The Delius Society JOURNAL

Autumn 2004
Number 136

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Autumn 2004, Number 136

The Delius Society
(Registered Charity No. 298662)
Full Membership and Institutions £20 per year
UK students £10 per year
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ISSN-0306-0373

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

On 5th June our President Felix Aprahamian celebrated his 90th birthday. Felix is currently living in a nursing home in north London, but I was able to speak to him on the day and to send him greetings on behalf of all members of The Delius Society. Though troubled by a number of infirmities he seemed very pleased to receive my call.

Hearty thanks to members who have written to say how much they enjoyed this year's AGM weekend, organised by Ann Dixon, which was held at the Hatherley Manor Hotel and coincided for the third consecutive time with the opening weekend of the Gloucester Three Choirs Festival. The formula has been good: the hotel is comfortable and has rooms suitable for the AGM, the annual lunch and various other events, while central Gloucester is only a short coach ride away for those who wish to attend the evening concerts in the cathedral. This year we heard our Vice President Tasmin Little in another distinguished performance of the Delius Violin Concerto and on the previous evening Alwyn Mellor sang the *Five Songs from the Norwegian* in the first public performance of Bo Holten's orchestration.

As is traditional, the Society invited a number of guests to share the occasion with us. Though our Vice President Sir Charles Mackerras and his wife were unable to join us (he was at that time in Dundee, recording with Alfred Brendel and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra) we were able to welcome from Germany Agnes Weiske, our speaker on the Sunday morning, and her partner Joseph Koestler. Bob Montgomery, who probably knows more than any other living person about copyright as it applies to Delius's works, was our guest from the Delius Trust. From the Midlands Branch, founded by him 40 years ago, came our good friend Richard Kitching, accompanied by Wyn Evans, whom it was a joy to see in better health than of late. From France we welcomed Jean Merle d'Aubigné, the owner of the Delius house in Rue Wilson, Grez-sur-Loing, and his companion Maryline Delevaux.

Jean, like his mother Anna Merle d'Aubigné before him, has been for years a wonderful host to individuals and groups from the Society who have visited Grez. As recently as last September, during the course of a weekend celebrating the centenary of the marriage of Frederick and Jelka in the village (reported by Stewart Winstanley and Brian Radford in the previous edition of this *Journal*), Jean opened his garden to a group of Society members and other friends, and provided a splendid *al fresco* lunch for all; it was a lovely late summer day and the garden looked ravishing. Jean had not visited England for some time and had never previously attended a Delius Society function, so his visit with Maryline was our opportunity to play host and to acknowledge the remarkable seventy years of family hospitality from which so many have benefited over the years. We are

delighted that Jean has accepted Honorary Membership of The Delius Society.

Jane Armour-Chélu has edited nine issues of this *Journal* and has decided that the current issue will be her last. The Committee is extremely grateful to her for her hard work and productivity. In her hands the *Journal* has flourished and its scale has achieved a generosity without precedent. She has been meticulous in collating all necessary information and has kept strictly to deadlines. I believe that the entire membership thanks her for her efforts on their behalf and wishes her well.

We are fortunate that another member of the Society has stepped forward with an offer to take over from Jane as Editor which has been accepted by the Committee. Our new Editor will be Martin Lee-Browne, well known to many members of the Society both personally and as the biographer of his grandfather, the singer and composer Frederic Austin. Until recently he was Chairman of the Three Choirs Festival Committee; the brilliantly successful Gloucester Festival of 2001 took place during his time in office. Martin will edit the *Journal* from the next issue, which is due to appear in April 2005 (copy date: 1st March 2005). Please email your contributions to him at deliusjournal@lee-browne.co.uk, or mail them to: Chester House, Fairford, Gloucester GL7 4AD. Tel: 01285-711417 (provisional).

Roger Buckley

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2005

The Delius Society Annual General Meeting will be held at the Royal Academy of Music, Marylebone Road, London NW1 5HT on Saturday 13 August. Included in the day's events will be a formal lunch and a musical event. Full details, together with appropriate booking forms will be sent out with the *Newsletter* in January.

Ann Dixon, Honorary Secretary

EDITORIAL

In celebration of the 90th birthday of our President Felix Aprahamian, I am very pleased to be able to include in this *Journal*, his recollections of his visit to Grez in August 1933. At a London meeting of the Society in 1989 Felix read from his diary, and the evening was, fortunately for us all, recorded. Brian Radford has recently transcribed that tape, and now we can all share Felix's memories of the day he met Frederick Delius.

I am extremely grateful to everyone who has contributed to this, my last edition of the *Journal*. I hope that over the past years I have managed to talk to most members who have sent me items of interest – it has been a pleasure to work with you all. However, there are certain members to whom I owe special thanks for their patience and assistance. I have enjoyed researching archive material, and I trust you have found this dimension interesting. But, as many members know, I do not read a note of music, and in fact know very little at all about it, so I have depended a great deal on friends and colleagues: Brian Radford, who always had a photograph to hand of anything I needed, and could write a review overnight; Stewart Winstanley, super-efficient and a master of diplomacy; George Little my long-time friend who introduced me to the Society; Paul Guinery who proof-read for me; Lyndon Jenkins, the super-human musical *Encarta* with the answer to almost every query, and who is also great fun to talk to; and my dear friend Robert Threlfall who has always been there to support and encourage me.

As I have said many times before – the *Journal* is what members make it – so, please continue to send in contributions to my successor and *The Delius Society Journal* will always be what you want it to be. My sincere thanks to you all.

Jane Armour-Chélu

THE DELIUS PRIZE

Over recent months the Committee has worked with the authorities of the Royal Academy of Music to establish The Delius Prize. The official agreement, recently signed by the Academy and the Society reads, in part:

> **Details of the Award**
> Founded by The Delius Society as a means of introducing young musicians to the music of Delius. This prize will be offered for competition annually, for a period of five years from its inception, for piano, violin, viola, v'cello, voice, vocal or chamber ensemble.
> The Delius Society agrees that this competition will adhere to Competition Rules as set out by the Royal Academy of Music.
> The competition will be held, if possible, in November each year.
> **Criteria**
> Students will be expected to present a programme of their own choice, of not more than 20 minutes. At least 10 minutes of music should be composed by Delius. The programme may also include work(s) by other composers who were contemporaries of Delius (1862-1934).
> The competition is open to all current students of the Royal Academy of Music.
> **Adjudication**
> The adjudicator will not be a member of the Royal Academy of Music Staff and will be selected and invited by the Royal Academy of Music. A non-professional musician will be nominated, from the members of The Delius Society, to assist with the adjudication.

The remainder of the agreement is concerned with the administration, costs and publicity of the Prize. Details of the Prize, along with many other competitions, are to be found in the current Diary of Events published by the Royal Academy and widely distributed. The value of the Prize will normally be £500, but for the inaugural competition the sum of £1,000 will be awarded to the lucky winner.

The adjudicator of the first Prize will be David Lloyd-Jones, the Chairman of the Delius Trust and a Vice President (and good friend) of this Society. The first round will be held privately at the Academy on 5 November. The finalists will then compete publicly for the Prize at a public event to be held at 7.00pm on Friday 12 November in the David Josefowitz Recital Hall of the Royal Academy of Music. There will be no charge for admission. All members of The Delius Society are invited to attend, and to stay for a Reception to be held afterwards in the Concert Room.

GREZ 1933 – FELIX APRAHAMIAN'S DIARY

Introduction by Brian Radford

Felix Aprahamian was born in 1914, and visited the Delius's at their home at Grez-sur-Loing on Tuesday 8 August 1933, at the age of nineteen. He was accompanied by Ernest Chapman, then working for Hawkes in Debenham Street (prior to Boosey & Hawkes being formed and based in Oxford Street) and Donald Peart, whose parents lived at St Cloud and whose house was their 'general headquarters' on the visit to Paris. They had been friends since 1931 when they attended an I.S.C.M. (International Society of Contemporary Music) festival of music concerts, divided between the cities of Oxford and London, where the concerts were held in the Queen's Hall. After Felix made the original suggestion that they should visit Delius at Grez, it was Chapman who was able to get a letter of introduction from Ralph Hawkes at his publishing firm, which gave them permission for the visit.

Fortunately Felix kept a detailed diary of the various events in his life, particularly those relating to the concerts that he attended and the many fascinating composers, conductors, solo artists and others in the world of music whom he met. His diary entries for 8 August 1933 form a fascinating record of the events of that day, and The Delius Society were fortunate indeed that he agreed to read them at a meeting held at the British Music Information Centre, 10 Stratford Place, London on 8 November 1989. The following is a transcript of the meeting from a tape recording by Stephen Lloyd, as Felix read out those diary entries made at the time, and which he completed on the journey home by train. The sections in closed brackets are asides added by Felix during the meeting, and those in closed square brackets are additional information added by way of clarification. Brief extracts from the diary have been published in the book *The Men Who Made The Proms* by Barrie Hall, but the whole of the entries have never been published.

Felix recounted that he, Ernest and Donald crossed the Channel by ferry and then went by train to Paris for a little sightseeing. On the Monday he visited the church of St Suplice, to find a small altar organ accompanying some antiphonal singing, and was thrilled when the mighty great organ at the west end joined in. Asking a woman selling votive candles who was playing, he was told that it was none other than Charles Marie Widor himself. Felix managed to insinuate himself into the organ loft using a card of introduction to Vierne, (whose name fortunately did not appear on it!) and sat beside the great man as he played "his old hands knarled and knotted, his feet difficult to manipulate accurately - but what playing!" Felix records in his diary. He managed to get Widor to autograph a copy of his Fifth Symphony, with its famous 'Toccata' finale.

Felix now reads from his 1933 diary entries:

". . . Then straight on to the Gare de Lyon – we were twenty minutes early. At ten to eleven our train steamed out. For an hour-and-a-half we journeyed via Melun, Fontainebleau, Aven, Montigny, and then Bouron-Marlotte-Grez. The signpost a little way from the station informed us that Grez was 2.12 km to the left. Oh, that walk! It was a main road, fields either side, a profusion of wild flowers, butterflies innumerable – ringlets, blues, clouded yellows, red admirals – the sound of grasshoppers all along the route, the sun blazing – what a place!

(You must forgive me. You must realise that this is . . . a kid of nineteen who has never written, who has no literary style, who is doing this for his own private memories. There was no thought in my mind that one day I might be reading it and might be sharing these thoughts. They're private, they are half-baked. You must make allowances for the age and the terrible inexperience of the person who is writing this, because I was not an academic. I failed matriculation because I discovered music. Probably because of Delius and refusing to swot and revise, I failed matriculation . . . But – revenge is sweet! . . . Right, we go on . . .)

At last we espied what must be Grez. The old grey church, the little white houses. Cautiously we trod the road, fearing to come across the house too soon. (I knew vaguely what it looked like because I had seen a picture of it.) We soon arrived at the main street of the village – at one end the church, at the other end the war memorial. A red-nosed motorcyclist [on one side of the road] did not know the house at all – he was a stranger to the village. A buxom dame on the other did however. "Did Monsieur see the white house down the road with the verdure [greenery]? That was it."

We retraced our steps to the Hotel Charlotte (?) for lunch. It was a lunch – perfect hors d'oeuvres followed by a scotch as (. . . ?) omelette followed by mutton cutlets with lettuce salad and fennel, some excellent local cheese and a delicious peach, all helped down by a palatable red wine and coffee. (I should have been the gastronomic correspondent. At an early age my visit to Delius is tempered by the lunch!) . . . Ernest is impatient, so we must leave this pleasant hotel garden. When next I take up my pen we shall have seen Frederick Delius.

(I next take up my pen at 9.15 in the suburbs . . . travelling towards Dieppe on the train. It's over. Ernest sits opposite studying the Bloch Sonata. The suburbs flash by and disappear while I try to collect my thoughts.)

We left the hotel and walked down the grand place to this large house to which we had been directed. We knocked and waited – no reply. A head, which had popped out of some shutters opposite, shrieked out in a shrill voice that they might be in the garden and that we should knock louder. We did – we heard steps, and the large door swung open. A French lassie asked us to enter.

We found that we were in a small courtyard. Immediately before us a

wonderful garden in full bloom. To our left a small section of the villa – to our right the main section. This was his home sure enough – there in the courtyard was his wheeled-chair. It was the mad riot of colour in the garden and beyond which held the secret of the works such as *In a Summer Garden*.

The next few seconds passed like lightning. A beautiful and gracious old lady moved through the door on our right to welcome us. It was all so sudden – no halls, no corridor. There, in that spacious living room, in the corner of my eye, I saw that sad, pathetic spectacle. James Gunn was right – he does look exactly like that. Much as I praise the photo of the Fontainebleau photographer, there's no doubt that the oil painting is truer to life.

His eyes half-open, the wonderful dome like finely chiselled marble, the sinuous and gouged neck, the loose white [open-necked] shirt and loosely knotted tie, perfectly creased white cricket trousers and white canvas shoes, bare legs like triangular sticks of wood – it all seemed so terribly, overwhelmingly sad. Mrs. Delius ushered us in and across the room. Ernest was introduced first, then me, and then Bernard. How can I forget how that pale hand was extended to grasp mine.

We were then introduced to a Miss Peggy Delius, who is a niece of Delius. (Some of you may remember her as Margaret Vessey. I was next to meet her in Bradford in 1962) Fenby wasn't there of course – he had already left at the beginning of 1933, the year before Delius died. [See Footnote]

Immediately we were seated Mrs Delius asked whether we would take tea or wine. This didn't need much consideration, and no sooner had we chosen wine than Mr Delius said, "Tell them to cool a bottle of wine dear." This was a royal command, and the order was immediately given down by Mrs Delius, and we noticed this immediate obeyance of everything Delius said throughout the hour that we were with him.

I was able to take stock, more or less, of my surroundings while Mrs Delius asked Ernest questions about the weather and Paris. We were in a spacious room, very tastefully furnished. At Delius's side stood a stodgy looking young German whom I took to be a male nurse – he was. (He uttered not one word or made one expression on his flabby face the whole time we were there. He must have been a Trappist monk – he was absolutely . . . er, it seemed wrong in that sense. Obviously the music of Delius meant nothing to him. But he had to deal with Delius – I expect he had other problems.)

"What do you think of Paris?" said Delius. I told him that I had been before - my father had taken me in 1925 so I knew it. It wasn't exactly old hat, but I loved it more than ever. "Yes, it's a gay city" was the wistful reply. (That would mean something different today.)

Mrs Delius told Peggy to approach us with one of the platters full of greengages

and told us to help ourselves to her garden produce.

Again the voice of the imperious old autocrat"But my dear, surely the gentlemen are not going to eat plums before wine." (The explanation of a fastidious gourmet - connoisseur of food. I shall always remember the way this was spoken. It simply wasn't done, and I doubt if I shall ever be able to eat greengages before wine now!)

The plums were set aside and the conversation began in earnest. I gave Delius Dr Michaud's message that the [Delius] Society is going strong. Delius seemed very glad to hear this. [This is of course a mention of the original Delius Society, not the present one.]

(Dr. Michaud used to run a music shop in the basement of 40 Langham Street. He had a big stock of Sennar (?) things. That's where I first saw the full score of 'The Gothic Symphony' of Havergal Brian. Of course it was France's office too. The Delius Society had just been mooted and of course 40 Langham Street was also where The Universal Edition was, where Sennar and France held out, so Dr. Michaud, as representative of Universal before they set up their own building after the war . . . That was where you went for *Brigg Fair* and the first *Dance Rhapsody* – the Universal publications.)

[Jean Michaud was then the London agent of the London music publishers Universal Edition, Leukhart, Josef Weinberger and Eulenberg. In 1929 he played a part in founding the first Delius Society of which Thomas Beecham was the President and Keith Douglas the Hon. Secretary.]

I mentioned The Sibelius Society's concerts before the issue of their first album, and expressed the hope that a similar concert would be given under the auspices of the Delius Society.

(Sibelius had really taken off owing to a combination of circumstances. The Finnish government had subsidised the recording by Kajanus and the LSO of some Sibelius works, and this was where Walter Legge was in evidence. He was a young man at HMV then, and the opportunity had been seized for the Sibelius Society to bring out the 78-rpm albums and also to give a concert. This also coincided with the publication of Cecil Gray's 'Sibelius' by the OUP. Now this was fortuitous perhaps, but extremely lucky, because it was a combination of things – the foundation of a Record Society, the incidence of a public concert by Kajanus (Sibelius's 3rd and 5th Symphonies, *Tapiola* and *Pojhola's Daughter*) arising out of the recordings, and the publication of a book on the composer by Cecil Gray, and from that time Sibelius really took off. That was 1931. If you add to that the fact that Beecham discovered Sibelius long after Granville Bantock and Henry Wood, and included the 2nd Symphony in his first series of LPO concerts in 1932 and then proceeded to do the Symphonies chronologically each year with the Royal Philharmonic Society (he did two in one year) and by the time we had got to the war in 1939 Tommy had done all

seven Sibelius Symphonies including the Symphonic Poems and things like that. So really Sibelius got a frightfully good start.)

The mention of Sibelius caused Mrs. Delius to remark that he must be a very queer man – apparently both Bax and Cecil Gray, who had been to Grez recently, had recounted weird things of Jean Sibelius.

Delius mentioned that [Balfour] Gardiner and [Norman] O'Neill had also visited him lately and I asked about the Elgar visit. Mrs Delius said that he'd been very pleasant – not at all like they'd expected he would be. I asked Delius if the report in Elgar's *Daily Telegraph* article that he would fly to England was correct.

"No, that is not right – I should be afraid of a disaster. How topical all this is when one hears of the terrible aeroplane disasters. I should not like to be burnt up."

I told him the sea was like glass when we crossed, suggesting that it wouldn't upset him too much to come over again. He pooh-poohed this with "Oh, I don't mind that." The sea obviously held no terrors for him. Yes, he wanted to come to England again. He would come if they did his *Village Romeo and Juliet* – also he wanted to go up to the Yorkshire moors again.

I told him of the splendid performance of *Songs of Farewell* by the Philharmonic Choir – the best yet heard. He had heard about it and was very sorry that it wasn't broadcast. Yes, he thought Kennedy Scott by far the best choir trainer in London.

Mrs Delius suggested that, while the wine was cooling, we might like to see the garden. This was jumped at. (I realise that this was a tactful break. There was I killing the old boy with questions!)

Oh, that summer garden – paradise for butterflies. Taking the path on the right side I walked along with Mrs Delius while Donald and Ernest escorted Peggy. The 'Greek Ladies' (?) slithered down the paths, and also figs. Profuse blooms everywhere.

I asked Mrs. Delius about the old church that stood to our right. It was 12th century Norman – a fine edifice. Apparently Grez was once a large and important place. The ruined tower to the left of the garden was the remains of the castle to which the early kings would confine their wives when they misbehaved.

Passing by a pool in the centre of the garden, which is fed by a natural spring, we curved round to the back of the garden which backs onto the River Loing. What a river!

(And then I must have reached home by then and amplified this with the Stevenson description. In August, 1875 Robert Louis Stevenson wrote home to his mother Mrs. Thomas Stevenson, 'Letters - Volume 2.' I have a collection of Stevenson; it's not complete but I have that volume, and I picked up this letter: -

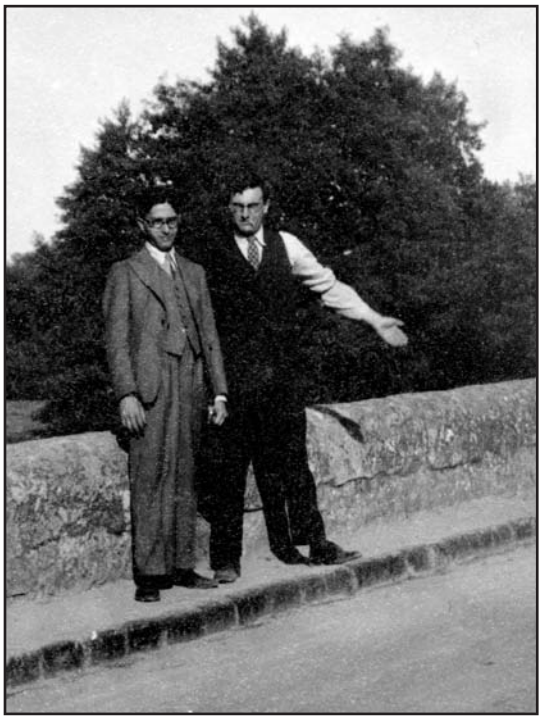
"My dear mother, I have been three days at a place called Grez. A pretty, very melancholy village on the flame (?) A low bridge with many arches choked

with sedge, great fields of white and yellow water lilies, poplars and willows innumerable, and about it all such an atmosphere of sadness and slackness one could do nothing but get into the boat and out of it again and yawn for bedtime."

Such is Grez today, fifty-eight years after that was written. From Delius's garden one gets a splendid view of the bridge of many arches a little way downstream to the left. Grez is in part of a neighbourhood known to painters. Lavery and hosts of others have painted the bridge in their younger days. The Americans however, having discovered Millais, have completely spoilt Barbizon, which is not far off.)

For some time we stood gazing at the water, absorbing the beauty that lay around. Everything was so tranquil and calm under a peaceful heaven. Delius has bought the large field opposite so that nothing, apart from an Act of God, will destroy the beautiful vista which undoubtedly inspired the last scene of the *Village Romeo and Juliet*. Even the boat was there, moored to Delius's landing stage.

Slowly we came back up the left side of the garden. Mrs Delius offered to show us the source of their spring, and we readily followed her. Descending a few steps we found ourselves in a sort of crypt, with a trough of water running through it – crystal clear and ice cold. The intense coolness of the place was almost unbelievable taking to regard the blazing heat of the sun outside. We peered through the aperture into which the trough narrowed and there, gushing out between two stones laid probably by Romans, was a flow of pure cold water. In the trough the wine was cooling. Coming out into the heat again, I seized the opportunity of taking a photo of the group. Donald took another photo of the group including myself.



Felix Aprahamian and Donald Peart on the bridge at Grez
photo courtesy of Felix Aprahamian

Mrs Delius then led us up to the study, which was on the first floor of the left side of the villa. The super-abundance of fruit was visible even here as it was in the living room. As in the living room, so on shelves up the staircase bottled fruits were arranged as though they were books. I remember asking Mrs. Delius for the address of the

Ernest Chapman, Peggy (Delius), Mrs Delius and Donald Peart (Grez, August 1933)
photo courtesy of Felix Aprahamian

Fontainebleau photographer on the way up the stairs. She said she would write it down for me, but in the general excitement of departure this was forgotten.

A second later one of my most intense desires was fulfilled – here the very study, the pictures of which in Heseltine's *Delius* had long fired my enthusiasm. Here is a diagram of it. [At this point Felix showed a slide] The door is at 'A.' On the opposite bank of these is the Riccardi bust of Delius; above it the fine portrait in oils of Delius by Jelka Rosen. Mrs Delius modestly told us it was her work, done long ago. Bookshelves 'C', 'D' and I think 'E' and 'F', a sketch in oils of Mrs Delius by James Gunn, who did it at the time he was working on the academy portrait of Delius. Mrs Delius had no need to call our attention to the magnificent world famous Gauguin which hung at 'G.' One thing, however, I was not aware of – it's not the original. Although Delius bought the original from Gauguin, while the painter was still unknown, it is now in the possession of the Courtaulds. Delius must have sold it since the war, as Mrs Delius recounted how during the war they had to shut the villa up and go roaming over the land, and how the Gauguin went everywhere with them.

