been a disaster. Elgar was furious and upset, but in a few weeks he was at work on a new piece. "I call it *Cockayne* and it's cheerful and Londony - stout and steaky". He had recently learnt the

trombone and consciously made the trombone parts more substantial than usual. He finished it in March 1901 and it was first performed in London in June.



It starts tentatively and gradually picks up momentum into the first big tune which is in two parts. The first part is swaggering and jolly, and the second part broad and sweeping. It then subsides and the second theme is quieter, romantic and dreamy. With a swirl the first theme reappears. A longer quiet section with fragments of other themes leads to a big crescendo and the third theme, bold and martial on brass and percussion. This too subsides and a steady tread of feet takes us to the emotional heart of the piece ("two lovers only concerned with each other, among the trees of a London square"). The rest of the

overture develops these themes in a mixture of swaggering ceremonial and tenderness, and it is the ceremonial which gives the rousing close.



Symphony No.5 – Arnold

Sir Malcolm Henry Arnold, CBE (1921 – 2006) was an English composer. His output of works features music in many genres, including a cycle of nine symphonies, numerous concertos, concert works, chamber music, choral music and music for brass band and wind band. He wrote extensively for the theatre, with five ballets specially commissioned by the Royal Ballet, as well as two operas and a musical. He also produced scores for more than a hundred films, among these *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957), for which he won an Oscar.



The Symphony No. 5, Op. 74 was finished in 1961. It is in four movements:

Tempestuoso

Andante con moto - Adagio

Con fuoco

Risoluto - Lento

The work was commissioned by the Cheltenham Festival Society. The composer conducted the first performance with the Hallé Orchestra on 3 July 1961 at the Cheltenham Music Festival in the Town Hall.

The Symphony is a remembrance of four of Arnold's friends who died too young:

Humorist Gerard Hoffnung

Clarinetist Frederick Thurston

Ballet choreographer David Paltenghi

French horn player Dennis Brain

The composer's own brief programme note states:

"This symphony is in four movements and is written for a normal symphony orchestra with the addition of a celesta. The four movements are divided into two pairs, the first thematically related to the third, and the second to the fourth. It will be noted that in the second movement, the composer is unable to distinguish between sentiment and sentimentality."

'A London Symphony' (No.2) – Vaughan Williams

Vaughan Williams did not number his symphonies, but this work was his second, premiered in March 1914. The only copy of the full score was sent to Fritz Busch in Aachen just as war broke out, which proved to be a near disaster as the score was lost and the symphony had to be reconstructed from the surviving orchestral parts.



The symphony was not really intended to be a tone poem about London, although there are unmistakable graphic images – the Westminster chimes are heard at the end of the introduction (Prologue) and the

Epilogue, and in the Scherzo we hear a mouth organ and street songs. Just as Beethoven described the appearance of the cuckoo and the quail in the slow movement of his Pastoral symphony as “more expression of feeling than painting”, in similar vein Vaughan Williams said of the London symphony that “the music is intended to be self-expressive, and must stand or fall as ‘absolute’ music”.

The work opens softly, before dawn, down by the misty Thames, with a rising figure in the basses. Big Ben is heard in the distance, then the great city bursts into life. The first movement is a kaleidoscope of images, from the hustle and bustle of The Strand to the quiet streets that lead down to the river, and ends in a very positive mood.

The hauntingly beautiful slow movement was said by the composer to depict “Bloomsbury Square on a November afternoon”, and this is the emotional heart of the symphony. After a chilly introduction, and a sad tune on the cor anglais, some consolation is found by the lower strings, to a gently throbbing accompaniment. A solo viola sings the street cry “Sweet lavender, who will buy sweet lavender?” against the distant jingles of hansom cabs. This time the music rises to a big emotional

climax, before dying away and leaving the viola to muse alone. The ensuing Scherzo (subtitled Nocturne) depicts evening revelries – it scurries along until interrupted by the brass. The Trio section is a clear depiction of a jolly cockney gathering complete with mouth organ and accordion. Eventually the light begins to fade, and so does the action, as if receding into the distance.