As Mrs Delius sat down for a moment on a seat under her portrait I took a snap. The wonderful climax of the study was none of these treasures but the wonderful view of the flower garden obtained from the window ledge. Mrs. Delius saw me gazing from it and told me how she would be painting in the garden below, and how she would hear Delius strumming at the piano, and see him walking about the room, and looking from that same window as he composed. What happy times

they can recall.

(Incidentally (I've told some of you this) the splendid copy that Mrs Delius made of the Gauguin 'Nevermore' – you know the painting with the Tahitian beauty on the couch and the raven in the corner which bears the motto 'Nevermore' – well I knew then it was a copy, and subsequently I saw the picture which is in The Courtauld Collection. The Delius's, I believe, sold it to Sir Michael Sadler who sold it to Samuel Courtauld, and its now part of his collection. What was an incredible surprise was to come across that picture twenty year later in 1953. My friend Donald, who was with me then, was professor of music in Sidney, New South Wales, and I stayed with him. We recaptured our Delius memories, and subsequently on his visits home to the old country, but I was accompanying Andre Marchal my friend the organist, so we went round to the Australian Broadcasting Commission, and one of our ports of call was Melbourne. I very much wanted to visit the Percy Grainger Museum because I knew that there were manuscripts there of Delius things. Percy had pillaged as much as he could with anything to do with his own career and friends. He built some of the building with his own hands – it's a low building on the grass verge of the campus of Melbourne University. You had to make an appointment with the curator (this is 1953 - a long time ago). It was arranged that I would visit the museum and make a list of the manuscripts there. I turned the corner, and there suddenly was the portrait of 'Nevermore' of Gauguin, which I instantly knew, was the copy made by Mrs. Delius which I had last seen in Delius's study 20 years earlier. I have to tell you that this building (the door is always closed and people can't gain access to it), it's on a tram stop, and people get out of the tram and make for this door thinking it's a gent's loo, and of course they can't get in: whereupon the Vice Chancellor of Melbourne University propounded the following: -

"Pass this building by, oh stranger,
'Twas not meant for your affair.
Pray for the soul of Percy Grainger,
And pray relieve yourself elsewhere."

We descended to the ground level and entered the living room once more. Mrs Delius was getting some fine white crystal glasses from the shelves for our wine, when –

"Get the green glasses out dear" – and immediately this was the way. In our honour some exquisite green glasses were taken down in place of the white ones. Mrs Delius filled them with delicious wine, sweetish with a moderate amount of body in it. Before leaving we had been helped three times to glass-fulls of this delectable fluid. Delius elected to have tea which, on arriving, the young German gave him sips of. "Tell them to ice a bottle of Perrier dear." Hence instantly the order was passed down.

Once more the conversation was started. Dr Sargent was inquired of, and I

gave the sad news that he had been barred from conducting for at least a year, and that the professorial staff of the RCM [Royal College of Music] interpreted this as a gentle way of breaking to him that he would not be able to conduct again for a much longer period. Mrs Delius said she didn't wonder after the strenuous life he had been leading – travelling at night and taking full rehearsals next morning, and suchlike.

I then asked confirmation of Alexandre Barjansky's statement to me that it was he who gave the first performance of the Cello Concerto in Vienna. I mentioned that Beatrice Harrison's name appeared in the Heseltine book. Delius was quite definite on this point. "Yes, Barjansky gave the first performance. She may think she gave it, but she is mistaken."

[Barjansky gave the first performance in Vienna on 31 January 1923 and the second performance on 1 March 1923 in Frankfurt. Beatrice Harrison actually gave the first English performance on 3 July 1923. The entry was corrected in the second edition of Heseltine's book.]

I followed this up by asking about the first Violin Sonata, mentioned by Heseltine as being in manuscript. Mrs Delius said that the first was published. I pointed out that the Sonata published by Forsyth was No 1, and was given as the second by Heseltine. Delius confirmed this. "Yes" he said "No 1 is here, still in manuscript." I asked if there was any likelihood of its being issued. "No, I do not think it is good enough for publication." That decided another point.

We went on to discuss various performances of his works. Mrs Delius told us of Andre Mangeot's visit to Paris with Helen Perkin when they gave the third violin and piano sonata. Delius told us of a broadcast from Paris when his Piano Concerto was played by one, Miss Maud Randle – quotes "A well known English pianist whom no-one seems to have heard of." He seemed very disappointed with her performance. "Very poor, very poor," he muttered. (And he was all there - he missed nothing!)

I recalled the broadcast some time back of a Delius chamber concert which comprised the 3rd [Violin] Sonata and the Nietzsche Songs. They remembered this well. Mrs Delius was especially struck by the fine voice of the singer. I mentioned that we were all looking forward to hearing the new *Idyll* at the Proms and Mrs. Delius remarked that the printed copy had just been sent to her. They were all delighted at the way it was produced. Mrs Delius expressed the hope that Fenby would be in London some days before the concert "to see that everything goes all right." (Remember it was Henry Wood. It was a Prom – it wasn't Beecham. He wouldn't have dared to suggest that Fenby should tell Beecham how the thing would go.) "Fenby will be at the concert then." Both Mr and Mrs Delius were amused by a promise to broadcast a special 'Bravo' at the first performance of *Idyll* and will be listening for us. [See footnote.]

Mrs Delius expressed the hope that the [Delius] Society would record *Paris* which she knew to be one of Fred's best works. I remembered the wonderful, wonderful performance of the Beecham at the last Phil [harmonia Concert]. Delius quoted, "Yes, Beecham plays my music beautifully."

I ventured to ask Delius his favourite work. "I can't say, I can't say," he said uneasily. Details of further conversation escape me. It was all too wonderful, and I'm thankful to have distinctly remembered this little and to have been able to record it.

Delius, we saw, began to get restless – we had tired him out. Mrs Delius suggested we move to the garden – the time was flying and trains were to be caught. "I've had enough dear," said Frederick to Jelka. "The gentlemen just wish to say goodbye to you" she replied, and one by one we approached him, thanked him for his courtesy and bid him farewell. We took our leave of Mrs Delius in the courtyard. Donald, who was nearest the door, heard Delius enquire of the male nurse" Sind wir allein?"

Once more we were in the road – it was all over. I inspected the church porch and took two photos of the house. We bought postcards of the village at one or two small shops that were open. I wrote to Cary, who had first put me onto Delius, and to Dr Tean (?) We walked down to the bridge, and there Ernest sat, Donald with him. The drowsiness of the place noted by the Stevenson is unmistakeable. I would be perfectly content to spend the rest of my days there, quite apart from the Delian connections.

At about a quarter past five we left the village. . . and once more we trudged the highway to the station under a blazing sun. At a little café just outside the station we had two grenadines [pomegranate syrup] – our parting cup. Some time later we reached the Gare de Lyon, took a tram across Paris to the Gare St Lazare. And that's it.

Footnote:
Regarding the Promenade Concert given on Tuesday 3 October 1933, which Felix attended. He records in his diary: "The audience was startled tonight by sudden loud roars after the premiere of a new *Idyll* by Delius. What they could not know was that a few of us had promised Jelka and Frederick Delius to cheer, knowing they would hear it over the wireless in Grez-sur-Loing."

And, after dashing out to another piano recital and then back to the Queen's Hall in time to hear Benno Moiseiwitsch play some encores at the end of the concert, Felix bumped into Delius's niece Peggy, who was in London to trace Sir Thomas Beecham and ask him to visit Delius.]

(Transcribed by Brian Radford on 26 March 2003 from a tape recording made by Stephen Lloyd during the Delius Society meeting held on 8 November 1989 – and reproduced here with the assistance of Jonathan Cadman)

. . . Someone began this musing by asking why Delius was not popular. I don't think I am much nearer saying why. Perhaps it is because his elements are difficult for the layman to tot up. I incline to think that certain of them obscure others: "wood for trees", partly, perhaps. Sometimes, for my own pleasure, when a little depressed about the world, I get out my score (Philharmonia) and the old, plucky, half-absurd records of *Sea Drift* that Decca made – and making, cut for itself a mark on the monument of gallant endeavour that will not quickly be effaced. I believe *Sea Drift*, Delius and Whitman together, tell us pretty well everything we need to know about the composer. I long for records of *Appalachia*. I end as in that former note: Delius offers beauty beyond price to all who are fit, or will fit themselves for it. If someone cannot find its wavelength, what can be done? If the music were really difficult, one might help: but it isn't. It is too obvious – like Christianity; so we don't try it; and always, there be many who will seek other gods.
'Round and About with W.R.A.', *The Gramophone*, June 1934, page 38

THE TONALITIES AND HARMONIZATION OF DELIUS'S *BRIGG FAIR*

David J Eccott

It was whilst I was writing the section under the subheading *Parallels between Delian and jazz harmonies* in my article *Mel Tormé and George Shearing: Their Tributes to Delius* (1) that I found myself being increasingly drawn into the matter of the tonalities and harmonization of Delius's *Brigg Fair*. These matters became so persistent that they were beginning to detract from the actual topic in hand, and it soon became apparent that they would be best considered in an altogether separate essay. Whilst some commentators, such as Deryck Cooke (2), have spoken authoritatively on the importance of form in Delius's music, the composer's tonal and harmonic skills have, as far as actual analysis is concerned, been largely ignored. *Brigg Fair* provides an ideal opportunity to discover how important these factors were to Delius, especially with regard to key centre relationships. In fact, harmonic analysis of such a score reveals the full extent Delius's, probably innate, but nevertheless highly scientific, grasp of tonal relationships.

Members will no doubt be aware that the subject of the tonalities of Delius's *Brigg Fair* have already been covered in Robert Matthew-Walker's excellent article on the work, and may be wondering why I find it necessary to repeat the exercise. I shall come to this point shortly, but first of all I should like to cover certain points concerning Stein's analysis (3) of Delius's *Brigg Fair* that appears in the printed score.

Stein's Analysis of *Brigg Fair*

I would not agree that Stein's analysis is too analytical, but I would certainly agree with Robert Matthew-Walker when he says that it is not analytical enough. It indeed does not cover tonality, and Stein, probably very wisely, steered clear of this topic. However, it does cover form – to an extent, although there are a few points in Stein's analysis that require a little clarification, and possibly even correction.

Bars 148-193 of *Brigg Fair* are described by Stein as a 'Middle Section', and bars 274-288 as a 'Transition Passage'. Both of these sections contain related subject-matter as they both include material derived from the introduction to the work. Stein's 'Middle Section' is not actually in the middle of the work, but just over a third of the way through, whilst the 'Transition Passage' is exactly three-quarters of the way through, and very much akin to the previous 'Middle Section'. It is not really a transition passage as such, at least not in the sense that Stein's second 'Transition Passage' is (bars 359-372). This is a true transition leading from the 16th variation into the final, climatic 17th variation. Besides sharing the same material

derived from the introduction, the first two passages are also related in tonality as D minor is prevalent, although the first passage (148-193) has a strong overlay of its relative major, F major, and culminates in that key. These two passages would be better described as'Interludes'. Also, the second one contains a complete reference to the *Brigg Fair* theme in its closing bars (284-288) on bass clarinet, which is, to all intent and purpose, another variation of the theme (4).

The section that Stein refers to as a coda (590-413) is also, in reality, another variation of the theme.

However, these are somewhat minor matters, and Stein's structural analysis is very useful, in as much as it provides an accurate, overall guide to the bar numberings for each variation, etc. It was probably not Stein's intention to provide a tonal analysis, although it is quite possible that he would have studied the tonal relationships of the work. If he did, he would have seen that they are extremely complex. Indeed, the tonal relationships of *Brigg Fair* are a minefield. But, once one begins to study them, the ingenuity and skill of the harmonic structure inherent in the work becomes immediately obvious. Harmonically, the work is very cleverly conceived, and can only be described as the product of a true genius. Far from consisting of mere harmonic meanderings, close scrutiny reveals that Delius had a highly developed understanding and control of tonal relationships.

Robert Matthew-Walker's Analysis of the *Brigg Fair* Tonalities

It has to be said that Robert Matthew-Walker's *Delius's Brigg Fair in Words and Music* (5) is an extremely scholarly discourse, and one of the finest papers that has ever appeared in *The Delius Society Journal*. However, I trust he will not take it amiss if I take issue with the table of tonalities that appears in his article. At the end of his analysis of the tonal basis of *Brigg Fair*, Robert Matthew-Walker provides a summary. He states:

1. 'The work is basically formed on the B flat tonality (beginning in B flat minor - introduction - and ending in B flat major - coda.' (Although opinions may differ on matters of tonality, the introduction is certainly not in B flat minor. During the whole of the nineteen bar introduction, a D flat, essential for the key of B flat minor because it forms the minor third of the chord, does not appear anywhere, except for one instance where, written enharmonically as C sharp, it forms the minor 7th of an E flat 11th chord. (See footnote 10). Furthermore, each time a B flat chord appears it is in the major form - B flat, D natural, F).

2. 'The Dorian mode (on C) is particularly strong, coming in the middle of the first five tonalities, in the middle of the second three, and in the middle of the last three.' (Here also I beg to differ. Only once in the whole score does the Dorian

mode appear on C, and then only in a fragmentary version of the first phrase of the theme in variation 17. The *Brigg Fair* theme mainly appears in Dorian on G, but also on the dominant degree - Dorian on D), and once in Dorian on G#).

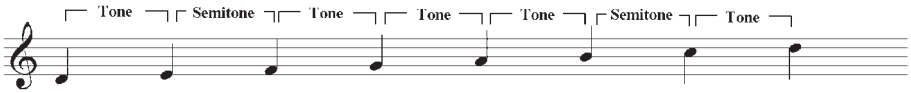
3. 'The opening B flat minor is followed by D minor: a third above. The closing B flat major is approached by G major: a third below.' (I have already stated that the introduction is not in B flat minor, but the following section (variation 1) is not in D minor either. It is true that Delius uses a D minor chord in bar 21, but this is the second bar, not the first bar, of the melody (6). The *Brigg Fair* theme in variation 1 is in G Dorian, and is underpinned by G minor harmony.

I shall return to both the harmonic basis of both the introduction and the coda a little later, but I wish, first of all to give an overview of the tonalities of *Brigg Fair*. In order to do this, it is important to understand the basic modal tonality of the *Brigg Fair* theme itself, and the manner in which it may be harmonized.

The Modal Nature of the *Brigg Fair* Theme

Robert Matthew-Walker states, somewhat ambiguously, that bars 20-109 of Delius's score are in D minor/Dorian/C major (7). It is true that Delius writes a key signature of one flat, implying either F major or its relative minor – D minor, but he is not writing in either key, and certainly not, predominately, in D minor.

It has to be understood that the *Brigg Fair* folksong is not formed on a diatonic scale, but on a mode. There are seven modes in all, and they each have their tones and semitones structured in a different order to both diatonic major and minor scales. The *Brigg Fair* theme is in the Dorian mode which, in its home tonality is built on D. (Example 1)



Both Grainger and Delius transposed the *Brigg Fair* theme from D Dorian into G Dorian. In order that, when transposed, the tones and semitones remain structurally correctly, a key signature of one flat (B flat) is required. (Example 2).

Whilst, under normal circumstances, a key signature of one flat would indeed imply either F major or D minor as the key, neither is the key of either Grainger's or Delius's *Brigg Fair*. The key must be thought of as being G Dorian. This leaves the problem of the harmonization of the melody.

Because the interval between the first and third degrees of the Dorian mode is 'minor', this gives some indication as to the tonality of the harmony that could be applied to a melody in the Dorian mode. Therefore, when the *Brigg Fair* theme is transposed into G Dorian, with the minor-third interval between the first and third degrees now becoming G - B flat, it becomes apparent that G minor would provide suitable harmonization. This would be described as harmonizing with tonic-based harmony. However, there are other harmonic devices by which the Dorian mode can be harmonized. We shall return to these when we begin to look in greater detail at the 'Harmonic Structure of Brigg Fair', but essentially there are two basic factors that need to be considered in order to proceed with an analysis.
The first of these factors is the G Dorian tonality of the *Brigg Fair* theme itself, (although it does not always appear in G Dorian). The second factor is the harmonization of the theme, (which is often G minor harmony, but not entirely). To begin with, let us leave aside the harmonization of the theme and concentrate purely on the G Dorian tonality of the *Brigg Fair* theme itself.

The Prevalence of G Dorian for the *Brigg Fair* Theme
This can be divided into four main sections.
1. In nine of the seventeen variations, the *Brigg Fair* theme appears in G Dorian. These are variations 1 (bars 36-51), 2 (52-67), 3 (68-87), 5 (109-124), 6 (125-147), 8 (202-213), 11 (254-264), 16 (340-359), & 17 (373-390) respectively. It should be noted that the first statement of the theme, and the coda, are also in G Dorian. So, the G Dorian tonality, as far as the melody itself is concerned, is already quite prevalent. (Example 3 shows the *Brigg Fair* theme in G Dorian as it appears in Variation 1).

2. Of the remaining eight variations where the *Brigg Fair* theme is not in G Dorian, one of them, variation 7 (bars 194-202), is in D Dorian, (albeit with a raised 7th [C#] at one point), and the other, variation 12 (265-273) is in G# Dorian. (Example 4 shows the *Brigg Fair* theme as it appears in Variation 7 in D Dorian, and Example 5 shows it as it appears in Variation 12 in G# Dorian).

Example 4

Example 5

3. In Variations 9 (bars 214-229), 13 (289-306), &15 (323-339) the *Brigg Fair* theme is freed partially, (but not entirely), of its G Dorian modal constraints and takes on an occasional major-like quality. This is achieved by sometimes raising the third degree of the mode (B flat) to B natural. Even though this is not always the case throughout the entire melody, (and the seventh degree still remains flattened), it is sufficient to produce a major-key effect in places This description can also be applied to variation 14, although here *Brigg Fair* theme is in D Dorian, and the corresponding third degree (F natural) is raised to F#, albeit only once in the third bar of the variation.

4. This leaves two variations (4 & 10) not accounted for. In variation 4 (bars 87-108) the Brigg Fair theme is heavily disguised and is given true melodic variation treatment. This particular variation is also longer than the previous three, and actually totals 22 bars. The modal quality is also not as evident, due partly to the extended modulation of its final passage. In Variation 10 (229-253) the *Brigg Fair* theme does not appear at all. It is totally absent. Neither is there any melodic variation of it, which is a fact overlooked by Stein and others. As such, it is not really a variation at all, as the whole passage is comprised of the counter melody to the *Brigg Fair* theme that appeared in the previous variation, (variation 9). In, so called, variation 10, Delius uses this counter melody as the main subject and then proceeds to develop it, and in doing so builds to the central climax of the work.

In the above section, all the tonalities for the *Brigg Fair* theme itself have been accounted for. A glance back at the opening paragraph to this section will show that the G Dorian tonality is extremely prevalent, occurring in the first statement of the theme, the coda, and in 10 out of the 17 variations. This is precisely why Delius writes in one flat throughout the entire score. (The key signature of one flat, as we have seen, is the key signature required for Dorian in G). Even in variation 12, where the *Brigg Fair* theme appears in G# Dorian, and the harmony (opening in B minor and culminating in G# minor) reach the point where they are farthest removed from the predominant tonalities of the variations, Delius still retains the key signature of 1 flat and writes in accidentals rather than writing a new key signature. Delius knew full well that he would have to return to Dorian in G before long, and works towards re-establishing G Dorian and G minor harmony in variation 16.

We shall now consider the actual harmony in order to determine how prevalent is the G minor tonality.

The Harmonic Structure of *Brigg Fair*

The analysis of the underlying harmonic nature of each variation is a more complex matter. As pointed out in the section on *Parallels Between Jazz and Delian Harmony* in my article on Mel Tormé and George Shearing, Delius makes much use of substitution chords that invariably introduce notes seemingly foreign to the harmony as it progresses, often making it quite chromatic in nature. Because of that, the actual nucleus of each variation can often appear to be harmonically indeterminable as far as specific orientation to a particular tonality is concerned. However, by looking closely at the harmonization of the first and final bars of each variation, it is possible to determine the implied tonality. This also provides an insight into the harmonic relationships of the variations as well as the harmonic impetus of the work as a whole.

We shall take the four groups, outlined above to determine how each statement of the *Brigg Fair* theme is harmonically initialized and culminated. However, group 1 has to be further subdivided into two groups, 1A and 1B.

1A. Of the nine variations where the *Brigg Fair* theme appears in G Dorian, 6 (variations 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, & 16) are harmonized basically in G minor, in as much as they begin and/or end with some form of the G minor chord, albeit often extended to form a 7th or 9th, etc.

1B. The remaining three variations of group 1 are variations 8, 11, and 17. Variation 8, although often chromatic in its harmonic content, begins over the D minor chord that forms the cadence of variation 7. Although the completion of the *Brigg Fair*

theme is built over a 3rd inversion G minor 7th (bar 210), the actual variation itself has a three-bar coda that takes the tonality back to D minor, albeit with an overlay of the relative major that give a somewhat ambiguous flavour.

Although, as stated above, the tonic minor key of the mode is the most suitable and obvious tonality with which to harmonize, it is possible, initially at least, to infer a harmony based upon the dominant (5th) of the mode. Although in Variation 11 the *Brigg Fair* theme is in G Dorian, Delius begins this variation with dominant-based harmony, in this case D minor, but the *Brigg Fair* theme actually modulates and culminates, along with its harmony, in Eb minor.

In variation 17, the actual *Brigg Fair* theme, becomes very fragmented. It is really only the opening four-bar phrase, now shifted forward by a bar-and-a-half in the 3/2 meter of the variation, and juxtaposed against an augmentation of the opening flute figuration on trombones, that is stated. This fragment occurs three times, once in G Dorian, then in C Dorian, and finally in E flat Dorian, and is bound by connecting melodic material. Harmonically the variation opens in B flat major (the relative major diatonic key of the G Dorian mode). Although the variation becomes quite complex harmonically, it is pinned to the tonality in which it opens by a recurring B flat in the bass. As such it paves the way for the apparent return of the B flat major tonality in the ensuing coda, which will be discussed in more detail below.

2. These are the two variations where the *Brigg Fair* theme does not appear in G Dorian. Variation 7 is in D Dorian. The harmony is extremely chromatic in nature, but culminates in tonic minor harmony - D minor.

Variation 12, where the *Brigg Fair* theme is in G# Dorian, employs a tactic of initially harmonizing in the relative major of the mode, in this case B major (8). However, this also culminates on its tonic minor harmony - G# minor (9).

3. In these variations the *Brigg Fair* theme appears partially in the major mode. Variation 9 opens with D minor tonality. Again the harmony becomes very chromatic, but it resolves onto G minor harmony at the beginning of variation 10, (see below). In the variations where Delius chooses to begin harmonization with tonic-based harmony, as opposed to beginning with dominant-based harmony as in variation 9, the raised 3rd (B natural) is often anticipated in the harmony before it actually occurs in the melody. Variation 13 is a case in point, as it opens over a G major 9th chord and continues over a tonic pedal (G) until culminating in C major Variation 15 also begins over a G major 9th chord (root omitted). However, in the 12th bar of the *Brigg Fair* theme, its counter subject is developed into a five-bar coda that moves through various keys before culminating on an A major 7th chord (with a flattened 5th) that forms a plagal cadence in E minor upon which variation

16 begins. (Variation 16 actually has a four-bar preamble, based upon the actual melody, before the *Brigg Fair* theme proper begins over a first inversion G minor chord in bar 344).

Variation 14 is the odd one out in this group as the *Brigg Fair* theme is in D Dorian, but has a raised 3rd (F#) in the third bar. It opens over dominant-based harmony (A minor), but culminates over a tonic-based (D minor) chord, which acts in the manner of a V - I (dominant - tonic) progression, as the following bar is the G major 9th chord at the beginning of variation 15 (see above).

4. These are variations 4 and 10. The melodic content of both of these variations have been described above in section 4 of the previous sub-heading. Harmonically Variation 4 begins over C major tonality, but quickly moves away from it, eventually passing to G minor for the beginning of variation 5. The harmony of Variation 10, despite the chromaticisms, is very much rooted in G minor, and the apex bar of the climax (bar 243) is built over a complete G minor 9th chord [G B flat D F A] in its third inversion. After the climax has subsided, the variation continues with a quaver figure in the woodwind derived from a figuration in the bass that gained some prominence at the end of variations 7 and 8. This allows a modulation into D minor for the beginning of variation 11.

Having covered, as much as is possible in an essay of this type, the harmonic structure of all of the variations, a brief summary may be appropriate. It can be seen that six of the seventeen variations have their harmony based in G minor. Variation 10 is also largely based on G minor harmony, whilst variations 4, 9, and 17 culminate in G minor harmony. Therefore G minor could be thought of as being the predominant tonality of the work, which is what one would expect considering that the G Dorian tonality occurs most often in the statements of the *Brigg Fair* theme itself. Despite that, it can also be seen that D minor, the dominant minor related harmony of G minor, is also of some importance not only in the two "interludes" but also in some of the variations themselves, both harmonically and with respect to the D Dorian tonality of some of the statements of the *Brigg Fair* theme.

The Tonalities of the Introduction and Coda

All that remains is the tacky question of the tonalities of the Introduction and Coda. These, of course, are extremely important as they envelop the entire work and, as such, should also bear some relationship in tonality, not only with each other, but also with the work in general. Also, as far as the Coda is concerned, Delius, one would expect, should also be moving towards some form of G minor considering its importance throughout the work. However, certain complexities occur which,

although they serve to make the overall tonal structure extremely rich, also cause a few problems of analysis.

The problem with the Introduction (bars 1-19) is that it is difficult, not to say impossible, to pin it down to one definite tonality. In fact, it is largely this "vagueness" of tonality that gives it its "natural" quality and beauty. The opening harmony on the harp that accompanies the solo flute is predominately F major with an added 6th [F A C + D], which could be said, at the very outset, to possibly introduce an ambiguity between an F major and a D minor tonality. In the third bar an F minor chord appears on the strings, again with an added 6th [D]. In bar 6 the first B flat major chord appears, overlaid with its major 7th [A]. This is followed in bar 9 with E flat major harmony (10), which in turn is followed by a totally unrelated D major chord. In bar 11 the horns intone the B flat major chord once more, this time underlaid with its minor 7th [A flat] which appears in the bass, making the chord a third inversion. The harmony alternates between those two chords before the B flat major chord, again overlaid with its major 7th [A], reappears once more in bar 16 on the strings. This chord is then held for four bars, but the major 7th [A natural] resolves on to a minor 7th [A flat] in bar 20 for the first bar of the main theme. Despite the progressions of seemingly unrelated chords, it could be said that the B flat major chord is predominant during the Introduction. The fact that the introduction also ends over, what is essentially, a B flat major chord suggests a predilection for B flat, but it must be stressed once again that the tonality is B flat major, not B flat minor.

The Coda (final minim of bar 390 to bar 413) also presents some problems. At the beginning of the final bar of variation 17 (390) there is a G minor 7th chord [G B flat D F]. The 7th of the chord (F) moves to an E on the final beat of that bar as the oboe begins the final statement of the *Brigg Fair* theme on a dotted crotchet D moving to a quaver E. The tonality of the actual theme in the Coda is G Dorian, but in bar 391 the chord used to harmonize the third note [F] of the melody is B flat D F G. (11) In all probability, the correct analysis of this chord is that of a B flat major chord with an added 6th [B flat D F + G]. Considering also the fact that the B flat in the bass is maintained, with the exception of four bars, throughout the entire coda, it would appear that it is the B flat tonality that is intended to dominate. This is no doubt purposeful, as ideally a B flat major tonality in the coda would mirror the B flat major tonality that dominated the introduction. Despite the chromatic wanderings of the inner parts, the harmony eventually culminates in B flat major, albeit tinted with an added 6th [G] for a few bars on the flute before the strings are left alone to fade peacefully on a pure B flat major chord in the final two bars of the work

Conclusion

In the sections entitled The Prevalence of G Dorian for the *Brigg Fair* Theme and The Harmonic Structure of *Brigg Fair* it has been shown that, harmonically G minor, and melodically G Dorian, are very important in the variations themselves. Despite this, it is the B flat major tonality that is of importance in the Introduction that opens the work and the Coda in which it closes. Add to this the fact that G minor is third-related to B flat major, it is quite understandable why some, and perhaps many, would state that the work is based on, or derived from, a B flat major tonality. Although it would appear that Delius, having abandoned B flat major after the introduction, has totally forgotten all about it, he has actually held it at the back of his mind with the intention of re-introducing it for the final climax of the work. From this point of view, Robert Matthew-Walker's reasoning that the work is basically formed on the B flat tonality, is indeed logical. Perhaps, when all is said and done, it is a certain ambiguity of tonality that is inherent in the work that enhances and provides much of the fascination that the piece holds for many, whether they be musicians or not.

Of course, Delius would have abhorred such analysis. Indeed, in many ways it seems wrong, and even unmusical, to dissect such an exquisite work and describe it in dry, technical terms. If nothing else, I hope I have shown that, from a harmonic perspective, Delius knew precisely where he was, where he was coming from, and where he was going at any given moment.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank Robert Threlfall and Robert Matthew-Walker for reading the draft version of the text.

Notes and References

1. *The Delius Society Journal*, No 134, Autumn 2003, pp 29-42.
2. Cooke, Deryck. *Delius and Form: A Vindication*. In *A Delius Companion*. (pp.249-262). Christopher Redwood, Ed. John Calder. 1976.
3. As published in *Brigg Fair*. Universal Edition. UE 6904.
4. Here the *Brigg Fair* theme appears in F Dorian.
5. *The Delius Society Journal*, No 129, Spring 2001, pp.7-29.
6. It is all too easy to look at bar 20 of the score, where the first statement of the theme appears, and assume that the key signature of one flat implies either F major or D minor, and then assume that the D minor chord in bar 21 confirms a D minor tonality. This chord, which is not actually on the first bar of the theme - but on the second, is used to harmonize the F in the melody. It is important to realize that the melody is in a 3/8 metre, not a 6/8 metre. To think of the F in bar 21 as being the first "naturally accented" note of the melody is to view the previous bar as a half-bar anacrusis in 6/8. The theme begins at bar 20, and the D minor chord in bar 21 is not the tonic chord, but the chord built on the dominant (5th degree) of G minor. Normally in a minor key it would be a major chord, but is now a minor chord. This is due to the fact that the 7th degree of the Dorian mode is not sharpened (as in the harmonic minor scale). As such it forms the minor 3rd (not a major 3rd) of the dominant chord.
7. Op Cit. p.23.
8. Prior to the actual beginning of variation 12, there is a dominant 7th chord on the brass [F# A# C# E] at the very end of bar 264 that resolves onto the B major chord in the following bar where variation 12 begins.
9. The cadence is a perfect cadence (V-I) in G# minor. The final quaver of bar 272 is a dominant 9th chord with the fifth omitted, [D# Fx C# E], (the Fx being written as G natural). However, the resolution to the tonic is delayed and does not appear until the middle of the following bar where the G# minor chord finally appears in its first inversion.
10. The chord here is actually an E flat (major 11th) chord. The root [E flat] and the 5th [B flat] appear in the bass on divided 'Cellos, whilst the minor 7th [D flat] (written as C#) appears on the second violins. Above and below the second violin note, the first violins and violas have the 3rd of the chord [G] in octaves. They move in triplet minims from the G to the 9th [F] of the chord, and back to G again, whilst the flute holds the major 11th [A] above the strings. It is important to note that it is the careful voicing of this particular chord that adds to its quality.
11. This is the only occasion in the variations where the first two notes of the *Brigg Fair* theme are treated as an anacrusis. As the third note of the melody therefore becomes the first naturally accented note, it is justifiable, in this instance, to view the chord used to harmonize that note as the tonic chord of this particular passage.

DELIUS TODAY

Robert Matthew Walker

There are surely few other composers of international renown whose music, 70 years after their death, is so infrequently performed publicly or – as a consequence – remains comparatively unknown to the general public as is that of Frederick Delius. The general perception of his music - if it exists at all - appears to be that of a dreamy rhapsodiser, whose lack of either formal command or of a perceived structural mastery, allied to an all-pervasive Impressionism of the more obvious kind, has run counter to the insistence upon rigorous organisational skills, or of organic unity, which can be 'analysed' in accordance with a pre-ordained set of standards in music - standards which are derived from a type of compositional technique which has grown in acceptance and influence largely since the end of World War II. The point has been made many times, both by Delius's admirers and by his detractors, that 'form' is the area in which he is perceived to be particularly lacking. It also appears that largely through a kind of sentimentality, reinforced by pictures of him as a blind, weak, infirm old man, that the wider musical world tolerates his music at all on the few occasions it is heard.

In the early years of the twentieth-century, that is to say up to 1914, Delius's music was widely performed and praised by many leading musicians – artists as varied as Busoni, Stravinsky, Oskar Fried, Carl Schuricht, Vaughan Williams, Bartók, Ravel, Grieg, Richard Strauss, Percy Grainger and, of course, Thomas Beecham: each of these different artists, amongst others, admired his music, and most of them committed their admiration to print.

Yet the music itself, certainly, has not changed, for it clearly remains precisely the same today as when it first appeared. The change in Delius's fortunes - as with those of any other composer of merit – stems from the public's reaction to it, or, perhaps more insidiously rather, the published reaction to it. Delius's detractors today ought to attempt to discover the qualities that his great contemporaries admired so much in his music, if such criticism is to be founded upon knowledge of that which they dislike - rather than appearing to be nothing so more as an irrational reaction, somewhat akin to that of an emotional spasm.

The subject of musical fashion – why some music is popular in one decade and decried the next – may help explain the public's changing perception of music, but what contributes greatly to fashion in music are performers: artists whose personalities strike a response in the public's mind. It is the music they perform and, perhaps even more significantly, record, that we are obliged to hear. The public, as such, cannot express views – by buying seats at concerts or by buying records – on music it is rarely given the opportunity of hearing; and critics can only

write on what is performed or recorded, when they are given the opportunity.

When we – performers or listeners – are confronted by music of which only a few bars are needed to identify Delius as the composer, such being the force of his creative personality, we may automatically bring to that realisation our preconceptions of his music, right or wrong. Yet because no systematic study of his work, considered purely as music, has ever been published – another surely unique happenstance for a composer of international renown – Delius's finest qualities, those which declare his greatness as a composer, remain unknown - even, it can be claimed, to some life-long admirers of his art.

We can read much of Delius's 'moods', his 'feelings', and other aspects of sentiment, comments which largely reflect the 'impression' the music has made upon the writer. But such an essentially Romantic, if not wholly Impressionistic, view of his music is, on the one hand, superficially concerned solely with its surface appeal – as if that is all that is worth writing about – and, on the other hand, ignores completely his utterly original, and therefore astonishingly unique, technical and structural command – for Delius's music is that which, at these deeper levels, is founded upon indestructible principles, as cogent and as coherent as the composition of large-scale works of art have always demanded, but which have not always received.

Indeed, such is his great originality that we might begin by turning one of the more platitudinous of the received opinions on his music on its head. This is that Delius was at heart a Romantic composer. He was not. That he lived and wrote his greatest compositions during the period of high-Romanticism cannot be denied, but in many ways it would be difficult to find an essentially more anti-Romantic composer than he – the elements of sentimentality and of self-projection, which characterise high-Romantic art (which also reached its zenith when Delius was at the height of his powers), and which can be found in the best works of, in particular, Mahler and Richard Strauss (without denigrating either of these masters), are, in point of fact, wholly absent from Delius's music.

The essential difference between Delius and the high-Romantics is that Delius hymned Nature, not himself – as did Sibelius – and the sentimentality with which his music is often wrongly criticised for possessing has arisen in large part from a style of performance in which beauty of expression came to mean everything, at the expense of the music's intellectual strengths. In short, the sentiment, the genuine artistic sense of feeling that his music clearly possesses, would seem to have been exaggerated to the point of sentimentality: such performances may have been particularly beautiful to listen to, but according to the commentators of the time such beauty was achieved through the heart's emotions forever overcoming the reasoning of the mind.

'Seem' is the operative word in the previous sentence; on perusing old writings

on Delius's music, newspaper articles or other pieces, the last feature to be praised in his work is his satisfyingly original structural subtlety – if it were mentioned at all. But on listening to those old broadcasts and recordings anew, led as they were by the vast recorded legacy of Sir Thomas Beecham, we can hear, reasonably clearly, the magnificent combination of feeling and intellect that marked out Sir Thomas's finest interpretations.

Delius's unique structural qualities were, of course, always there for the listening - but such is the unique nature of his music that any attempt at 'analysis' in the generally fashionable sense of the word (which, essentially in the post-1945 world, seems to have evolved from a kind of post-Schoenbergian obsession with rows of notes, and not much else) is almost certainly doomed to failure. Those who have tried have quickly realised the inherent futility of such an exercise: for, put simply, it is well-nigh impossible in Delius's case to apply a blanket analytical approach, which might prove enlightening in the music of other masters but which is useless in music not written according to such processes.

Near the beginning of the late Deryck Cooke's two-part essay'Delius and Form', published in 1962 at the time of the composer's centenary, he states a number of facts – twelve in all – in proving the necessity of analysing Delius's formal methods. Cooke made the straightforward point of not accepting that the formal methods of one composer should necessarily be a measure for understanding those of another. In the second part of this now famous essay, Deryck Cooke analyses, from bar to bar, Delius's Violin Concerto an analysis which demonstrates, beyond doubt, the unique structural qualities, indeed the hidden mastery, of this composer. This meticulous examination of the bar-by-bar life of the work is precisely that which ought to be applied in the analysis of all music – and can be – but which, for purely mnemonic purposes in classical works, has become shorthanded into such phrases as 'sonata form', 'binary', 'ternary', 'rondo', and so on.

Those of us familiar with analysis know, broadly speaking, what these terms mean; but when we are confronted with music that does not readily conform to such ease of description it looks as though we shall have to do some hard work by ourselves. That is what Deryck Cooke did, but his essay remains, so far, a solitary attempt, though whether this is due to disinclination on the part of critics and musical journalists (it being so much easier to claim that one doesn't 'like' Delius, and thereby avoid having to do some close listening and thinking for a change), or whether the musical understanding of writers on music since Cooke has not been of a similar standard to his, or whether it is symptomatic of our Internet age that many now believe that all knowledge exists, resulting in the received opinion which states that if there is not much written about Delius's music, then there is not much in it worth writing about. Yet for whatever reason, principally, one would suggest, owing to the originality of the music itself, no writer has followed where

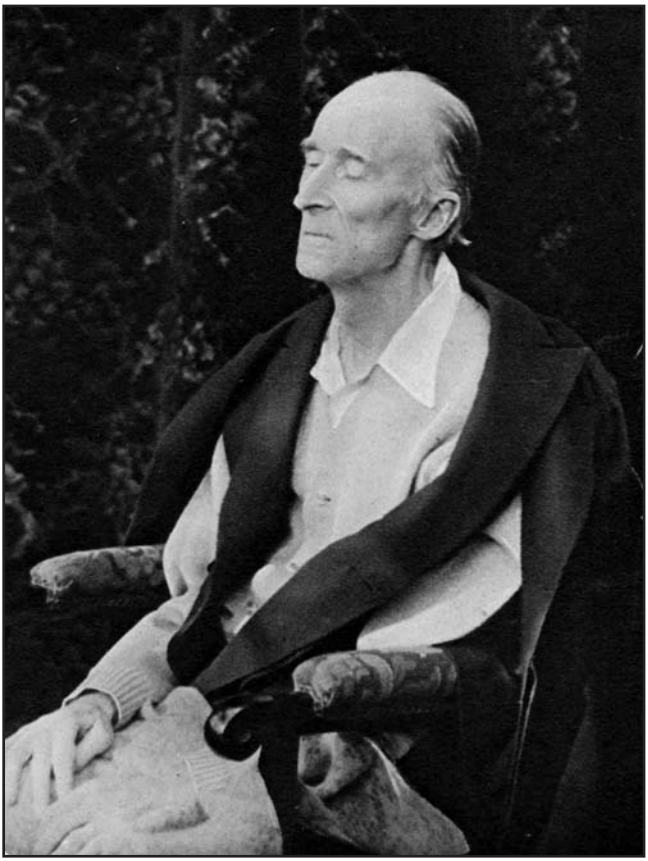
Deryck Cooke initially led.

It is surely the case that, since the end of World War II, the concentration in writing on music upon 'analysis', as if that by itself in some way 'proves' that a piece of music is a worthwhile work of art, has coincided with a decline in the 'fashionableness' of Delius's music. If a composer's work, for whatever reason, is heard less and less, then the supporters of such a composer naturally decline in number. And if such music falls out of fashion, the need to analyse it, in our increasingly analytical world, also declines. Consequently, in Delius's case, the 'need' for analysis is perceived as being unnecessary, as his music appears irrelevant to successive generations. Additionally, as Delius's music does not 'fit' the preconceptions of many analysts (because it is so originally composed), and therefore cannot be analysed in the same ways as might be brought to bear on the work of other twentieth-century masters, it has been criticised for not being what it was never intended to be – and never was – in the first place.

However, as analysing Delius's finest works reveals aspects of his genius in a way hitherto unknown (or certainly unremarked upon) by previous generations, the time is surely long overdue for a wholesale reassessment of his music, and we must return momentarily to the current misapprehensions as to what constitutes Romantic music. In addition to the factors outlined above, it is made easier for the critic or journalist to claim that, because a certain composer is described as a Romantic (which he may or may not be), that therefore removes a certain intellectual contact with his art. Such a wholly superficial, and therefore somewhat ill-informed, view of musical history has caused a lot of damage to be done to composers in the published views of their music. One of these superficial attitudes is the opinion that a beautiful orchestral sound thereby makes the composer a Romantic. The problem with such an attitude is that not every Romantic artist invariably sought beauty of expression. Of course, Delius's music often *is* beautiful, and should be played well with much tonal beauty, but that does not make it Romantic. There is no genuine *angst* in Delius's music –another example of his anti-Romanticism – such as we find in Mahler and Strauss and later 20th-century Romantics and post-Romantics (Schoenberg and Berg especially). Whilst there is much passion in Delius, it is always, in his concert music certainly, there as a force of nature, and not as that of a lone artist railing against the world. In this regard, Delius has much more in common with the anti-Romantic Scandinavians Sibelius and Nielsen, a connexion made more meaningful when we consider first, that they were, with regard to their output, Delius's almost exact contemporaries, and, secondly, that Delius had an enduring attraction for Scandinavia, its people, and its art.

In Delius's operas, his characterisations are made by a complete artist – his sympathy with his characters surely the result of one who has seen much and

probably knows more. Yet Delius himself is never on stage. What we see – given the opportunity, owing to the scandalous absence of his work from the repertoires of those companies specialising in 'opera in English' – is the personification of his deep understanding of human life, never pages from Delius's diaries, or 'scenes from Bohemian life'. His operatic passion is that of empathy, of a composer who has lived music himself, but not that of his own striving – the mark of the natural operatic composer.



Photograph from The Illustrated London News, June 1934

Delius's songs were world-famous for many years; his chamber music is that of a composer who was also a violinist and pianist of no mean technical attainments. The solo parts in his Concertos, therefore, were composed from a position of practical understanding of the nature of the instruments chosen – a position which can be claimed by very few twentieth-century masters. The sounds and textures of his orchestral music are not only utterly unique but also exhibit a mastery which shows a detailed and keen knowledge of the orchestra.

One of the more equally unique aspects of the absence of a detailed analytical study of Delius's music is that his art is rarely, if ever, discussed in academic circles: yet his music is, in demonstrable fact, so subtly, so *originally* composed as to stretch to the utmost the analytical powers of many a musical pedagogue, as Deryck Cooke's analysis of the Violin Concerto demonstrated. As a consequence, therefore, Delius's music has survived not through the advocacy of published studies by academicians, but through its appeal to audiences and

to those musicians who have continued, through difficult times, steadfastly to perform it.

If music composed one hundred years ago and more continues to move and excite people today, we ought to attempt to identify the lasting qualities it undoubtedly contains, the better to understand the nature of the artist, and his art, which exerts this fascination. By doing this in Delius's case, as in that of any composer whose music enjoys the support of devoted music-lovers, our appreciation of his art therefore becomes deeper, and our understanding of it enhanced.

BBC TRIBUTE BY B.B.C.

BEECHAM CONDUCTS MASTERPIECE

OVATION FOR FATHER OF AIR RACE HERO

By Richard Capell

The winter concerts of the B.B.C. Orchestra were begun last night at Queen's Hall with a tribute to Frederick Delius, in the form of a performance exemplary in beauty and understanding of his masterpiece, "A Mass of Life," in which Charles Kennedy Scott's Philharmonic Choir took part. Sir Thomas Beecham conducted.

Mrs. Delius had come from France for the occasion. When she took her seat she was cheered by the choir and flowers were presented to her.

The hall was sold out, and at the end there were ovations for Sir Thomas and for the principal soloist, Roy Henderson. The audience would not disperse until it had as chance of greeting Kennedy Scott, the founder and trainer of the Philharmonic Choir.

The singers shouted in unison, "We want Scott!" and at last Mr. Scott appeared. In a short speech he said he was well aware that the applause was meant as much for his son – C.W.A. Scott, of the Melbourne Air Race – as himself.

. . . . Roy Henderson taking once again the part in which he first made his name, nine years ago, and in which he is unexcelled. The part might be sung with more power in the lower range, but it is unlikely ever to be given with a more thorough musical grasp. The top of Mr. Henderson's voice seems to have gained in quality.

. . . . The rarest beauties were provided by the orchestra. The poetry of sound that was produced from such pages as the quiet introduction to the chorus's greeting to the noontide was something beyond all that the look of the score could even faintly suggest.

The Daily Telegraph, page 12, Thursday 25 October 1934

FLORIDA – Tropical Scenes for Orchestra

Robert Threlfall

Every book on Delius delights in including an account of the first performance of *Florida*, a read-through which took place with a pick-up orchestra in Leipzig in 1888 under Hans Sitt, with whom Delius is understood to have studied orchestration. Edvard and Nina Grieg and Sinding were with Delius in the audience. On the other hand no-one, as far as I am aware, has yet charted the troubled and adventurous history of the music itself between that première and the present day. Certainly no chance listener to a performance of this attractive work is ever likely to imagine the links in this twisted chain; it is to remedy this lack that my present survey has been undertaken.