The Finale opens with a great cry of anguish, as if the composer was trying to depict the human tragedy found in all great cities. The solemn march that follows has a hint of pageantry but is full of emotion. The allegro is powerful and barbaric, with no comfort, until the quiet return of the march. The music rises to an impassioned climax, then dies away to the sound of the Westminster chimes; it is the beginning of the end. The Epilogue opens with rippling figures depicting the great river, as London returns to rest.

Central to the Symphony's success is the wonderful limpid scoring, which Vaughan Williams felt in later life that he had never bettered. He had taken lessons in orchestration from Maurice Ravel to acquire, as he put it "a little French polish", and the results were quickly apparent. In this Symphony there are atmospheric evocations of London that one can only call 'impressionistic', showing how the composer had developed complete

assurance in deploying his orchestral technique.

Though Vaughan Williams revised the symphony periodically, even as late as the 1950s when he was turning 80, he told the conductor John Barbirolli "the London Symphony is past mending, though with all its faults I love it still, indeed it is my favourite of my family of six."

Banbury Symphony Orchestra

Management Committee

Peter Button (Chair), Emma Callery (Treasurer), Ros Templeman (Secretary),
Trish Evans, Lyn Gosney, Jane Cerasale, Marianne Robinson, Simon Kingsley.

Conductor - Paul Willett

Violin I

Anna Fleming (Leader)
Penny Tolmie
Stephen Taylor
Marianne Robinson
Lisa Callejo
Natasha Henwood

Violin II

Ian Smith
Maddy Evans
Andrew Waite
Trish Evans
Gill Walker
Sue Christie
Emma Pascoe

Viola

Alex Mann
Matt Dale
Tommie Lee
Conrad Woolley

Cello

Jennifer Hubble
Paul Morley
Janet Parsons
Peter Button
Ruth Mankelow
Simon Kingsley

Double Bass

Robert Gilchrist
Jo Willett
John Cronin

Flute

Rachel McCubbin
Sue Wain
Ruth Carroll

Piccolo

Ruth Carroll

Oboe

Emma Wahlen
Lyn Gosney

Cor Anglais

Lyn Gosney

Clarinet

Jane Cerasale
Helen Finch

Bass Clarinet

Alice Palmer

Bassoon

Ian McCubbin
Rachel James

Contra Bassoon

Ian White

French Horn

Bob Powell
David Settle
Dan Blakey
Helen Barnby-Porritt

Trumpet

Tony Chittock
Ron Barnett
Tom Bolton-King
Terry Mayo

Trombone

Paul Macey
Gary Clifton
Malcolm Saunders

Tuba

James Longstaffe

Timpani

Justin Rhodes

Percussion

Keith Crompton
Shirley Day
Huw Morgan

Celesta

Huw Morgan

Harp

Karina Bell

Our Patrons

Lady Saye and Sele

Our Sponsor

spratt endicott
SOLICITORS

Support Us

We are grateful for the support that the orchestra receives from our patrons and sponsors as well, of course, as the support of those who regularly attend our concerts, which help make the concerts all the more enjoyable for audience, performers, and soloists.

If you would like to support the orchestra through donation, sponsorship or joint enterprises, please contact us via our website

Join our email list and we can keep you up to date with our forthcoming concerts. To find out more, use one of the following contacts:



BanburyOrchestraTickets@gmail.com



banburysymphony.org



Banbury Symphony Orchestra



[@BanburySymphony](https://twitter.com/BanburySymphony)

Joining the Orchestra

If you play an instrument to a standard of Grade 7 or above and would like to play with the orchestra, find out more by contacting Anna Fleming on 01295 780017.

All rehearsals take place in Banbury in term time on Tuesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30pm.