At that first performance, Grieg commented to Delius that the work was *scheusslich interessant*, probably referring to the dance in the third movement. A complete rewriting of this movement in Paris in 1889 established the version now familiar. This was rewritten (on separate sheets of upright format paper) and the original version was removed from the first manuscript (which is now bound into an oblong volume); its first and last pages survive, as they back up pages of the adjoining movements. However this now-popular piece, Delius's true opus 1, was never heard again during his lifetime.

After Delius's death those manuscripts he had retained at Grez were transferred to a Paris bank vault for safety. In 1935 Eric Fenby was asked by Sir Thomas Beecham to select some suitable piece(s) therefrom to form interludes during the forthcoming performances of *Koanga* at Covent Garden and elsewhere. Eric

Titlepage of the original MS of Delius's *Florida*

evidently chose the dance section from the first movement of *Florida*, the part now known as *La Calinda*, and copied a score of this out for Beecham from Delius's manuscript under the title *Danse Créole*. (He only made his own concert version of *La Calinda* a little later and it was published in 1938.) No old orchestral parts were available, it seems, so Beecham had a complete set of material for the whole work extracted (by a variety of hands); this was fairly accurate – much more so than that printed and published in 1963 – but the viola parts at the end of the third movement were garbled (through misreading Delius's perfectly clear change of clef) and various other errors appeared, such as the final trumpet solo being shorn of all but its last note. Beecham, with characteristic disdain for musicological finesse, had blue pencilled his principal hairpins and modified dynamics straight into Delius's manuscripts before those parts were raised. On April 1st 1937 he included the piece in a London concert programme, in what appears to have been his only public performance of the work (which even then lacked its second movement; the so-called *Irmelin Prelude*, which had also been used as an entr'acte during Act 3 of *Koanga*, was substituted for it). Although Beecham stated, in his declaration of 1947, that *Florida* was one of the works given to him by Delius in 1929, he never programmed it again until November 4th 1958 for an all-Delius concert – which attracted so little support that the programme was altered, *Florida* was withdrawn and Sibelius's First Symphony was substituted. Beecham had meanwhile made his justly-popular recording of the complete *Florida* suite in November/December 1956, though it was several years later when this was released.

Much had happened to the music by then. Delius's manuscript score evidently remained with Eric Fenby during the late 1930s; and to him Percy Grainger appealed, just before the War, for some Delius manuscript material to be housed in his Museum then under construction at Melbourne University in Australia. Nothing was settled at that time; the manuscript presumably remained in Eric Fenby's home during the War (where at least it might have been considered safer than in the Beecham library in London . . .) but in the aftermath Grainger returned to the subject. In September 1948 both *Florida* manuscripts (and some generally less important items) were handed to Grainger by Eric Fenby, apparently without any reference to either Beecham or the Delius Trust – both of whom would have certainly claimed ownership of this material. Consequently when Beecham returned to the work in the 1950s he found himself confronted with parts but no score. (Denis Vaughan's article in *Opera News*, 29 December 1962, reprinted in an early Delius Society Newsletter, refers to this.) Likewise, when Philip Emanuel wished to send the manuscript of *Florida* to Jacksonville University in the early 1960s he was forced to send that of *Koanga* instead as no-one seemed aware of the then location and travels of the earlier work. Beecham consequently handed the *Florida* parts, which had fortunately survived the wartime vicissitudes of his

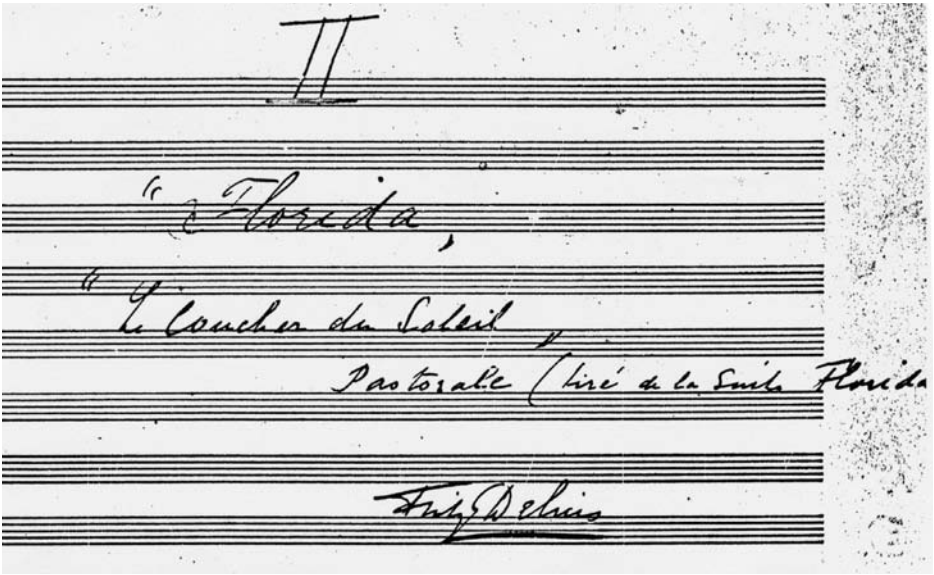
music library, to his then librarian George Brownfoot in order to raise a fresh score therefrom. Unfortunately the resulting score added more errors to those in the existing parts (e.g. incorrect entries; percussion out of phase; more wrong notes) largely due to the absence of the original manuscript for checking. Nonetheless Beecham added further editing and it was sent to Boosey & Hawkes as basis for a score to be issued in the Collected Edition then under way. At the time of Beecham's death in 1961 this project had reached proof stage but he had not given his imprimatur to the result, which was however released in 1963. (I was told that at one stage a chance visit to Boosey's by Eric had enabled various queries to be settled, but I could see no evidence of that in the section referred to (the *Calinda* episode), where rows of misreadings in the viola part alone went unremarked.)

After I met Rachel Lowe in 1964 we worked together on the Delius music Archive and an effort was made to trace all relevant manuscripts not then included therein. Among the information received over the bush telegraph and through conventional channels came the news (to us) that the *Florida* manuscripts had been seen in the Grainger Museum, and this was confirmed when Rachel herself called there in 1969. Although hers was then a hurried visit it sufficed to establish contact with the then acting curator and to advise me accordingly. I was quickly enabled to obtain a microfilm of all their Delius music manuscripts, from which xerox prints were blown out and stored in the Delius Trust Archive by 1970. Study of these soon revealed the many inaccuracies of the printed score of 1963 – and also of the clarity and accuracy as a whole of Delius's manuscripts. I prepared a short list of the most glaring errors and circulated it to various interested parties forthwith. One of these was Sir Charles Groves, who had already made a number of commonsense suggestions as a result of his own performances, and of which he sent me copies. A complete set of xeroxes was also handed to Boosey & Hawkes and discussed there with Dr Leopold Spinner.

When the miniature score became due for a reprint in 1986 the opportunity was taken to carry out a fairly extensive revision of the plates and orchestral material, and this reissue (in larger, study-score size) was at last a much improved text. A few further details were added when the full score was reprinted as Vol. 20 of the Collected Edition in 1990 (the long list of corrections filled 4 pages of the Editorial Report, though a number of further ones have been noted subsequently). At a later stage Bob Montgomery and I spent some time in Boosey's Hire Library sorting the material and throwing out sets of the corrupt 1963 printing. Yet when David Lloyd-Jones conducted the work in Jacksonville at the 2004 Festival the material supplied to him from the publisher's New York house was chiefly this uncorrected 1963 set once again, and David had to spend hours at his hotel rectifying the errors before rehearsal. Such an unnecessary and thankless chore, far from dampening his enthusiasm, has increased his interest in this extraordinary work (which must

surely have made more converts to the Delius cause than many of the later scores). It is our hope that a further corrected and definitive edition will now appear, in which, while preserving and amplifying Beecham's editing, notes may draw attention to a few points of practical interest. Also, it is intended to restore all Delius's many directions in his original German – for a Leipzig-born score – which are frequently more detailed and explicit than the hitherto-printed Italian ones.

Perhaps what is entailed "at the back of the shop" in linking a music manuscript and its public performance deserves more than occasional consideration in these days of easy listening. That is an excuse for my present survey of the story of Delius's earliest orchestral score and of the problems which were encountered behind the scenes in attempting to produce a reliable text for performance.



Part of the titlepage of the revised manuscript for part of Delius's *Florida*

'SPIRIT OF PLACE' – Grez-sur-Loing

Colin Scott-Sutherland

'So many haunts where I could dream a whole life through . . .'
W W Gibson, *The Eternal Eden*

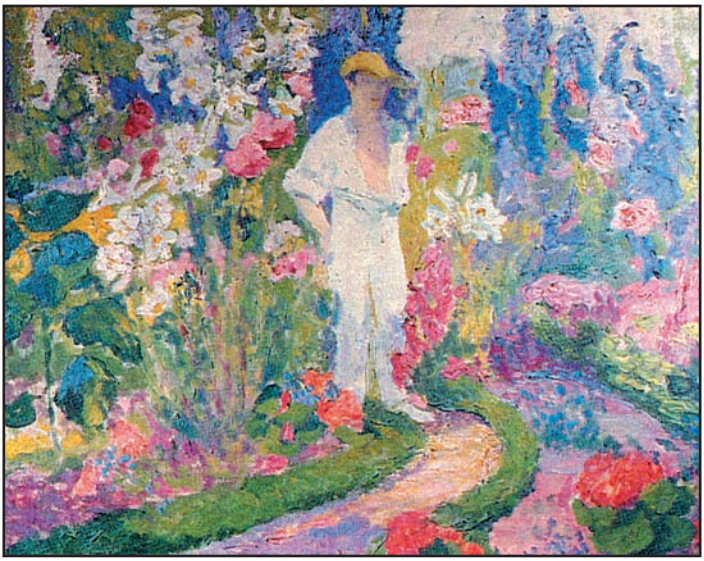
Spirit of place . . . a concept embodying not only natural beauty but an awareness of the past, of pre-history, of the ministrations of the inhabitants who have left their subtle impressions on the place. It is perhaps the essence of that period in artistic expression, be it in writing, painting or in music, that we loosely call Romanticism – the awareness of 'that part of reality which is larger, more heroic than everyday reality'. (1)

With that awareness however comes another feature of the romantic view – that of the impermanence of that beauty which carries with it those impressions – that loveliness, even ecstasy – that only too quickly fades and dies. Whether it is equally romantic to believe that, as in Nature, this is also temporary, to be followed as Spring follows Winter, by a reburgeoning, is open to question. For it is mixed with melancholy:

> '. . . and at that moment some strange melodious bird took up its song and sang, not an ordinary bird song with constant repetitions of the same melody, but what sounded like a continuous strain in which one thought was expressed, deepening in intensity as evolved in progress. It sounded like a welcome already overshadowed by the coming farewell. As in all sweetest music a tinge of sadness was in every note. Nor do we know how much of the pleasures even of life we owe to the intermingled sorrows. Joy cannot unfold the deepest truths, although deepest truth must be deepest joy. Cometh white-robed Sorrow, stooping and wan, and flingeth wide the doors she may not enter. Almost we linger with Sorrow for very love.' (2)

Most creative artists have alighted upon a place, or type of place, which seems to impel to life the creative impulse – John Ireland in Sussex; Constable in Suffolk; Stanley Spencer and Cookham; Bax and Donegal and Morar; John Cowper Powys and Dorset; Housman and Shropshire . . . and Delius and Grez-sur-Loing. 'I could not help remarking how wrong Delius had been when he had chosen to be buried in England. He belonged to Grez and only to Grez'. (3)

If Delius belonged to Grez then so also did Jelka Rosen. It was in 1897 that Jelka, who had met Delius in Paris, bought the house in Grez and it was there that



'Delius in the garden at Grez' Jelka Rosen

'The Ferry' by William Stott of Oldham

'The Bridge at Grez-sur-Loing' John Lavery

they moved together into what was to be Delius's home until his death in 1934. Jelka was an artist – an artist with an especial love of colour – and it was in her garden at Grez that this love of colour found natural expression . . .

> 'It is not easy to grow flowers in this climate. But Mme Delius had her own way of overcoming the difficulty. She planted roses in every bed, at varying distances, and filled the spaces between them with such annuals as enjoyed the sunshine and dry air. There were petunias in blue and purple, marigolds in yellow and orange, zinnia in bronze and gold, nicotiana in white (which enhanced all the other colours), salpiglossis, cosmos, crimson flax, pink geraniums, white pelargonium and I do not recall how many more. Never have I seen such a riot of colour, and to crown all, here and there, a clump of Madonna lilies growing up and above this kaleidoscope of blooms, and breathing over them, so to speak, a benediction' (4)

The village of Grez-sur-Loing in the beautiful Seine-et-Marne region of France had become a mecca for artists – not only those escaping, as Monet had in 1863, from the competitive art world of Second Empire Paris, but those who followed the breakaway from the studios of the formalised classical style to what was rapidly becoming established as the 'plein air' school of Barbizon in the forest of Fontainebleau. (It was at this village, not far from Grez, that Millet painted the famous 'Angelus'.) Paysage Champetre and Nature were taking over from the historical figures and architectural remains of the classical scene.

The romantic movement, begun as a movement away from classical order and formality, had an especial influence on Nature: gardens, orderly and formal in layout, first admitted the artistic value of landscape gardening and, by the late eighteenth century the idea of Nature, wild and without artificiality, had become prevalent. Wordsworth describes his own love of Nature in 'The Prelude' – and even Beethoven had exulted in happy feelings on going into the countryside in his sixth Symphony. In both Keats and Shelley, Man is at one with Nature.

There was now a certain relaxation of emotion, previously constricted by the accepted – even demanded – formalities of the Augustan period. How better to express this exultation, a kind of pantheism, than in the natural surroundings of the countryside – that same countryside that previously formed the backdrop to the procession of severely classical imagery, and now became the natural environs of Man and his uninhibited self-expression. Thus the life of the imagination became as real as the outside world.

One of the most important figures in this was the artist Corot, one of the first to take his easel out of doors and to develop a special treatment of light, form

and distance in his work. Corot had come to Barbizon as early as the 1860s before impressionism and ultimately post-impressionism were to develop. Corot's treatment of foliage, essentially non-graphic, uses masses of soft colour that are not yet quite impressionist in technique.

And so in music – in Delius, for instance, scenes are distilled in blocks of shifting colour – harmonies moving in unresolved block chords (ie non-graphic) decorated with the sparkle of accidentals (5), floating'in a pool of sound' as Richard Capell put it. (6) Appropriately water formed an important part of the landscape, for the river Loing at Grez provided a quietly-moving horizontal plane – a fundamental in both architecture and architectonics, its flow broken by judiciously placed perpendiculars of plants, trees and the occasional group of figures. The flow in Delius's music was as essential as the smooth swift flow of the river. In an article in the *Westminster Gazette* on the curious subject of 'musical water-wheels' (the use of sequence as a facile means of progression in music) Elgar spoke of Delius as one composer who does not resort to this device. There is in Delius, and in the pre-impressionist artists who painted the scene, much more than mere scene painting. *In a Summer Garden* is not impressionistic, writes Cardus – 'there is no tone painting'. (7) It is music of a mood, and of this mood Cardus continues 'the music tells us of the bloom that was on the hour, long ago' (8). Despite the melancholy that this implies Robert Louis Stevenson thought differently:

> 'But Grez is a merry place after its kind, pretty to see and merry to inhabit: the course of its pellucid river, whether up or down, is full of gentle attractions for the navigator; islanded reed-mazes where, in autumn, the red berries cluster; the mirrored and inverted images of trees, lilies and mills, the foam and thunder of the river . . .' (9)

This idyll, which had earlier been recognised by such as Stevenson and the poet Mallarmé was perhaps not so far removed from the more bohemian aspects of life in the Parisian ateliers – the inn at Grez was a frequented meeting place and nude bathing parties were not uncommon. (10) And in nearby Barbizon impecunious artists eked out a thin but fulfilled existence in the several auberges that were favourably disposed to them.

The migration down the road from Barbizon to Grez was nevertheless a particular movement – for later the fully-fledged impressionists tended to return to urban subjects. A considerable number of artists - among them the Irishman Frank O'Meara, Carl Larsson from Sweden and the Japanese Seiki Kuroda – had already discovered the attractions - and now a particular group of artists, seeking the 'plein air' after venturing from Glasgow, left the Scottish art world and also

discovered Grez. Among the first of the 'Glasgow Boys' to visit was the Irish John Lavery. Again it was the river – the smooth level dark water, spanned by the famous many-arched bridge – that became the subject of many paintings, the horizon characteristically high in the picture.

As the classical landscape, with its emphasis on narrative, fell out of fashion there appeared in painting mysterious atmospheres, low points of light, and passages of light and shade in contrasting patterns – essentially a new way of seeing Nature. One of the main features of this landscape art, especially when trees were an important element – they are after all the 'inhabitants of nature' – is perspective, drawing the eye through the picture towards a focal point, almost always of light. Perhaps something similar can be seen on music – in which movement towards a point is expressed.

It does not seem too far-fetched to imagine the musical perspective, the ninth and tenth bar of Ex.1 approximating to that point of light to which the eye, or in this case the ear, is drawn quite naturally.

There is another aspect to this analogy. Delius has often in the past been considered a composer without antecedents (other than that of being alive in an era of post-Wagnerian freedom of harmonic expression.) A strong and vital influence in the music of Delius is however undoubtedly Grieg, whose influence indeed in all music of the time is more pervasive than is generally acknowledged. Grieg's particular use of a second inversion chord – a 6/4 – is heard as a kind of climax – or, more accurately, as a kind of emotional release – also a focal point if you like, analogous to the idea of perspective. It is heard so often in the music of Richard Strauss, Edward MacDowell and John Ireland – always conveying an ecstatic passion, an orgasmic overflowing of accumulated tension – of the mind, not physical. And it is often tinged with a note of despair, certainly of stressed emotion. It appears in its most conspicuous form in Grieg's *Last Spring*.

The chord is really a dominant pedal, decorated more often than not, with the tension protracted pending resolution via the seventh, to the tonic.

Surely this practice must be heard in Delius (11). The six/four chord does appear as in Grieg, although the flow of the music and the flux of his harmonic procedures means that no sooner has the point appeared than it is lost, still unresolved, in the forward movement. Instances like the 'wake-up' chords in *Appalachia* (bars 33-34): the opening of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* (a dominant pedal) and in Part 3 of 'Mass of Life' are worth mentioning. And in *In a Summer Garden* says Cardus (12), 'we get one of the most beautiful climaxes in all music' (bars 237-240 perhaps, very reminiscent of Balfour Gardiner's *April*.) There are too moments of rapt stillness – 'a beautiful extreme case is the inclusion of a high B, the 7th of the scale in the major chord of C which opens *On hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring*. Some of the loveliest and most spellbound moments in his work are those in which the music seems motionless but breathing – the texture just alive, its heart throbbing on one of these quiet chords' (13).

The comparison between music and art is apt to lead to misconceptions for the technical terminology is quite different. But it is not too far fetched to draw something of a relationship between the natural – the flow of the river at this

point in its passage – and the sound in passages like the cantabile motif (bars 25 et seq) of *Summer Night on the River*, the same quiet bloom that is in *In a Summer Garden* as reflected in memory. To quote Hutchings (14) 'the appeal to one sense is not at variance with the appeal to another'. One cannot help feeling the fresh early morning air and the dew in the first bars of *Song before Sunrise* – yet technical analyses of both expressions are meaningless. The relationship is not impressionistic but a kind of unity of mood – mood recollected in tranquillity some time afterwards – and the human element is in the melancholy that this engenders. In Delius the harmonic progression (ie the sequence of chords or chord patterns) is so often the 'melodic' element and is one says Cardus that can be whistled!

Hutchings speaks too of a horizon in music, just as I have mentioned in the Grez artists' work. 'In these favourite orchestral works [he is speaking here of *Brigg Fair* and *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring*, despite the fact that the latter is based on a Norse folksong] they [the horizons] are unmistakably the beloved skyline of our English fields, woods, rivers, hills, dawns and sunsets'. (15) Does it matter that the same horizons can be seen in *In a Summer Garden* – only French because of its location? The two are to this extent interchangeable – and the experience is the same.

Apart from the romantic attraction of Grez as a place there was another attraction for the visitor. It was the presence of Delius himself. Why did this Bradford-born expatriate exercise such an influence that even Elgar – that solid essentially English Elgar – should be compelled to visit Grez in 1933? He was not the only pilgrim, even if some were welcomed with less enthusiasm than others. In a reminiscence of his meeting, Elgar in the *Daily Telegraph* (1 July 1933) mentioned 'in passing through the pine-scented forest of Fontainebleau on the way to see Delius, I had come to a turn of the road leading to Barbizon . . .' The last words should be those of Robert Louis Stevenson:

> '. . . I entertain a fancy that, when the young men of today go forth into the forest they shall find the air vitalised by the spirit of these pre-decessors and, like those 'unheard melodies' that are the sweetest of all, the memory of our laughter shall still haunt the field and trees . . .'(16)

Notes:

1 Ronald Stevenson, *Western Music*, Kahn & Averill 1971, p 142
2 George MacDonald, *Phantastes*, Chatto & Windus 1894, p 109
3 Eric Fenby, *Delius as I knew him*, Quality Press 1936, p 231
4 P T Oyler, *Delius at Grez* in *Musical Times*, pp 444/7
5 Arthur Hutchings, *Delius*, Macmillan 1946, p 166 He writes: Delius's scores are liberally covered with what the textbook calls accidentals, but Delius's harmony differs from that of most previous composers in that the sharps and flats are not accidentals, but that his music is chromatic only in the literal sense ie. Coloured.
6 'Delius – landscape painter of music' in *A Delius Companion*, (Ed. C Redwood) John Calder 1980, p 46
7 'Delius – his method and his music' in *A Delius Companion*, p 89
8 Ibid p 90
9 R L Stevenson, 'Fontainebleau – Village communities of painters' in *The Magazine of Art*
10 '. . . a very nest of bohemians' – J S Sargent – a letter to Vernon Lee 1881
11 Ernest Newman complained of the persistent 6/4 in Delius's music, but it seems now that perhaps he may have been referring to the inevitable triple time signature that Delius's sense of flow required. Nevertheless the 6/4 (ie second inversion) used in the way I have described is very marked in those composers I have mentioned.
12 Cardus Ibid. p 89
13 Hutchings. Ibid. p 171
14 Hutchings. Ibid p 120
15 Hutchings. Ibid p 82
16 R L Stevenson. Ibid.

A PRODUCTION THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

Christopher Redwood

A few months ago information reached me that a London dealer with whom I had previously done business had acquired a collection of Delius scores and was about to dispose of them. As usually happens in these cases, the news came at a time when I was extremely busy and unable to visit the capital for several weeks. I contacted the dealer to disclose my interest, at the same time explaining that I would be prepared to take my chance on some (or even all) of the scores being sold before I got there.

Fortunately that turned out not to be the case, and the collection proved most interesting. From it I was able to buy a full-score of *Appalachia*, which had evidently once belonged to a Delius Society member because, stapled inside the front cover, was David Eccott's article *The Missing Trombone* which he wrote for me when I was Editor of the *Journal* and which I published in DSJ 48.

Also listed in the same collection was the vocal score of *Sea Drift* originally published by Harmonie Verlag of Berlin in 1908. As I already own one of these I was not at first greatly interested, but my feelings changed on seeing the copy in question. Mine has a pale blue-green cover and is slightly larger than A4 (about one inch wider and less than half an inch greater in length). The design might be described as 'Victorian-floral', the title is in *Schrift* and its colour a deeper blue-green.

The copy I now saw was appreciably larger in format: an inch longer and almost one-and-a-half inches wider. Yet, surprisingly, the contents appeared to be identical in both size and format. It seems strange to us today to think of a score being reprinted with margins twice as wide. Presumably paper was less expensive in those days! The cover, too, was very different: buff in colour with a quasi-cloth feel to it, print (this time in red) was kept to a minimum and might be described as 'bauhaus style'. We must therefore conclude that Harmonie reprinted *Sea Drift*, and as the present copy was hand-dated '1912' it could not have occurred later than that year. Incidentally, this must now supplement information given by Robert Threlfall on p.60 of his *A Catalogue of the Compositions of Frederick Delius* (Delius Trust, 1977).

By far the most interesting item, however, was a copy of the Universal Edition English vocal score of *Fennimore and Gerda* which was stamped on the inner cover (and elsewhere) with a familiar rectangle containing the words THE PROPERTY OF SIR THOMAS BEECHAM. Now, as is well-known, the Delius scores belonging to Beecham were passed to the Delius Trust several years ago, so my first reaction on seeing this one was to enquire discreetly of the dealer whether it should be on

sale at all. Having been assured that it came from a private collection and all was above board, I purchased it.

The next challenge was to try to discover the history of this interesting copy, and a clue was provided by the name 'Leyland White' in faded pencil on the outer cover. Those members who have an interest in Delius's operas will immediately recognise the name as that of the singer who played Don Jose Martinez in the 1935 production of *Koanga.* What, then, was he doing with Beecham's copy of *Fennimore*? Behind that question, of course, lay another: would Beecham have acquired a score that had previously belonged to Leyland White; or was it more likely that Leyland White had somehow come to own a copy that had been in Beecham's possession?

For my money the former is implausible. Beecham was surely not a person to have been interested in any score that was other than brand new (save, perhaps, for something obscure and long out-of-print). On the other hand it is by no means impossible that he might have given or loaned one of his scores to another musician. Interestingly, I have since learned from Robert Threlfall that the Beecham collection which came to the Delius Trust contained a full-score of *Fennimore and Gerda,* but no vocal score.

If the reader accepts my thinking in the previous paragraph, the only question that remains is why the score should have been passed from one man to the other. I believe an answer may be found when it is remembered that Beecham conducted *A Village Romeo and Juliet* at the Royal College of Music in 1934 and *Koanga* at Covent Garden the following year. I therefore venture to suggest that it was his intention to follow up these performances with *Fennimore and Gerda* in 1936 or soon after. Impressed with Leyland White's performance in *Koanga* he gave him his own vocal score of Delius's last opera, telling him to learn the part of Niels Lyhne. In the event the production never took place, and a few years later the country went to war. Beecham was still talking of conducting *Fennimore and Gerda* at the time of *Irmelin* in 1953, but he never did so, despite the opera having been dedicated to him.

Sir Thomas's Tribute to Delius

Sir Thomas Beecham's speech in memory of Delius, at the performance of " A Village Romeo and Juliet" at the Royal College of Music on Wednesday, was most felicitous and graceful in its phrasing, and moving in its seriousness.

He rather surprised his audience by mentioning that there is reason to think the Delius family to have been originally English. The composer's parents were of German extraction, and their ancestors it is known, were Dutch. Sir Thomas's suggestion was that the family, generations ago, had gone to Holland from England.

"How little, my soul, thou needest to be happy!" These words, from "A Mass of Life", were, said Sir Thomas, supremely applicable to Delius. A garden in France, a summer holiday in Norway – this was all he asked of life. Sir Thomas described the contrast between Delius's intellect and his essential nature – the one so subtle, so cultivated, the heir of centuries of civilisation, and the latter utterly simple. Delius, he said, looked like a prince of the Roman Church of the Renaissance. He had a mind that might have given him high place in the Church, in the world of banking, at Scotland Yard, or in the profession of economics. He chose a life of simplicity, and the simplicity of that life, and of Delius's pleasures – the sight of sunlight on his flower-beds, and the sound of wind in the leaves – was, Sir Thomas insisted, in his music, "a music", in the Wordsworthian phrase, "born of murmuring sounds".

Daily Telegraph, ? June 1934

Jacob Krammer putting the finishing touches to a portrait of Delius painted in Paris [sic], *New Chronicle*, 22 October 1932

MIDNIGHT BURIAL OF A GREAT COMPOSER

Sixty People Under Flickering Lamps In A Surrey Churchyard

DELIUS – HIS LAST WISH OBEYED

SERVICE NOBODY HEARD

HOOTING OF OWLS IN AN AGE-OLD YEW

Frederick Delius, the blind composer, was buried at midnight last night in the quiet churchyard at Limpsfield, Surrey.

He died last June at Grez-sur-Loing, in France. He was buried temporarily there.

On his deathbed he had whispered to his wife, "Bury me in my English countryside".

Last night his body was brought to Folkestone.

The only music was the hissing steam from the cross-Channel steamer Biarritz and the mournful slapping of the water against the ship's side.

The body, in a lead shell and unpolished, iron-bound coffin, came back by the route by which Delius, in October 1929, came to attend his triumphal festival in London.

Mrs. Delius, who is very ill, made the journey to England two days ago. She was unable to be present at last night's ceremony.

Drawn up on the quay at Folkestone close to the steamer's berth was a motor hearse. Only employees of the Southern Railway saw the case lifted by an electric crane from the hold of the steamer to the quayside.

200-MILES JOURNEY

The men stood reverently and silently for a moment before lifting the case into the motor hearse. Then the hearse left for Limpsfield.

Mr. Eric Fenby, Delius's secretary, accompanied the body on the 200-miles journey from Grez, which began at 9 a.m. yesterday. There was no ceremony as it was taken from the Chappelle Trovisoire where it had lain since being disinterred three days ago.

Sixty people had assembled in the darkness of the village churchyard before the motor-hearse arrived.

A string of cars had drawn up outside the churchyard.

Flickering lamps, fixed to crosses on other tombs, lit the eerie scene as the coffin was wheeled forward to an open grave lined with laurel wreaths.

It was Delius's wish come true, a resting-place where "winds are warm and the sun is friendly."

There was no friendly sun, but the sky was star-swept.

The verger, swinging a lamp which dimly lit the narrow path, walked before the coffin as it was wheeled forward. The rector, the Rev. Charles Steer, walked behind.

HIS LIFE-LONG FRIEND

The ceremony was simple.

The open grave was under a thousand-years-old yew tree. Next to it was the grave of Mrs. Harrison, his life-long friend, to whose daughters, Beatrice and Margaret, he had dedicated some of his greatest work.

The hooting of the owls in the age-old yew was the only sound heard.

The coffin was lowered . . . . The Rector conducted the service – it had been cut short.

The voice of the rector was almost inaudible to those standing round.

One could see in the gloom that all the men had bared their heads.

Some moved their lips in as they followed the words of the committal prayer. The sound from their lips developed into a low murmur – blending with the rustle of the gentle breeze in the trees.

TWO MINUTES

The service lasted, perhaps, for two minutes, and the grave was covered over.

One man stood out in the shadows, watched by the group of villagers who looked on – Eric Fenby, barehead, his shoulders bowed as he stared down at the coffin.

There were no flowers; the grave was covered for the night, and the people filed slowly home through the darkness.

Women to whom Delius was just a name wept as the service finished.

Several crossed themselves as they stood at the graveside.

The formal funeral service takes place at four o'clock this afternoon, when 20 members of the London Philharmonic Orchestra will play selections from the composer's works under the leadership of Sir Thomas Beechamm who will pay his personal tribute.

And the many admirers of the great composer will have their opportunity to pay tribute to his memory.

Limpsfield is 22 miles from London, and is on the border of East Surrey and Kent. The nearest railway station is Oxted.

But to the villagers the funeral is already over. They came in the night, to pay their respects to the man whose spirit wanted shelter under their yew tree . . .

Born in Bradford, Delius had no wish to be brought back to his own county of Yorkshire.

"In Yorkshire there is rugged beauty," he said, "but it is too cold, too bleak. When I am dead, take me to the south of England, where the winds are warm."

In 1932 he was given the freedom of Bradford.

The festival of six concerts for which Delius came to England in the autumn of 1929 was organised and conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham.

His only opera, "A Village Romeo and Juliet," was produced by Sir Thomas at Covent Garden.

Delius's most important choral work was "A Mass of Life," [??] was set on this side of his work when "Requiem" [??}by the Philharmonic Society.

(Headline & Front Page) *Sunday Dispatch*, 26 May 1934

MIDNIGHT BURIAL OF DELIUS

MEMORIAL SERVICE TO-DAY

INTERVIEW WITH SIR THOMAS BEECHAM

"AN ANGLO-AMERICAN COMPOSER"

(SPECIAL TO "THE OBSERVER")

At midnight last night the body of Frederick Delius, which has been brought over from France, was re-interred at Limpsfield. A memorial service will be held to-day. Fifteen members of the London Philharmonic Orchestra will play, and a funeral oration will be pronounced by Sir Thomas Beecham, who was a great friend of the composer.

"Delius came from a very ancient European family," Sir Thomas told a representative of THE OBSERVER yesterday. "The name seems to have been originally Delij, but was Latinised in the sixteenth century into Delius." Another name Latinised at the same period was Erasmus. Members if the family were found scattered over Europe, in Holland, Hungary, and England. A Delius was Chaplain to Edward VI. The composer descended from a branch of the family who lived in Westphalia in the early eighteenth century, a member of whom became a wool merchant in Bradford. "But Delius himself showed no trace of his Teutonic origin in his character, tastes, or accomplishments. He was peculiar to himself, a composite type of another century. He was a throwback to an earlier strain of his family: he bore no resemblance to his parents or to his sisters."

NORSE INFLUENCE

"No one has ever fully examined," continued Sir Thomas, "the influence of Scandinavia on the music and culture of the North of England, Scotland and Ireland. After all, the Vikings overran Ireland for 300 years. The name of Dublin is Norwegian. The island of Lewis, off the coast of Scotland, was Norwegian till the eighteenth century. The melancholy of Celtic music probably comes from the Vikings.

"The Vikings invaded and left their stamp on Russia in the eighth, and Ireland in tenth. There is", he said, "remarkable resemblance between Russian and Irish melodies. Some of the music of 'Prince Igor' can be found note for note, cadence for cadence in Irish tunes. Grieg, whose grandfather came from the East Coast of Scotland, was another inheritor of this tradition.

"GERMANY AND FLORIDA"

"Although Delius studied in Germany, lived in France, and visited Italy, he derived nothing from the music of those countries. I have thought of writing a book on

Delius," continued Sir Thomas, "entitled 'An Anglo-American Composer'. Delius was never poor, though like Horace his means were exiguous. His parents disliked the idea of his going to the Continent to study music, and to head him off from the Continent of Europe bought him an orange plantation in Florida. 'Germany and Florida!' But his family forgot another Continent! – Africa!

"Among the American Negroes fifty-five years ago, Delius came into contact with the spontaneous music of primitive peoples.

"The Welsh are an example of such spontaneous music," Sir Thomas said, "Wales has always been a back-water of European life. The art, and the history of European music mean nothing to the Welsh. They hear instrumental music with reluctance. But they can sing! Any Welsh gathering has the inherited gift of song; they can improvise their own harmonies.

HIS GIFT OF HARMONY

"Delius had latent in him the most delicate and complicated feeling for harmony of any European composer. And contact with African music brought it out. Negro music was not then contaminated by jazz: a vulgar imposition of an over-sophisticated degenerate frivolity on the single rhythm of the Negro. Delius did not use the phraseology of negro music except as an illustration, but contact with it brought out his gifts."

He eventually deserted his plantation and an emissary of his family finally found him teaching music in a girls' school in Jacksonville. His family now saw he had determined to pursue music, and 'Fred' was sent to study in Leipzig 'in the days when every student went to hear Tristan and the next day would desert their classes en masse to discuss it.'

"After Leipzig," Sir Thomas said, "he lived in Paris under the protection of his opulent Uncle Theodore, and in France he married, and died there last year after a long illness which left him blind and paralysed.

HIS DYING WISH

"Delius's developments of his gifts of melody and harmony made him one of the great composers of all time. He was a cosmopolitan, like the educated English of a former day, like Thomas More. England's cultural insularity only dates from the long isolation of the Napoleonic wars," said Sir Thomas. "The three intellectual influences on Delius were the philosophy of Nietzsche, the literature of Scandinavia, particularly Ibsen, Jakobsen, and Lie, and the French impressionist school of painting, the works of Corot, Claude Monet, Sisley, Gauguin, and Cezanne. All of these he talked about constantly."

Before he died Delius expressed the wish to be buried in England. His wife's illness made it impossible at the time, but his friends have now arranged for his

reinterment in Limpsfield, chosen not for particular associations with Delius but for its beauty and accessibility to his friends. The reasons for his desire to return to England Sir Thomas will speak of in a speech which will be broadcast from the churchyard.

The Observer, Sunday 26 May 1935

BLIND COMPOSER'S WIDOW

Death Within Two Days of Delius's Reburial

Mrs. Delius, widow of the famous composer, died peacefully in a London nursing home yesterday.

Though doctors warned her that a Channel crossing, and the uncertainty of the English May weather, were full of dangers for a woman of her age and in her weakened state, Mrs. Delius came to England from France on Saturday to be present at the reburial of her husband's body in Limpsfield (Surrey) churchyard.

Her illness developed at once, and she was taken on landing to a nursing home. Her grave condition made her attendance at Limpsfield on Sunday impossible.

"Mrs. Delius was one of the most devoted wives a man ever had," said Miss Margaret Harrison, the musician, yesterday.

Miss Harrison and her sister Beatrice had known Delius and his wife well for many years, and she told the *Daily Mirror* that even to a stranger it was obvious wnat a wonderful love they had for each other.

Mrs. Delius.

"Mrs. Delius lived entirely for her husband," she added. "When hardships came upon him, she sacrificed everything to make him as happy as possible.

"She threw up her career as a painter—and she was a very fine artist—to minister more effectively to him, and for years she did no other artistic work than some sketches of him.

"She had a lovely personality and a sweet nature that was never allowed to become ruffled. At times that cannot have been easy, for Delius had the temperament of any other genius.

"No one can ever know what an enormous help she must have been to him."

The Daily Mirror, 29 May 1935

DELIUS SOCIETY MEETING (Midlands Branch)

13 March 2004, Weston Underwood, Derby

'Frederick Delius, Friends and Associations' – a talk by Anthony Lindsey

Over twenty members had risked the weather forecast of heavy snow sweeping through the Midlands to attend this social gathering and talk by the former Society Secretary, Anthony Lindsey, accompanied by his wife Kay.

Tony briefly described his rather parochial youthful experiences, living in Sussex, with Dorking being his furthest venture 'up north', only to be whisked to Derby in 1955 into the world of jet propulsion. Tony's musical experiences were as a chorister in Ealing Abbey, and therefore choral works and madrigals were the mainstay of his live musical performances. We began with a performance of 'On Craig Dhu' in the recording sung by the Elysian Singers conducted by Matthew Greenall, which Tony considers to be Delius's finest part-song.

The talk was based on the premise that all of us meet individuals which to a lesser or greater extent, influence and change our lives. He then considered 2 or 3 important individuals who were associated with Frederick Delius, were deeply influenced, musically, by their friendship with Delius and how Delius, in turn, valued their friendship.

The first was Philip Heseltine, who as a 16 year old studying at Eton, wrote to Delius following a performance of the *Songs of Sunset* he had heard conducted by Thomas Beecham. Hearing Tony read the letter, many of us found both the eloquence of the writing and the forthright opinions of the youth astonishing. The association between the two began in 1911 and lasted nearly 30 years. Delius thought highly of the young man for he preserved all the correspondences from Heseltine. Heseltine sought Delius's advice on which career path he should take. His family expected him to become a civil servant. True to form, Delius expounded to Philip on the virtues of following his own feelings and ignoring family pressure and wishes. (I wonder where he got that idea from?). Tony read an astonishing and at the same time amusing letter from Joe Heseltine to Philip, a neighbour of Delius living near Grez, berating his association with Delius especially in fact that the Delius's often spoke in German!

Philip Heseltine's output as a writer, collector of folksongs, arranger, and composer under the pseudonym of Peter Warlock, was prodigious. Tony then played an excerpt from the *Capriol Suite* Peter Warlock's most popular composition and told us the story of his meeting with Philip's granddaughter Philippa a few years ago in London. Tony then went on to relate the scenario of the song 'The Fox'

and played a recording. It was composed in 1930 the year of Heseltine's death. The first part of his talk concluded with 'The Curlew', a particular favourite of Delius.

After a suitable replenishment of glasses, Tony considered briefly the association of Delius with Scandinavia, and then the friendship of Norman O'Neill. O'Neill, born in 1875 was the son of a portrait painter and unlike Delius had the support of his family in studying music in Frankfurt and eventually became a Professor of Music at The Royal Academy. His forte was in the writing of music for the theatre and we listened to his *Overture in Autumn* first performed in 1902, his music from *Fiocco* and finally a recording of *The Bluebird* with O'Neill conducting, impressively revived from a 1920s shellac recording to CD. Norman O'Neill met Delius in 1909 and their friendship was to last the rest of their lives. Tony showed us an original programme from the 1915 Festival of British Music which Norman O'Neill helped organise featuring works of the leading composers of the day including Elgar, Delius, Scott, and Vaughan Williams. The festival's aim was to promote the 'Best Musical Achievement of British Composers' for home consumption and foreign visitors to the capital in times of war. Anthony reminded us that Eric Fenby used to recount that Delius would always be more positive in spirit and almost changed when he knew that the O'Neills were about to visit Grez.

Tony concluded his talk with Eric Fenby and played us his composition *Rossini on Ilkla Moor* written composed in 1938.

In conclusion, Tony thought that Frederick Delius was often a remote and enigmatic man but certain friends and associations had touched him in a way that affected him greatly. In a similar way, the music of Delius affects us, and draws us together as friends and associates in The Delius Society.

Richard Kitching thanked Tony for his presentation and the members then enjoyed the splendid buffet provided by Brian and Jo Radford.

John Graham

DELIUS SOCIETY MEETING

18 March 2004, New Cavendish Club, London

Thomas Hemsley CBE in conversation with Lyndon Jenkins

Members who managed to attend this meeting despite transport problems were rewarded by a fascinating insight into the career of a leading English baritone of international renown. Thomas Hemsley, who had never spoken to the Society before, reminisced freely about experiences that had taken him to opera houses and concert platforms all over Europe. Making his opera debut in 1951 as Aeneas in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* in the famous Mermaid Theatre production in London, he was at Glyndebourne two years later. Then came a three-year engagement in Aachen – he was the first English singer after the war to join a German company – and from 1957-63 he was with the Deutsche Oper in Dusseldorf where, in two opera houses, there were 450 performances of 50 operas a season. In 1960 he created the role of Demetrius in Britten's *Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Aldeburgh Festival, was then in Zurich from 1963-7, and appeared at Bayreuth as Beckmesser from 1968-70. He made his Covent Garden debut in 1977 in Tippett's *The Knot Garden*, and sang with Scottish Opera in 1974, the Welsh National Opera from 1977-85 and then with Kent Opera, for whom also he directed *Il riturno d'Ulisse in patria* in 1989, the year in which he retired.

He sang over 150 roles in a career of over forty years, and in response to a question from Lyndon about his preference for the opera or the concert platform, replied that he had no preference but was always aware of the difference, and also how close they are. Interestingly, all the singers he most admired, such as Gerhard Husch and Hans Hotter, had been opera singers as well. "Of course, there are singers who don't have strong enough voices for opera, but there are also singers who can only sing loud." He himself was always a stage animal and loved the acting side of it. Asked if opera should be sung in the original language our speaker said, "In all big international houses opera it should only be sung in the original language, and likewise with festival performances; but for the ordinary opera-going public it should be sung in the vernacular." In his lifetime he considered that the decline in operatic singing standards had been largely due to the fact that singers have become incredibly lazy about diction and declamation of text: "If they sing in a language that they only half understand to an audience that doesn't understand it at all, then they don't bother with the subtleties of diction. If you listen now to a record of someone like Heddle Nash it comes as a shock to hear anyone declaim the words so clearly, so meaningfully and so beautifully."

In Aachen his first Music Director had been the young Wolfgang Sawallisch, the second was Wilhelm Pitz, then Fritz Busch at Glyndebourne. He sang a lot of

Mozart: in *The Marriage of Figaro* he sang both Figaro, which lay rather too low for him, and Count Almaviva, which he much preferred, and also in *Così Fan Tutte* the roles of Don Alfonso and Guglielmo. Whilst in Dusseldorf he also sang Escamillo in Bizet's *Carmen* in German, and thought it one of his worst roles: having played the role *avec fatuité*, as called for in the score, the critics complained that he was too fatuous! In *Faust* he sang Valentine's aria in German, with the audience fully expecting to understand the text – clarity was considered most important. We heard an excerpt from a live 1968 performance of Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* at Bayreuth, with Hans Sachs banging out the correct beats on his last whilst Beckmesser sang his 'Serenade'. Lyndon asked about operetta, and we learned that he very much enjoyed both the singing and the dialogue, and had taken roles in works by Lehàr, Millöcker and Johann Strauss with Scottish Opera and Welsh National Opera.

Turning to the subject of English Song he spoke up for some wonderful songs by Stanford, though even some of the best he thought had rather 'twee' Irish poems for words. Lyndon mentioned Dowland, and to our speaker's mind his songs were the greatest of any culture at any time, and in his estimation he stands alongside Hugo Wolf, who also fully understood the art of totally marrying words and music. He also loved Quilter, and there were some wonderful, first-rate songs by Gerald Finzi that have a dramatic content like German songs. It was important for a singer to know who is singing, why is he singing the song, to whom, in what mood is he and for what reason. In his view any composer who sets one of Keats's poems is mad – the music is already there in the poetry. As to Vaughan Williams and Warlock he had sung their songs at times, but felt that you had to be selective. Warlock's hearty songs are beautifully written, but he could never get along with the hearty ones, whilst some of the less hearty ones, such as 'The Fox' are really wonderful and on the same level as Wolf. He could never find himself on the same wavelength as John Ireland.

Schubert, Schumann and Wolf remained his passionate interest, and so we heard our guest singing the last two songs from Schubert's *Die Winterreise*. All the same, he felt that "No composer who writes a lot can be consistent throughout; of Schubert's 400 songs 150 are drivel but 250 are songs of great genius – again you have to be choosy."

Talking about the songs of Delius with piano accompaniment he said he could never find where they lay (Lyndon had observed that they were best suited to soprano and tenor voices anyway) and although he had the music he never had the feeling that he wanted to sing them. The orchestral songs and other works for voice and orchestra were a different matter. *Sea Dri*ft, he said, was on the shortlist of his very, very favourite works and is one of the great works that, apart from anything else, introduced him to the poetry of Walt Whitman, of which he has remained a great fan. He had sung all the Delius with orchestra: whilst an undergraduate he

sang *Appalachia* in the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford, and the next year he was in the square of some little village in Devonshire when a man walked up to him and said, "I know you – you're 'O, Honey!' " I replied, "No, I'm not, I'm T. Hemsley!" "No, no," he said, "You're 'O Honey, I am going down the river in the morning . . . ' "

Concerning *Sea Drift*, Mr Hemsley recalled: "On my 50th birthday I was given a copy of *The Times* for the day I was born, 12 April 1927, and I looked in it to find what concerts were going on whilst my mother was struggling to bring me into the world. What I discovered was that Beecham was conducting *Sea Drift* in the Albert Hall that very day. So that must have inoculated me in some way! Then *Sea Drift* was the first thing I ever sang with a full symphony orchestra, under Carl Schuricht, a Delius conductor before Beecham came along, and it was a great experience." Responding to Lyndon's observation that that must have been a challenging thing to take on as his first-ever outing of that kind in 1952, he explained that when he first started with it he thought "This is difficult stuff to sing", since at first sight it is very angular, "and singing *legato* is actually rather difficult. Lily Lehmann has written that 'the important thing in singing *legato* is to hear every note of the phrase in your head when you start so that you sing within an harmonic envelope.' By doing that and concentrating, hearing a spectrum of harmony for every phrase, those angular notes of Delius suddenly became *legato.* This very strong, concentrated sense of harmony is most important to singing, and it is also something that Delius had to a very large extent. He's one of the great composers with these subtle shifts of harmony, and any performance which doesn't quite appreciate that misses the point."

We then heard a passage from his 1952 performance of *Sea Drift* with Carl Schuricht conducting the BBC Symphony Orchestra. Schuricht had first conducted in the work in 1910, and he thought that this might be the only recording of the work by him. [see Notes 1 & 2] Our guest thought that Schuricht's conducting was wonderful, and although he subsequently sang *Sea Drift* a lot under other conductors (including at the 1962 Delius Centenary Festival in Bradford under Rudolph Kempe), "somehow Schuricht did it differently in a very easeful way; not conducting every beat but letting it flow freely." The performance we heard had a wonderful sense of climax, was totally un-sentimental, and when he'd subsequently done it with other conductors, he'd always wished that they had done it like that. At that 1962 performance Eric Fenby was very complimentary and had sent him Delius's own library- stamped copy of the Heine songs [which Mr. Hemsley has the generous intention of presenting to the Society].

When singing eventually became 'hard work' he told his wife that he was going to retire at the end of the season. She said, "But isn't there music that you're going to miss terribly?" and he had replied: "Yes, there are two pieces that I would dearly

love to sing once more, but no-one is going to ask me now. One is *Sea Drift* of Delius and the other the *Sea Symphony* of Vaughan Williams. Ten days later a letter arrived from Denmark – Would I be interested in singing in a concert with the Aarhus Symphony Orchestra and Norman Del Mar conducting, the programme being *Sea Drift* of Delius and the *Sea Symphony* of Vaughan Williams!" So in fact Delius's work was in the last orchestral concert in which he sang as well as in the first.

The conversation then turned to Delius's *Requiem*. Mr. Hemsley commented that the music is lovely but personally he found the words a bit embarrassing, seeming to be rather a poor, second-rate imitation of Nietzsche. He thought that perhaps because of this it is not often done –"It seems to be actually a rather later, smaller scale version of the *Mass of Life*, but you have to give it all you've got," he said. We heard him sing the section "My beloved whom I cherished was like a flower", from the live recording of only the second public performance at the Philharmonic Hall in Liverpool in 1965 with Heather Harper (soprano) and Sir Charles Groves conducting the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra [see Note 3]. He observed that if he were to do it again, he would try to persuade the conductor to take it faster, and sang a short phrase that well illustrated the comment, adding "It would sound more natural, and the phrases are so well constructed."

In that connection, he remembered that once, when he hadn't sung *Sea Drift* for a couple of years, he took it to the Chief Repetiteur of the Zurich Opera, a wonderfully old-fashioned German musician who didn't know the work at all. Stopping half way through, the latter had observed 'You know, this music is really very well constructed.'"This is something one forgets about Delius, because it's so easy to spread it out and be a bit self-indulgent. It is classically well-constructed music, which you don't always hear in performance." *A Mass of Life* he had sung with both Norman del Mar and Charles Groves. When Dietrich Fischer-Diskau backed out of a recording of it he was offered the engagement, but unfortunately he was in bed with a high fever and flu, and it was thus Benjamin Luxon's great chance, and he did it and made a good job of it. He also remembered singing the *Mass* in Stoke-on-Trent but couldn't remember the details [see Note 4). He always preferred to sing it in German. He had sung the *Arabesque*, which lay a bit low for him, and he knew Einar Norby, who sang it in Danish on the Beecham recording, quite well. He had also sung *Cynara* and *Songs of Sunset* in 1967, although he had no recollection of that concert at all.

Having retired in 1989 and asked if he missed the life he said simply "Yes. And my many colleagues, especially Irmgard Seefried who, apart from Elizabeth Schumann, was the one who really understood the Wolf songs." To round off the evening we heard 'L'Invitation au voyage' by Henri Duparc, Dowland's 'Sorrow! Stay awhile' taken from a recording of a recital in the Concertgebouw in

Amsterdam, and finally Hugo Wolf's 'Herr, was tragt der Boden hier,' a sacred song from 'The Spanish Songbook' that represents a conversation between the pilgrim and the inner Christ, which our guest loves and which still moves him greatly.

Lyndon expressed the Society's thanks to Mr Hemsley for an absolutely fascinating as well as entertaining evening, a sentiment endorsed by a long round of warm applause from members.

NOTES:

1: There is a commercial recording of *Sea Drift* conducted by Schuricht, and sung in German, available on CD. It was taken from a live Bavarian Radio broadcast from the Herkulessaal der Residenz in Munich on 8 March 1963 with Carlos Alexander (baritone), the Bavarian Radio Chorus (chorus master Fritz Schieri) and the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra. Limited copies are still available on the 'archiphon' label Cat. No. ARC-3.0 by direct order: send 15 euros to cover cost and postage to Werner Unger, Archiphon, Grossherzog-Friedrich-Strasse 62, D-77694 Kehl/Rhein, Germany.

2: Interestingly Schuricht (3 July 1880 – 7 January 1967) had been present at the very first performance of *Sea Drift* on 24 May 1906 when it was sung in German at the Essener Tonkunstlerfest, Allegemaine Deutsche Musicverein with Josef Loritz (baritone) and George Witte as the conductor. On 23 June 1910 Delius, then undergoing treatment in Mammern, had sent the proof sheets of *Sea Drift* to Jelka for correction and asked her to then send them on to Harmonie, since the week before Schuricht had been pressing him for a copy of the corrected score. A German typescript in the Delius Trust Archive states that Delius and his wife Jelka travelled especially from Grez to Frankfurt on 4 November in order to go on to hear that performance in Wiesbaden on the 7th. Schuricht was subsequently destined to become the leading interpreter of Delius in Germany. (See R. Threlfall: *A Catalogue of the Compositions of Frederick Delius* pp 60-1 and L. Carley: *Delius: A Life In Letters 1909-1934* pp 38 and 64)

3: This performance was actually the fourth and not the second as claimed in the 'inta' glio' C.D. sleeve notes. The first performance of *Requiem* had been given by Amy Evans and Norman Williams with the Philharmonic Choir and the Royal Philharmonic Society Orchestra conducted by Albert Coates in the Queen's Hall in London on 23 March 1922, the second in Frankfurt on 1 May 1922 conducted by Oscar von Pander (at which Delius was present) and the third in Carnegie Hall in New York on 6 November 1950 with Inez Manier and Paul Ukena and the orchestra of the National Orchestra Association conducted by William Johnson. (See R. Threlfall: *Frederick Delius - A Supplementary Catalogue* pp 41 and L. Carley: *Delius: A Life In Letters 1909-1934* p 250.)

4: That performance took place in the Victoria Hall, Hanley on 14 March 1982 as the final concert of the Fourth Delius Festival organised by the University of Keele, with Wendy Eathorne (soprano), Helen Watts (contralto), Kenneth Bowen (tenor), the Ceramic City Choir with the Keele University Choral Society and the BBC Northern Symphony Orchestra conducted by Delius Society member Philip Jones.

Brian Radford

DELIUS SOCIETY (WEST OF ENGLAND) BRANCH MEETING

20 March 2004, Taunton
'Delius – a young person's view', presented by James Baker and Joanna O'Connor

When, in a previous *DSJ*, I saw the words 'a young person's view' describing a presentation at a Delius Society meeting, I said to Ron, "Why don't we book these two for the West of England Branch? They might attract some younger members"; and Ron agreed. Well, we're not meant to be a club for the over-sixties, are we? Unfortunately, things didn't turn out quite as planned. The mother of all March winds was blowing as nine 'old faithfuls' gathered in the Archbishop Cranmer School, Taunton to see James and Joanna strutting their Delian stuff. Considering that they had come all the way from Essex to entertain us, this could fairly be described as a poor turnout. When I suggested to James, in the interval, that perhaps an appreciative audience was better than a large one, he gave a polite but non-committal sort of laugh.

In the first half, James told us how he was in the habit of playing music as an atmospheric accompaniment to the book he was reading. The search for appropriate musical compositions to enhance his various literary odysseys led him to Mahler, Sibelius and, in due course, Delius – which, of course, is when he saw the light. His eagerness to share with us the mounting enthusiasm with which he discovered one Delius work after another, involved playing more short and varied extracts from the Delius canon than I can ever remember listening to in a single meeting! James has travelled in Norway and, for him, the 'Norwegian' Delius is the essential one.

The description in the handout ('love scenes from Delius's works') was a bit misleading, as what we got in the second half was actually a sequence of poetry and prose, not all of it ('Jane Eyre', for example) having any connection with Delius, interspersed or accompanied by the master's music. Not that that really mattered: it all hung together very nicely. There was a moment of pure serendipity towards the end: James had just finished reading those heartbreaking lines, 'We two together no more, no more' and, before Ron pushed the button for the last bars of *Sea Drift*, there was a pause – and we could hear the desolate crying of the wind outside the school. Perfect.

It must be said that James came over as a more assured actor than presenter; his very enthusiasm for his subject meant he often seemed almost stuck for a superlative. Well, we can forgive him for that, can't we? As for Joanna, well, I think I'm in love with her. But don't tell James.

I'm sure there are many potential Delians out there who have just not been exposed to his music. It is to be hoped that, in taking their show around the country, James and Joanna will make new converts to the music of Delius.

Tony Watts

DELIUS SOCIETY MEETING

20 April 2004, New Cavendish Club, London

Some less appreciated aspects of Delius – A talk by Tony Summers

After an introduction by the chairman Roger Buckley, Tony told the meeting that the idea for his talk germinated during a rehearsal of a local amateur orchestra. During a coffee break someone mentioned the name of Delius and a lady chimed in with "Cow pat music". Very much to Tony's consternation – and before he could mount a defence – the subject was quickly changed, clearly indicating that this was a majority opinion. Sadly, Tony had also found this to be an opinion voiced in encounters with others – that Delius was a minor English composer of limited range who conceived peaceful pastoral miniatures, nostalgic, misty dreams lacking any discernable shape and structure. That he was indeed, as Bernard Levin described, the musical image of blancmange.

It was these views that Tony wished to challenge in his talk. Whilst agreeing that some of Delius's finest music indeed evokes moods of nature and the transience of things, it is clear that the attention paid to the poetic qualities of the music has obscured his other achievements. These ideas have given a restricted impression of the music's emotional range and Delius's ability as a composer. Within the talk Tony wanted to look into aspects of Delius's compositions for which he does not usually receive credit, yet delivers very well; qualities which are far removed from blancmanges, cow pats and other soft objects!

Firstly Tony examined the portrayal of human emotion. He expressed the belief that Delius's works actually embraced the whole range of human emotion especially in his larger forms such as the operas. Delius was uncomfortable depicting violence and aggression and avoided this as much as possible, making exceptions only when forced to by plots. Admittedly, these are not his finest moments, however it would be very wrong to say that his music merely occupied some narrow pastoral range. His shifting high chromatic harmonies were well suited to portraying emotionally charged states, something people don't normally associate with him.

To support his observations and persuade those still of the cow pat view, Tony played two excerpts from Delius's last opera *Fennimore and Gerda*, throughout which

runs – most particularly during the earlier parts – a brooding tension that erupts into unusually intense states of emotion. The first example was from the fourth picture where Erik shares with Niels his views on death and bemoans his failed life; a moment unique to Delius's output. The second example was the explosive love duet of the seventh picture that Tony described as the most concentrated and intense of all Delius's love duets.

The talk moved next to the subject of form and structure. Many people say that Delius's music is merely rhapsodic meanderings; however Tony expressed the belief that Delius wrote in forms and structures that others simply did not understand, failing to appreciate how original his approach was. Delius relied upon his innate sense of flow and did not fall back on conventional forms, composing in a way others would have considered impossible. In spite of avoiding pre-existing formal techniques he made extensive use of variations in a highly original way. Tony expressed the belief that Delius virtually invented harmonic variations on a theme, something rarely done before. Such harmonic and instrumental variations on a theme became a mainstay of his compositional technique. Tony went on to play the third movement of the *North Country Sketches* 'Dance' as an example of perfect structural mastery. He then referred to Delius's ability to build up tension in the music and for it then to take off, playing *In a Summer Garden*, for the most part a tranquil piece yet with the sudden build up and drive towards the climax of this work, a really exciting phase especially contrasted to the gentle content of most of the music. This climax was achieved, extraordinarily, largely through harmony. A similar extract was played from the second *Dance Rhapsody.*

This led onto the fact that Delius composed many works making use of Dance Rhythms and that he was particularly fond of triple time. In fact many of Delius's works have the word 'Dance' in the title, perhaps as many or more than those with the word 'Song'. Therefore Delius was a 'Song and Dance' composer! However he never wrote a ballet score and Tony considered it an unimaginative oversight of choreographers that his music hasn't been more frequently utilised. The Second Dance Song from *A Mass of Life* was played as one of Tony's favourite examples. An extraordinarily exciting dance where Zarathustra comes across girls dancing in a meadow and persuades them to continue to dance for him. Tony believed that this was perhaps the most virtuosic orchestral writing that he had heard from the composer and Havergal Brian once stated in an essay that this dance had no rival in Delius's music. Tony said that he had never heard anyone do justice to this extraordinary score.

After a tea and coffee break, Tony played a series of short extracts explaining afterwards that these were all examples of Delius depicting popular music, whether it was an American Marching Band from *Appalachia* or the dance music of Negro Slaves in *Florida,* the Arabian Dance in *Hassan* or the Café and Cabaret music of

Paris. This illustrated Delius's interest in crowd music and gave the lie to the idea that he was merely a solitary character who loathed the masses. This type of music featured particularly in his earlier works. Through *Hassan* it is proved that Delius could write a competent piece of theatre music, however it is known that Percy Grainger assisted him as he was working to a deadline.

To conclude his talk, Tony discussed and then played his favourite example of popular/crowd scene music, the progressive music of the Fairground scene in *A Village Romeo and Juliet* which looked forward to Stravinsky's *Petrushka*. He described this as an amazing, brilliant, lively and exciting piece, full of energy and bustle, depicting crowds of people and lots of noise, containing the sounds of brass bands playing circus music; similar sounds to yodelling, blow suck cords on the Harmonica and even a possible reference to an American Civil War march! This excerpt ran into the interlude from *The Walk to the Paradise Garden*, an effortless melting of the fairground scene into this music which is normally played in concert as the edited Thomas Beecham version, but was heard here in its full glory in the Charles Mackerras recording. This concluded a fascinating and persuasive talk that was much appreciated by the members in attendance.

James Baker

DELIUS SOCIETY (WEST OF ENGLAND BRANCH) MEETING

15 May 2004 – A Programme of Live Music at Weycroft Hall, near Axminster

The second Delius Society meeting to be held at Weycroft Hall was, for me at least, quite a memorable event. Weycroft Hall is an impressive Tudor building (parts of it even older) and we were assembled beneath the vaulted ceiling of the Baronial Hall to hear a concert of live music by 'Delius and his friends'. The 'friends' were, Grieg and Warlock certainly; but the other three – Vaughan Williams, Gerald Finzi and Duke Ellington – were not personally acquainted with Delius, as far as I know, so their relationship with our man was more one of common nationality or musical affinity.

There were about fifteen of us present and our little group was dwarfed by the vast sombre tapestries, on classical and biblical themes, that adorned the high walls. There was also a musicians' gallery where I suppose, strictly speaking, our players should have been situated – but apparently no one offered to carry Liz Hayley's Steinway up the steps.

Elizabeth Hayley is Weycroft Hall's musical director. On this occasion, she

acted both as soloist and accompanist to all the others – an impressive *tour de force*. She began with two Delius piano pieces, *Mazurka* and *Waltz for a Little Girl* and followed with Grieg's *Papillon*. Later she gave us the second movement (Andante) of Grieg's Piano Sonata in E minor (Opus 7) and, in the second half, a piano transcription of *La Calinda*, in which she captured all the melodic grace and romantic charm which make it a gem amongst Delian miniatures. Liz concluded her solo contribution with two more of Delius's Five Piano Pieces – *Waltz* and the surreally-entitled *Lullaby for a Modern Baby*.

It is doubtful whether the mellow tones of the piccolo (or micro) bass have resounded in many baronial halls of the land. This instrument was made by Ron Prentice for his son when he was eight years old and is now played in a cellistic fashion by Ron himself. With Liz's support, Ron treated us to arrangements of the Serenade from *Hassan* and the *Caprice* (from *Caprice* and *Elegy* for cello). Other pieces given the piccolo bass treatment were Vaughan Williams's Study No. 3 from the *English Folk Song Suite* and Grieg's *Albumblatt.*

Our singers were Tina Harrison, soprano, and Tony Lister, baritone. Tina sang two Delius songs, 'Homeward Way' and 'Cradle Song'. Tony sang the only Delius song he knew (I witnessed his confession), 'Twilight Fancies'; but he also gave us a vigorous rendition of 'The Vagabond' from Vaughan Williams's *Songs of Travel* and, in the second half, Finzi's 'Fear no more the Heat of the Sun', from 'Let us Garlands Bring', and Warlock's 'Yarmouth Fair' (sometimes known as 'Captain Stratton's Fancy') This last song was, for me, one of the highlights of the afternoon. I normally prefer my music to inhabit the wistful Delian end of the emotional spectrum, but I couldn't fail to enjoy this: he sang with such full-blooded, roguish

West of England Branch members 'basking' in the May sunshine at Weycroft Hall

exuberance that singer and song seemed made for each other.

It is tempting to imagine that Duke Ellington wrote 'I'm Beginning to See the Light' when he discovered Delius's music. He probably didn't, but nevertheless is said to have been drawn to the music of Delius as to that of no other classical composer (according to Ron, Delius is said to have liked the Duke too.) The above composition, together with 'Sophisticated Lady', formed a pair of Ellington compositions included in the programme. They both featured Liz on piano and Ron on bass. If it seems odd to include jazz in a recital like this, it shouldn't: jazz composers have arguably made more imaginative use of Delian harmonies than post-Delian classical composers.

During the break, we went out on the lawn to bask in the May sunshine. Someone suggested that it would be nice to hold the concert outdoors, but the musicians thought that was not a good idea, as 'the sound just disappears'. So we sat for a whole half-hour before we went back inside, serenaded by the birds in the majestic trees that surround Weycroft Hall. How the birds manage so delightfully to overcome the outdoor acoustics problem is, of course, a closely guarded avian secret – they weren't letting on.

Whoops! I almost forgot to mention the most important contributor – Ron's Brenda, who managed the refreshments with her usual good-humoured efficiency.

Tony Watts

DELIUS SOCIETY (MIDLANDS BRANCH) MEETING

Saturday 19 June 2004, Weston Underwood, Derby

Recital by Bobby Chen

In recent years the Midlands Branch has held a performance event around midsummer. This year's gala evening formed a part of its 40th anniversary celebration. Over this entire time chairman Richard Kitching has guided the group with energy and inspiration, and he is still supported by a handful of the original 1964 membership.

This year the weather was not quite as kind as usual: there was rain about and a sharp cold breeze limited use of the garden to a few minutes for photographs, but in every other respect the evening was a great success.

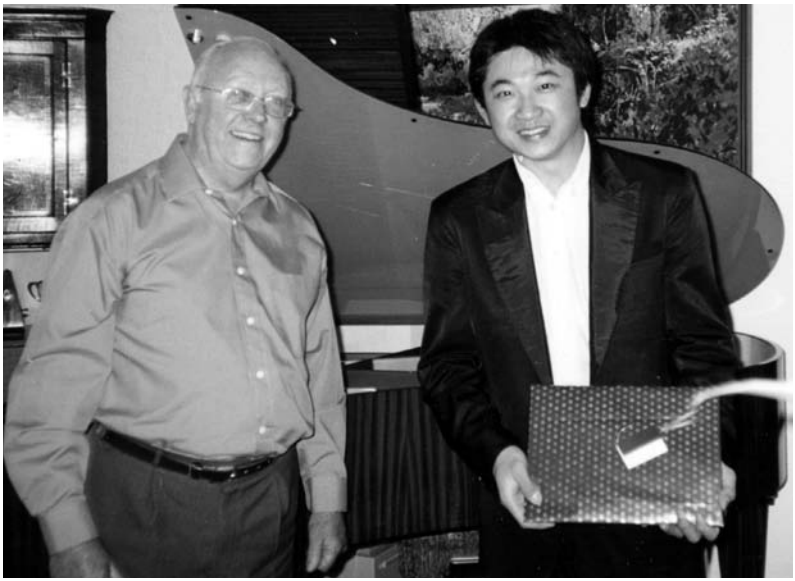
Recitalist Bobby Chen (piano) had learned Delius's Three Preludes and Toccata especially for the occasion, a generous compliment. The combination of a rugged technique with delicate sonorous control immediately impressed. In the pieces

that followed, a feeling for water was manifest in an unhurried, reflective reading of Ravel's *Jeux d'Eau* and in Debussy's *Cathedrale Engloutie*.

Prokofiev's Fourth Sonata ended the first half of the programme; the interwoven figures of the first movement well worked and the showy dynamics of the finale leaving everyone a little breathless. But, after interval revivers, Bobby Chen's carefully crafted Brahms, (*Intermezzi* Op.117), displayed a restrained and limpid elegance which delighted his audience, and particularly those who may have known and loved these pieces since schooldays.

A stunning performance of Chopin's third sonata still scarcely prepared us for a gigantic encore in the form of Liszt's second *Ballade*, a feast indeed. This rarely heard piece, also founded in B-minor, was once described by Sacheverell Sitwell as depicting 'grand happenings on an epic scale'. 'Heroic' might have been a more appropriate epithet, however, as it is believed that Liszt had in mind the tragic story of Hero and Leander, and indeed the work is dramatically pictorial of the Hellespont's turbulent waters. It provided a virtuoso finish to an exciting programme.

E E Rowe



Richard Kitching and Bobby Chen

photograph: Jo Radford

Delius and the Blind.

Of late years, Mr. Frederick Delius has been greatly handicapped by loss of sight. His interest, therefore, was immediately aroused when he heard of the work which the National Institute for the Blind has conducted during the past sixty years in aid of the blind community.

A REMARKABLE FACT.

One fact specially impressed him. Over 4,000 musical works of all types—including some of his own compositions—are available in Braille to blind musicians, music teachers and students.

A MOST GRACIOUS ACT.

His appreciation of this Branch of the Institute's work has been most graciously expressed. The *Air and Dance* which is being performed for the first time in public at the second concert of the Delius Festival, on October 16th, has been dedicated by the composer to the Institute —thereby setting a seal on its work which will make its own appeal to every musician,

AND AN APPEAL TO YOU

Every volume or piece of Braille music published is supplied to the blind throughout the Empire at one quarter of the actual cost of production, and the publication of Braille music is but one of the Institute's many activities. Generous and continuous financial support is, therefore, needed, and it is hoped that all musicians and lovers of music will, as a thanksgiving for their own sight, send a donation to the

National Institute for the Blind

(Registered under the Blind Persons Act, 1920)

224-6-8, Great Portland Street, London, W.1

This announcement is made by the courtesy of Sir Thomas Beecham

From the 1929 Delius Festival programme

AGM AND SOCIAL GATHERING, 7-8 AUGUST 2004

In this the 70th anniversary of the death of Delius, the AGM weekend was held in Gloucester to coincide with the opening of the Three Choirs Festival. Apart from the interest of the Society activities, two Festival concerts featured works by Delius – the Five Songs from the Norwegian and the Violin Concerto.

The weekend was centred in the familiar venue of the Hatherley Manor Hotel which had proved to be so popular on previous occasions. Members and guests assembled for the informal buffet lunch on Saturday. Word had got around that Jean Merle d'Aubigné of Grez-sur-Loing, who lives in Delius's house, had accepted an invitation for the weekend, and both he and his partner Maryline Delevaux duly arrived for lunch. After lunch we relaxed in the gardens trying to cool off a little before the meeting. The social side of our annual gatherings are always a great pleasure with lots to talk about with friends old and new.

During the business-like AGM which followed, Michael Green was nominated as Vice Chairman and Brian Radford stepped down from his 19 years as Programme Secretary, leaving his successor James Baker at the helm. Other notable events in the AGM were announcements that the 1st Delius Prize Competition sponsored by the Society would be held in the autumn term of this year at the Royal Academy of Music, and a celebration of Richard Kitching's 40 years as Chairman of the Midlands Branch would be held in Derby in October. Roy Price thanked the committee on behalf of the Society members for their very hard work during the year. The meeting was duly closed and we adjourned for refreshments before boarding the coach for Gloucester.

Agnes Weiske, Stewart Winstanley and Jean Merle d'Aubigne

photograph: Brian Radford

Before the 'Five Songs from the Norwegian' concert there was ample time for refreshments and browsing in the local CD shop. CD 'widows' were a frequent sight outside this shop during the weekend as their men hunted for bargains. Spies in the 'Comfy Pew' restaurant near the cathedral spotted some members disappearing into the town after the

Roger Buckley making the presentation to Brian Radford
photograph: Jo Radford

'Five Songs' thus missing the Brahms *Requiem*. After a very enjoyable evening we returned to the hotel to continue our conversations over drinks into the night.

On Sunday after breakfast we were treated to a detailed talk on 'The History of the Rosen Family' by Agnes Weiske. This proved to be something of a revelation to those of us who did not know much about Jelka Delius's family connections. She came from a long line of German Jewish Lutheran ministers, doctors, lawyers, diplomats and musicians. On her mother's side she was linked to the Moscheles family in that the famous pianist, composer and conductor Ignaz Moscheles was her grandfather.

After pre-dinner drinks 68 members and guests assembled for the formal lunch in the Hatherley Suite. During the proceedings our Chairman Roger Buckley welcomed our special guest Jean Merle d'Aubigné and his companion Maryline Delevaux. Jean was presented with a gift after which he gave a little speech expressing his heartfelt thanks to the Society. A presentation was made to Brian Radford in recognition of the great contribution he had made to the Society during his years as Programme Secretary. Flowers were presented to Jo Radford for her staunch support for Brian, and to Agnes Weiske. A little presentation was also made to our Chairman by the Society in recognition of his recent marriage to Lesley. After our toast to the 'immortal memory of Frederick Delius' we completed what was considered a splendid lunch by all of us.

After lunch we were shown three video recordings. The most significant of these was the Yorkshire Television documentary 'Songs of Farewell' the very moving account of Eric Fenby's return to Grez-sur-Loing. Surprisingly Jean Merle d'Aubigné had never seen this production but remembered it in the making. We adjourned for tea before boarding our coach for Gloucester for the highlight of the weekend, to hear Tasmin Little play the Violin Concerto in the cathedral. After a delightful evening we were returned by coach to the hotel to a late night buffet. The weekend had been a great success due to the very considerable efforts of our Honorary Secretary Ann Dixon.

Ray Osborne

Portrait of Jelka Rosen by Louis Ramon Garrido – Paris 1893

(Owned by Agnes Weiske)

'An Audience with Frederick Delius', hosted by Roderick Swanston (Professor of Historical and Interdisciplinary Studies)
A Royal College of Music Chamber Concert
Concert Hall, Royal College of Music, 7 May 2004

Last March, Luke Whitlock (a self-confessed 'ardent fan of the music of Frederick Delius') contacted the Committee to advise that, as Chamber Concerts Co-ordinator of the Royal College of Music, he had programmed an evening of music by Delius shortly to be held at the College. A generous handful of Society members turned up for the evening event on 7 May.

Roderick Swanston was the linkman of the evening. He provided the introduction and the commentary; unaided by notes, he spoke authoritatively on Delius's background and musical style.

The programme opened with a performance by Madeleine Mitchell (Professor of Violin at the RCM, and leader of the Bridge Quartet) and Andrew Ball (Head of Keyboard at the RCM) of the spectacular 1892 Violin Sonata in B major. Those familiar with the pioneering 1975 recording by David Stone and Robert Threlfall, and what might be termed the definitive recording subsequently made by Tasmin Little and Piers Lane in 1997, were soon aware that no major new insights were on offer. Much more thrilling was the sequence that followed, in which the soprano Christine Marøy, accompanied by Peter Møllerhøj, performed seven of Delius's twelve Norwegian songs from the two published sets.

After the interval the Bridge Quartet played repertoire that is now in their blood: the fragments that survive from the 1888 String Quartet and the 'Late Swallows' movement of the String Quartet of 1916. What followed was possibly the most memorable item of the evening: a splendid performance of the Cello Sonata given by Simon Wallfisch (Raphael's son) accompanied by Rhodri Clarke. Easy mastery of their instruments, plus instinctive involvement in the organic structure of the piece, gave this duo the means to beguile their audience. The evening concluded with a performance of the two songs *To be sung of a summer night on the water* by a choir of sixteen students of the College conducted by Sofi Jeannin-Foissard, with Sean Clayton as the tenor soloist.

We can only admire the enterprise that produced this exceptional evening of music-making. The future of Delius's music, which must be one of the Society's main preoccupations, at such times seems secure.

Roger Buckley

THE DELIUS SOCIETY WEEKEND AT HATHERLEY MANOR
THE TWO 'THREE CHOIRS' CONCERTS

As part of the events included in the Society AGM and Weekend a coach load of members attended two of the concerts in Gloucester cathedral.

On the Saturday evening the concert was conducted by Andrew Nethsingha, the new Director of Music at Gloucester Cathedral in his role as Artistic Director of the Three Choirs Festival and Musical Director of Gloucester Choral Society.

In commemoration of his untimely death in December last, the concert opened with *Festival Te Deum* written in 1960 by John Saunders, the former Director of Music at the Cathedral, for the Cheltenham Bach Choir. The forces of the Festival Chorus and the Cathedral Choristers combined well with the Philharmonia Orchestra in this attractive work with its two main ideas – an incisive arpeggio figure from the brass to the words 'We praise Thee' and 'The glorious company' – a folk tune heard from both choirs and on the orchestra. Saunders' work is perhaps not widely known, but this was both a pleasing and fitting opening work and deserves to be heard more often.

The remainder of the first half was taken up by the first public performance of Bo Holten's orchestral setting of Delius's 'Five Songs From the Norwegian' dating from 1888 and dedicated to Nina Grieg when published in 1890. Having set about restoring the original Norwegian texts. Bo, who is a valued member of the society, orchestrated all five and they were recorded in Aarhus in May, 2001 and subsequently released on CD by Danacord in 2002.

Originally it was hoped that Ruth Holton would be the singer and that the songs would be sung in those Norwegian texts. In the event she was unavailable and Alwyn Mellor (soprano) took her place, and we instead heard the songs sung in German, which was a great pity. The soloist had a strong voice that perhaps made for a less than sensitive interpretation in some of the items, and one felt that there were intonation problems with the song 'Longing,' possibly aggravated by having to use the German text. Also by then the pace had unexpectedly slackened and lacked the impetus one felt was needed. However it was good to hear them live, and Bo is to be congratulated for bringing them forward for performance in this orchestral form in which he has faithfully tried to 'update' the songs in the way he thought that the Delius might have done as a more mature composer.

The whole of the second half was taken up with a performance of Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem* Opus 45 with soloists Alwyn Mellor (soprano) and Neal Davies (bass). This work, which offered full scope for the combined forces assembled to show their abilities, was written soon after the death of Brahms' mother and he himself stated it could equally well have been called the 'Human Requiem' since it omits many of the conventional passages asserting the Christian faith. It was an

unusual choice for the opening orchestral concert, and was presumably made as part of the conscious decision by the new Artistic Director who had wisely chosen not to repeat the highly successful 2001 decision to present an all-British music repertoire, as an earlier *The Three Choirs Newsletter* had made clear.

All members had very much looked forward to the Sunday evening orchestral concert at which they were to hear Tasmin Little play the Delius Violin Concerto. The concert opened with *Choral* by Oliver Knussen which was inspired by a vision in which he saw 'several funeral processions converging onto a point in the distance.' The work starts with three stark and discordant progressions, with angular shafts of discordant interjections by the brass sections, and moves to a point where "four chords culminate in one mass-dissonance," tailing off in a slow and dissonant progression at the end. Greeted by polite applause, one wonders why this work was considered to be a suitable prelude to the two masterpieces of English music that followed.

Fortunately we had Tasmin to lift our spirits with a wonderful interpretation of the Delius played on the 'Regent' Stradivarius which she had chosen to use as being the most suitable for the special acoustic ambience of Gloucester Cathedral. Her skilled shaping of the work and her ability to catch those moments that give the work its special appeal to those of us who love the work, was further enriched by her masterly interpretative technique which made it a performance to remember and cherish. As Tasmin herself has written 'the secret of a successful performance (of the work) lies in making the music a reaction to the images evoked', and that she achieved quite brilliantly. She effortlessly coped with the difficulties of the 'Scherzo' section, and the whole work flowed seamlessly towards its conclusion, revealing the true innermost feelings of Delius that lie behind the music. Her rapport with both conductor Richard Hickox and the Philharmonia Orchestra itself was evident throughout, and she rightly returned to the platform three times to further acknowledge the applause that was so richly deserved.

The second half of the programme was a complete performance of the original 1913 version of Vaughan Williams' *A London Symphony*, but this was preceded by Stephen Connock, MBE presenting Richard Hickox, CBE with the first International Medal of Honour of The RVW Society for his remarkable contribution to the music of Vaughan Williams – a very well deserved award indeed, and for which he was warmly applauded.

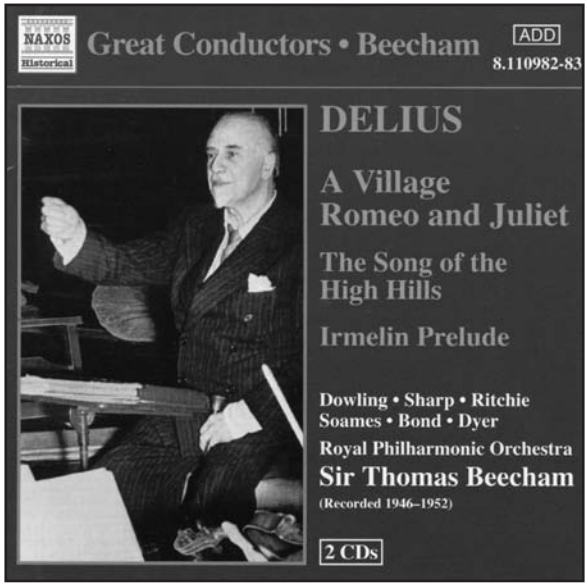
The original version of *A London Symphony* was first heard in the Queen's Hall in London on 27 March 1914 in a performance by the Queen's Hall Orchestra conducted by Geoffrey Toye, and it was later recorded on a set of 78 rpm records with Dan Godfrey conducting the London Symphony Orchestra. Vaughan Williams may well have been influenced by some of George Butterworth's comments on the work in the RCM Magazine in 1914 and in particular that about the last long

'Finale' movement giving "a feeling that the composer is straining himself too hard." He subsequently revised it three times and the well known published version, 20 minutes shorter, was published in the mid 1930s.

Richard Hickox has already made a modern recording of the original version, for which he received the Gramophone Record of the Year Award in 2001, but we were uniquely privileged to hear a special live performance of it under his baton. It was beautifully shaped, the orchestra producing all those fine elements of tonal colour so essential in such a work which began so evocatively with the slow introduction depicting the city asleep – perhaps not so dissimilar in some ways to the opening of Delius's *Paris – The Song of a Great City* until the point at which the harp 'chimes' the strike of the hour from Big Ben at Westminster. The magical impressionistic evocation of 'Bloomsbury Square on a November afternoon' came over brilliantly in the throbbing of muted strings as the cor anglais intoned its plaintive melody, moving on into 'The Cries of London' section with its splendid climax followed by folk-song like threads of melody – all so clearly heard. The third 'allegro vivace scherzo' movement depicts alike the catchy tunes such as might be heard on an accordion, mixed with evocative eerie passages and ending in a soulful final section which was so well evoked by the sheen of the orchestra under Hickox's sensitive control. The fourth and longest movement, and the one most altered, evokes London in various moods with its solemn march, its agitated passages, its lovely 'andantino' section, so beautifully played, and the three-quarter hour Westminster chimes which heralds the peaceful closing section. It was delight to hear the work in its original form performed live and the fulsome applause at the end showed how much it had been appreciated.

Brian Radford

FREDERICK DELIUS: *The Song of the High Hills*. Freda Hart, soprano; Leslie Jones, tenor; Luton Choral Society. Recorded 22 November 1946. *Irmelin Prelude*. Recorded 21 December 1946. *Hassan: Intermezzo and Serenade*. Recorded 29 October 1952. *A Village Romeo and Juliet*. Dennis Dowling, Frederick Sharp, Margaret Ritchie, René Soames, Dorothy Bond, Lorely Dyer, Gordon Clinton, chorus. Recorded May and July 1948. *Koanga: Final Scene*. Chorus. Recorded 26 January 1951. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. Naxos 8.110982-83.



Naxos has already given us three CDs of the music of Delius in its 'Great Conductors: Beecham' series (8.110904 – 8.110906, see *Journal* 128 pp.68-9). They were almost exclusively reissues of the recordings that made up the three Delius Society volumes of 78s dating from 1934-1938 with Sir Thomas Beecham conducting the London Philharmonic Orchestra. The recordings in this new two-CD set date from 1946-1952, with Beecham conducting his recently-formed Royal Philharmonic Orchestra that made its first appearance at Croydon on 15 September 1946 and its London début the following month in the first of the Delius Festival concerts that included the first work on this set, *The Song of the High Hills*.* Beecham recorded a number of works from the Festival while they were fresh in the orchestra's repertoire, and *The Song of the High Hills* was committed to disc the day after the Festival's penultimate concert, with the same performers.

These are generally good transfers, with this recording of *The Song of the High Hills* comparing quite favourably with its only other issue on CD (EMI CDM 7 64054-2, not currently available). The EMI is the cleaner, with surface noise generally less in evidence, although as a result of some filtering the strings there can occasionally sound slightly 'pinched'. In neither version are the timpani

particularly clear, but the surprise in the Naxos set (from figure 23 onwards) is the bass drum which has a tremendous presence and a reverberation totally lacking on EMI. The one slight disappointment in this Naxos re-issue is the very short break (a side-join) at that great moment when the chorus enters *ppp*; the music should be continuous as it is in the EMI version. The Naxos copy of that particular side also sounds slightly worn so that the choral sound in this section is not quite as clear as on EMI. (I wonder how many members who, like myself, came to this work through the set of three 78s endlessly replayed that choral side, its climax used to such telling and memorable effect in Ken Russell's BBC film *Song of Summer*.)

The main interest here, of course, is Beecham's 1948 recording of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* that first appeared in two volumes comprising altogether 24 78 rpm sides under the title of 'The Delius Fellowship'. As EMI's CD transfer (CMS 7 64386-2, coupled with Gordon Clinton's *Sea Drift*) is also currently unavailable, this Naxos set is doubly welcome. Again, the EMI version is marginally cleaner with little noticeable surface noise, but the ear quickly adjusts and at the Naxos super-bargain price of under £5 a disc one can hardly quibble. If ever an example were needed to disprove the notion that conductors sped up their performances to fit the side restriction of the 78 disc, here is one. Time and again Beecham allows the music to breathe, with some heart-breaking moments that make it hard to believe that the work was recorded in four-minute sections. Anyone who does not already have the Beecham version should acquire this set unhesitatingly. It provides a deeply moving experience.

One might add that no serious Delian should also be without the 'live' Beecham *A Village Romeo and Juliet* issued on SOMM-BEECHAM 12-2 (see *Journal* 131 pp.60-2), being the first of the two Third Programme performances he gave in April 1948, a month before the commercial recording was made with similar (but not identical) soloists. With his two broadcast performances of Strauss's *Elektra* the previous October, there was a strong suspicion at the BBC, especially from Stanford Robinson who was in charge of Third Programme opera, that Beecham was using extra rehearsals for the benefit of his subsequent gramophone recording. Beecham of course denied this by letter, grandly concluding: 'I have no other choice before me but to regard this allegation as a scandalous and unwarrantable libel upon my honesty, and I must insist before I have any further dealings of any kind with the British Broadcasting Corporation that it be withdrawn in the most unambiguous way by that official of the corporation who has the requisite authority and standing to do so.' He received his apology with Robinson in vain urging his superiors not to give Beecham any further opera broadcasts. One would hardly dare to suggest that Beecham was placating an infuriated Stanford Robinson by casting his wife Lorely Dyer as Vreli in the commercial recording in place of Vera Terry!

The remaining items in this Naxos set are all available elsewhere. The *Hassan*

Intermezzo and Serenade and the *Irmelin* Prelude are included in Dutton CDLX7028 'Beecham conducts Delius – The RPO Legacy Volume 2', while the *Koanga* Closing Scene is on Sony SMKB7966 (with *Eventyr*, *An Arabesque* and *Hassan* incidental music) where the recording date is erroneously given as 29 May 1956. (The Naxos cover gives the wrong year for the *Irmelin* Prelude recording, although it is listed correctly in the accompanying booklet.)

With a total playing time of about 144 minutes, this is a bargain indeed, and it is good to think of the wide circulation these recordings will receive through Naxos's worldwide outlets.

Stephen Lloyd

* As a matter of interest, the British Library Sound Archive holds off-air recordings, made and donated by an enthusiast, of that Delius Festival performance of *The Song of the High Hills*, together with a Prom performance of the same work under Boult in July that same year, and parts of an even earlier Beecham performance from March 1936. All three recordings apparently suffer from a degree of "wow" (pitch fluctuation) and small breaks at the side changes. They can be heard by special appointment: see the British Library website for further details.

DELIUS
By Bernard van Dieren

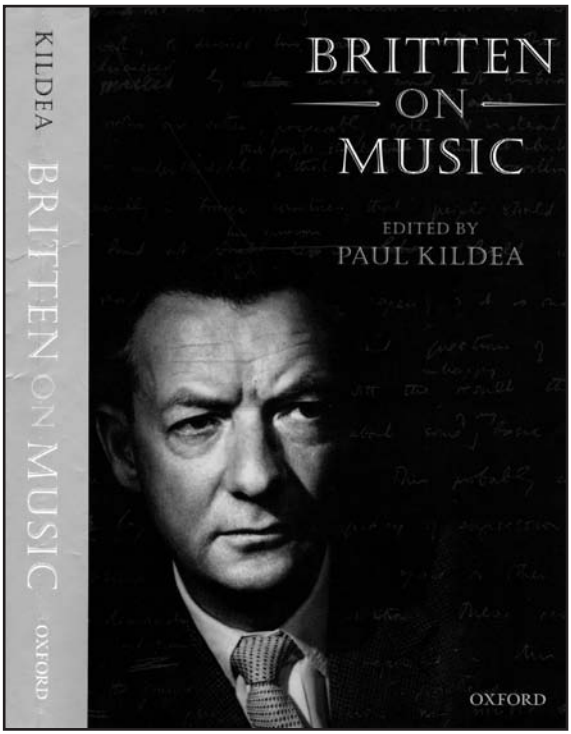
After Delius's long martyrdom, endured with the patience of a stoic, it might seem as if his death should bring relief to the tormented hearts of his nearest friends. Yet everyone felt as if after this long preparation the anguish of final parting was deeper than it would have been under different circumstances. His protracted suffering and his heroic application to his art right through to the end endeared him even further to us than his work had already done. Delius had not only the admiration but the love of everyone who knew his music. Although he had encountered the hostility which every artist knows when his ideals differ from those generally accepted, he never roused any bitter antagonisms. His sincerity and his artistic integrity were patent to friend and foe, and all through his life he had the respect of those who felt no sympathy for his work. . . .

Monthly Musical Record, Vol LXIV, No 758, p 121, July-August 1934

BOOK REVIEW

Britten On Music, Edited By Paul Kildea.

ISBN 0-19-816714-8, OUP 2003



At first glance this book may not appear of great interest to lovers of Delius's music, or any person who has an interest in English music before the careers of Walton, Tippet and Britten. However, on closer inspection there are some fascinating topics in Mr. Kildea's collection of interviews, articles, speeches, and musical descriptions, concerning music which has been penned by Britten between 1936 and 1976. As men and musicians, Delius and Britten are of course vastly different. Briten the practical musician – always ready to be useful to his fellow musicians and listeners, either writing film music as a young man, music for the theatre or indeed church music. Delius on the other hand is certainly not interested in producing music to order as a matter of choice. He is more of a musical visionary, waiting for the inspiration to take wing.

Delius and Britten do have in common an admiration for folk music in the right circumstances. Whilst Grainger's setting of 'Brigg Fair' inspired Delius, he was not a folk song collector, and did not set songs as frequently as Britten did. Not surprisingly they both admired Percy Grainger, whom Britten met as an old man, and Delius had encouraged when younger. Less well known is the fact that Britten admired E. J. Moeran, whom he met in East Anglia whilst a young man. In a criticism of the *Nocturne* by Moeran, Britten speaks admiringly of the older man's music. He recognises that the *Nocturne* is influenced by the musical thinking of Delius.

Both composers are highly discriminating when evaluating other composers.

Delius famously dismissed many older composers, whilst Britten admired many – but not all - of the great masters. Britten's dislike of Brahms for example, is clear enough from this book, as there is no mention of the German master here. One section of this book deals with Britten's writings on various other composers, from Bach to Verdi. I was surprised to see at least two articles in this book where Britten writes admiringly of Sibelius – not a composer one would automatically expect Britten to admire. Much less surprisingly we see Britten banging the drum here for Mahler, a composer he certainly admired and who exerted a real influence over his music.

Another difference between Delius and Britten would be their attitude to politics and society. Of course in the 1930s Britten was aligned with those artists who were on the 'left'. Britten was close to W H Auden and Christopher Isherwood, and his librettist for *Peter Grimes,* Montague Slater was a left-wing literary figure. In contrast Delius's inspiration was to be found in the writings of Nietzsche.

It would also be true to say that Delius despised the Christianity, which sustained the later part at least of Britten's musical career, as can be seen in his choral music and church parables. How ironic then that two Catholics – one at the end of his life (Eric Fenby) and one at the beginning (Thomas Ward) – helped Delius so much.

There is no mention of Eric Fenby in this book. Since Fenby was the person at Boosey & Hawkes who first recommended publication of Britten's music, this is rather sad. Interestingly, Britten recounts in an article written in 1975 how one of Fenby and Delius's friends, Evelyn Howard Jones arranged for a performance by The Stratton Quartet, of Britten's String Quartet in D, which was composed in 1931. This was particularly helpful as the performance took place at a time when Britten as a young man was very keen to hear how his music sounded. Regarding Delius himself, Britten says in an article entitled 'England And the Folk Art Problem' (1941) that the piece, which brings tears to the eyes of an English expatriate, is *On Hearing The First Cuckoo In Spring*.

It is most interesting to contrast the impact of America on both composers. As we know the music of black Americans greatly impressed Delius in the 1880s. Sixty years later when Britten lived in the USA at the beginning of the Second World War, his feelings were mixed, as can be seen from his views expressed in this book. He was not always impressed by American music, but he did particularly admire Aaron Copland. The life Britten describes having in the US is in marked contrast to Delius's seclusion in his orange grove at Solana Grove. Having persisted with this book, I feel that it does not disappoint, and has much to please all of us who love English music of the 20th Century.

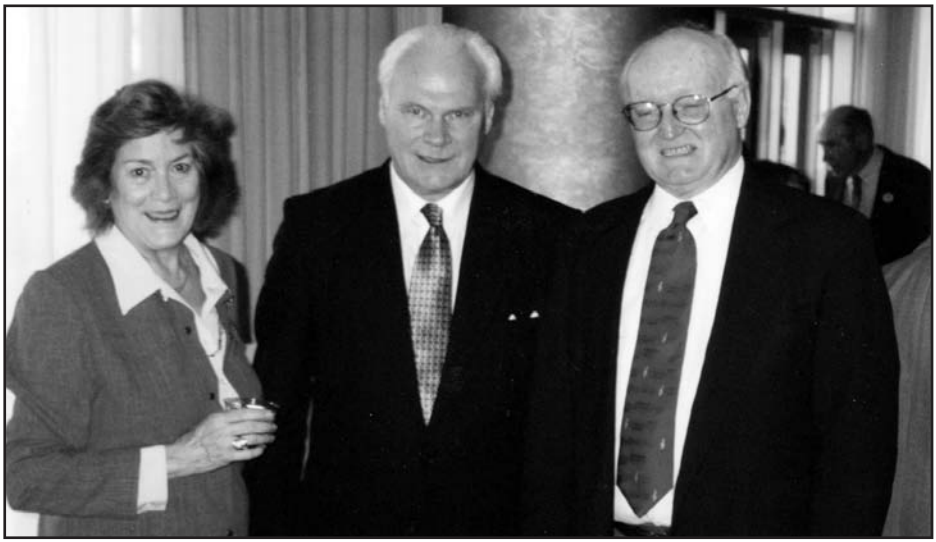
Paul Chennell.

DELIUS ASSOCIATION OF FLORIDA – FESTIVAL 2004

Jacksonville, Florida was a vibrant tourist destination until 1901, when, regrettably, a major conflagration largely razed it to the ground. What rose up to replace it has now become the USA's largest city (by area). It is not the most beautiful place on earth, and probably not the first destination you would consider for a holiday. But each year, since 1961, it has an irresistible attraction – a festival devoted to Delius who, of course, from 1884, lived for a couple of years nearby at Solano Grove, having been sent there by his father to grow oranges.

The programme for this year's festival seemed particularly attractive and full, so I packed my bags and arrived in time for the opening event, a boat trip on the St John's River. It was a spectacular evening, thoughtfully timed to coincide with the kind of brilliant sunset over the water that Delius would have witnessed many times. As the sun went down in a gorgeous display of reds, purples and pinks, the 'Sunset' movement from *Florida* Suite was piped over the PA. Quite magical – and the achievement of a long held ambition by the man who was the backbone of this, and many other, Festivals – Jesse G Wright Jr, the Association's energetic President.

David Lloyd-Jones, who was to conduct the centre-piece concert with the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra, gave a small speech as we enjoyed our on-board cocktails, in which he pointed out that Delius would have been much impressed



Following the Jacksonville Symphony concert conducted by David Lloyd-Jones.
From left: Mrs Lloyd-Jones, David lloyd-Jones and Bill Marsh
Photograph: Bill Marsh

by the sheer scale of the St Johns River, three miles wide at some points, and much bigger than anything he would have seen in Europe. It was indeed 'a mighty, mighty stream'.

The convivial evening brought us back to the sumptuous conference hotel, the Adam's Mark, right on the riverside, from where dolphins could be seen each morning making their stately way through the brackish waters.

On Friday came an extraordinary event - the Friday Musicale. This is quite a "society" occasion – although very welcoming – and a great Jacksonville institution. It even has its own small concert hall, a replacement for one which burned down a few years ago. Unfortunately, fires do seem to be a recurring feature of Jacksonville history.

The Friday Musicale concert we attended was performed by the Solano Singers, directed by Brenda McNeiland, with Rachael Clinton at the piano. Opening with Choral Hymns from the *Rig Veda* by Holst, the rest of the ambitious programme was devoted to Delius. It included 'The Splendour Falls on Castle Walls', 'The Chorus of Young Men and Women' from *Irmelin*, two of the *Songs of Farewell*, selections from *Hassan* and two variations from *Appalachia*.

The performance was, in the main, quite enchanting, but it was clear that this music was not part of the choir's usual repertoire and there were a few tension-inducing moments of uncertainty from some of the younger singers.

If that weren't enough excitement for any Delian, in the afternoon we were invited to a cocktail reception at the Delius House, relocated from Solano Grove to the campus of Jacksonville University. What a thrill not only to stand in the house and see the piano on which Delius reputedly worked, but also to be surrounded by other charming and enthusiastic Delians from all over the USA.

It was a pleasantly warm evening, made even more so when we repaired to the university's Kinne Centre to enjoy the Festival Dinner. (Although I don't know what Delius would have made of the rather ostentatious prayer that preceded the feast, thanking God for our atheistic hero's music!).

Having booked tickets for a concert in the Times Union Centre for the Performing Arts in downtown Jacksonville, we sadly had to forego the after-dinner liqueurs that were served in a candle lit Delius House (and yes, all the jokes about the wooden cottage becoming another destination for the Jacksonville fire department were made, and said catastrophe duly avoided!).

The following lunchtime found us at the Ritz Theatre and LaVilla Museum, where an excellent meal was served. The Ritz has a fascinating history, as does the area of Jacksonville in which it is situated, LaVilla.

LaVilla boasted a rich African-American culture during the 19th century, earning it the nickname 'the Harlem of the South'. In the museum are many exhibits celebrating this unique history of black emancipation. Perhaps the most

extraordinary is a show called 'Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing' which tells the story of James Weldon Johnson and John Rosamond Johnson, who composed many of the popular songs of the day, and who soon found themselves writing Broadway shows. Much more importantly, James was also a courageous statesman and poet, as well as a teacher and writer. His energy and commitment greatly progressed the breaking down of the almost intractable barriers of racial segregation that surrounded so many of his fellow African-Americans.

The brothers' story is told by two full-sized animatronic models that are so life-like and move with such realism that it was difficult to imagine that we weren't sharing the room with the Johnson brothers in person rather than two highly sophisticated robotic models.

Then came a talk by Jeff Driggers, the honorary Life Director of the Delius Association of Florida. When James Weldon Johnson's *Autobiography of an ex-Coloured Man* was translated into German, Frederick Delius wrote the preface for it. Jeff reflected on the potential coincidences which Delius's preface suggests. James Weldon Johnson was born in 1871 and would have been reaching his teens when Delius was also in Jacksonville. Johnson's career as a poet and songwriter in collaboration with his brother began in the same locale which inspired Delius. Jeff said it was possible – although not probable – that the two men had met. At least it can be said that the Jacksonville of those days was indeed an important influence on these two artists of the earliest twentieth century.

Then came another choral concert given by the J W Honeysucker Community Choir and the H Alvin Green Memorial Alumni Chorale, under Patricia Black. This time we were treated to some of the songs that Delius just might have heard as the workers on his orange grove, and on the docks in Jacksonville, went about their business. It was a spirited and joyous rendition by a choir that obviously loved the music.

This was followed by the Fenby Lecture, this year given by Derek Healey, who has undertaken a 20-year research into the influence of late 19th Century African-American music on Delius. Characteristics include the composer's use of various African-American musical devices such as the cakewalk rhythm, blues notes, various types of triplet ornaments, as well as unique melody patterns. Derek accompanied his lecture with musical examples on disc and with the aid of a solo voice. He accepted that much of what he was proposing was speculative, and I have to admit that I found some bits of it more convincing than others.

The following day, Sunday, found us making an early start for the forty-mile journey south from Jacksonville, along the freeway and eventually up a dirt road through dense subtropical vegetation to find Solano Grove in a clearing on the banks of the St Johns River. There stands a splendid monument to Delius.

We enjoyed a delightful picnic by the monument, serenaded by a recording of *Appalachia*, emanating from someone's car stereo. The place may be off the beaten track, but the isolation is not quite as it once was. Nearby neighbours are beginning to encroach.

Some anxiety was expressed about a rumour that Jacksonville University, which owns the grove, is suffering a financial crisis and is considering selling it. No one could confirm the veracity of this rumour, but it seemed to reflect a feeling that the Jacksonville Festival, too, may soon be under threat.

Many of the members of the Delius Association of Florida, who have given the society a great deal of service over the years, are now very elderly. It is unclear whether the organisers of this year's event will want to continue much longer – given the enormous amount of energy and time, not to mention frustration – that must have gone into organising this marvellous celebration.

Whatever its future, the 2004 Festival came to a stunning conclusion with a concert by the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra at the breathtaking Times Union Center for the Performing Arts, Jacoby Hall. This ultra modern and capacious concert hall is a proud achievement for the City, although this concert drew far from a capacity audience.

The programme – conducted by David Lloyd-Jones, who is also a Trustee of the Delius Trust – got off to an exuberant start with Chabrier's *Marche Joyeuse*. Then followed the world premiere performance of 'Two Negro Songs' by Delius, which were only recently discovered. The first, 'I will meet you when the sun goes down'

Keith Wood (left) and Terry Sanderson (right) at the Delius monument at Solano Grove.
Photograph: Bill Marsh

is familiar from the opera *Koanga*. The second, 'Let Us Dance Tonight' features pizzicato strings that brought to mind the 'Plantation Dance' in the third movement of the *Florida* Suite. The songs were beautifully sung by The Edward Waters College Concert Choir. There then followed, appropriately enough, the *Florida* Suite.

After the interval, we were treated to the *American Rhapsody*, which was later extensively revised – along the way losing its allusions to 'Dixie' and 'Yankee Doodle' – to become *Appalachia.* The evening ended with a somewhat muted rendition of the Grieg Piano Concerto, with Scott Watkins as the soloist. It's a pity that the programmers didn't give us the Delius Piano Concerto at this point – that would have been the icing on the cake, but I suppose there had been hopes of attracting a larger audience by plumping for the Grieg warhorse. All that was left now, was the farewell reception, when email addresses were exchanged and reunions promised.

I was mightily impressed by the organisation of this Festival, by the easy-going friendliness of the participants and the true southern hospitality that I have heard so much about, but have now experienced at first hand. My hope is that the enthusiasm of the present incumbents of the Delius Association of Florida can be transmitted to a new generation, who can keep alive the memory of Delius's time in their town.

Terry Sanderson

Reminder !

Copies of Derek Healey's book, *The Influence of African-American Music on the Works of Frederick Delius* (reviewed in *DSJ* 134), may be obtained from the Secretary to the Delius Trust, Marjorie Dickinson, 16 Ogle Street, London, W1W 6JA, at £5.00 inclusive, to cover expenses. Please make cheques payable to The Delius Trust.

THE DELIUS SOCIETY (PHILADELPHIA) BRANCH

Delius/Stainer Concert, 4 April 2004

Conductor Matthew Glandorf takes a bow with tenor soloist Ramone Diggs (left) and baritone soloist Tom Baust (right)

Photograph: Michael Kulas

Palm Sunday afternoon brought a concert of major importance to Philadelphia. The United States premier of John Stainer's *The Crucifixion* in Barry Rose's orchestration was preceded by Delius's *To be sung of a summer night on the water* and the local premier of *Late Swallows* in Eric Fenby's string orchestra version of the third movement from FD's String Quartet. Matthew Glandorf conducted the program in Old St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church where until just recently he has been music director.

The choir consisted of both the church's *Schola Cantorus* and Glandorf's *In Clara Voce* chamber choir. The 30 or so singers sang with perfect intonation and choral refinement. The orchestra drawn from the virtuosi students at The Curtis Institute of Music played magnificently – far better than the usual pick-up orchestra generally expected at programs like this. Another plus was that Barry Rose himself came from the UK and played the organ part.

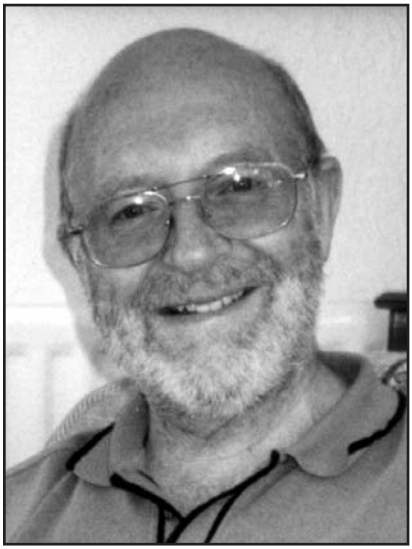
Stainer's Lenten oratorio has pretty much gone out of fashion locally in the last 35 years or so, and even in days of yore performances were almost always cut, especially the hymns. This performance was absolutely complete and with congregational participation in certain places. Soloists Ramone Diggs, a Curtis student replacing the scheduled tenor on one week's notice thrilled the audience, as did baritone Tom Baust. Glandorf conducted fluently with sensible tempi and without any Victorian excesses.

The concert was supported in part by generous grants from The Delius Trust and The Delius Society.

Bill Marsh

OBITUARY

Richard Maries *(13 September 1940 – 19 August 2004)*



Richard Maries our Society accountant has died suddenly of a heart attack whilst at his holiday cottage in Wales, just over a week after attending our Annual General Meeting in Gloucester.

Richard was born at exactly the time of the height of the Battle of Britain and there was something of that spirit and of this country about him; a dogged personality who gave himself wholeheartedly to his family, his profession and his other two main interests; sport and music. He was born in Birmingham and went on to attend Moseley Grammar School where he learned to play the piano and became the school pianist. Richard remained a dedicated amateur pianist throughout his life. He married his wife Tricia in 1963 and together they raised a family of four girls causing Richard to jibe on occasion that even the family cat was female! His professional life was as a Chartered accountant and as such he became well known to the local business community in Walsall. His sporting passions, because that is what they became, were golf and cricket and he was the Treasurer of the town cricket club, within walking distance of us both. He loved living in the Midlands and when I asked him recently if they planned to retire to his cottage in Wales, he was sure that they would continue to live in Walsall, close to their family and grandchildren. He was introduced to me as our prospective Society accountant when I became Treasurer of our Society in 2000 and I immediately warmed to his down-to-earth personality, impish sense of humour and his ever willingness to help and guide me. Such was his love of music that he eagerly accepted the position and insisted on joining the Society. It is a tragedy that he passed away just as he was starting to enjoy semi-retirement from work and the prospect of more time with his family, sport and music.

Stewart Winstanley

MISCELLANY

Eagerly awaited . . .

The publishers Ashgate have sent me advance details of Lyndon Jenkins's forthcoming book on Delius and Beecham, which is due for publication next year. Their catalogue entry describes how 'the extraordinary creative relationship between Beecham and Delius is studied in depth for the first time . . . Starting with the first meeting of composer and conductor in 1907, it charts Beecham's gradual introduction of Delius's compositions to British and foreign audiences, his operatic premières and revivals, the Delius festivals that he organized in 1929 and 1946, and the formation of the Delius Trust upon the composer's death in 1934. Also described is Beecham's continuing crusade for Delius's music up to his own death in 1961, which included a model edition of the scores, a biography and an internationally celebrated recorded legacy. The book, which includes a critical discography, a selection of Beecham's writings on Delius and a description of his arrangements and orchestrations of Delius's music, provides a vivid account of an achievement that remains without parallel in the history of British music.'

Further details will follow in the next *Newsletter* or *Journal*.

Winning composition

In April 2004, one of David Eccott's orchestral works was awarded 3rd prize in the First International Composition Competition organized by the Fédération des Eurochestries in France. The piece, entitled *Fantasia*, is actually the first movement of a three-movement work. Its principal motif is derived from a melodic fragment, a rising triplet figure (minor third-tone-tone), that first appears 10 bars after S in Delius's *Appalachia*. Although the work is not essentially Delian in style, there are some Delian-like episodes; notably the slow, central section of the first movement that begins with an oboe solo based on the main motif that works to an exuberant climax. The *Fantasia* was performed, as part of the Eurochestries 2004 festival, in Saujon, France, on 24 July 2004. It was played by the Orchestre Symphonique des Juenes de Zhengzhou from China, and was conducted by Taiping Wang.

Delius/Bax Lectures, WEA Derby Branch, February – May 2004

Richard Kitching writes: Tom Corfield, the assistant organist at Derby Cathedral gave a series of lectures on Delius and Bax last Spring. Three Midlands Branch members, Graham Parsons, Beryl Winfield and Richard Kitching attended. Mr Corfield commenced by drawing attention to the similar outlooks of the composers, quoting Bax '. . . my music is the expression of emotional states" and Delius 'There is really only one quality for great music and that is emotion.'.

The music discussed in detail consisted of Delius: *Appalchia*, *A Village Romeo & Juliet*, (including excerpts from the film), *Sea Drift*, *Violin Concerto*, *In a Summer Garden*, and the Ken Russell film *Song of Summer* together with a recording of the work. Bax: *Tintagel*, Third Symphony, Chamber music and songs, Sixth Symphony.

There were some amusing comments from the students: one thought *Appalachia* sounded like *The Walk to the Paradise Garden* (!) and another enquired why the male bird in *Sea Drift* had not incubated the eggs? Mr Corfield said tactfully that he did not think Whitman was interested in the ornithological aspects of the story. The course was very imaginative and thorough and Mr Corfield is to be congratulated on his enterprise.

Gentle Giant . . .

Stewart Winstanley very kindly sent in a review from the *Daily Mail* 13 August, of *Lullaby of Birdland: The Autobiography of George Shearing*, (Continuum Books, £18.99). George is a long-time member of The Delius Society and is described in this excellent review as the 'Gentle giant who was big before the Beatles'.

Disappointment

Many members were severely disappointed earlier this year, when due to the 'illness' of Thomas Hampson, Delius's *Cynara* was dropped from the concert programme at the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester. Roy Price wrote personally to Mark Elder the Hallé's Musical Director to express his dismay that another artist was not sought who could perform the work. Roy had a reply on behalf of Mr Elder, from Geoffrey Owen, Head of Artistic Planning. In this letter he explains that 'shortly before Mr Hampson was due to arrive in England, he informed us [the Hallé] that illness had prevented his working on the piece, and he therefore requested a programme change . . . in the event, Mr Hampson cancelled his trip to Manchester (due once more to illness) at less than two days notice.' However, the good news from the Hallé is that Mr Owen writes: 'Cynara, along with certain other works by Delius, is of great interest to Mr Elder and we hope to include some of them in our programmes over the coming seasons'.

Brigg's Fair

This year on Saturday 7 August, for the first, and possibly the only time, *Brigg Fair* was performed by a full orchestra conducted by John Pryce-Jones in St Mary's Church, Brigg, Lincolnshire. It was part of a series of events to mark the 800th anniversary of the town's market charter. Celebrations began on Thursday 5 August – the traditional date of the Fair.

Three-act Tragedy ?

Several members drew my attention to the article by Martin Kettle in the *Guardian* on the eve of the Proms this year. Commenting on the '1934 – England at the Crossroads' theme chosen by Nicholas Kenyon, Proms Director, he understandably questioned whether it was not 'too little, too late?' In 1934 Elgar, Holst and Delius all died in the space of four months, and Mr Kettle expressed his surprise that, 'it has taken 70 years for the anniversary-minded BBC Proms to come up with a way to mark the event'. Although the article notes the inclusion of *The Walk to the Paradise Garden* in the 'Nation's favourite Prom', I am sure we all agree with the final paragraph: ' It is Delius, though, who comes off worst. Incredibly, his music does not figure once in the last 70 of this summer's 74 Proms. No *Brigg Fair*, no *Appalachia*, no *North Country Sketches*, no *Paris, Song of a Great City*, above all no *A Mass of Life*, a magnificent work wholly suited to the Proms. This is a miserable treatment for a composer who is so ostensibly at the heart of one of the season's main themes.'

Fair point ?

Mary Jones of Huddersfield has kindly sent me a cutting from the *Guardian* of Friday 16 July. In a letter sent in reply to the earlier article by Martin Kettle, Peter Wood questioned the lip-service paid 'in this country to our composers'. As he points out; 'Elgar is obviously well-served – with the birthplace and visitor centre at Broadheath. However, Holst and Delius have fared less well: the former's birthplace in Cheltenham is threatened with closure while Delius's home in Bradford is marked by a nondescript sign and is now an Islamic centre. And where are the museums dedicated to the likes of Vaughan Williams, Britten and Walton? Contrast this with the way composers in other parts of Europe are celebrated and revered.'

Echo

Tony Watts writes: Did you hear the recent Radio 2 documentary 'Lost Boy: In Search of Nick Drake', narrated by Brad Pitt? Nick Drake was an English singer/songwriter who committed suicide in 1974 aged 26. Apparently, he wanted the song 'River Man' to echo his favourite composers, Delius and Ravel.

Tausky's "lollipop"

Both Roy Fredericks and Christopher Redwood sent in a cutting from *The Times* of 31 March 2004. In the column 'Lives Remembered', J Hugh Thomas recalled working with the late Vilem Tausky at Harlech – 'I always ordered a Delius "lollipop". Vilem's eyes would light up as he inspected the music on his arrival. "Ah, some Delius," he would say every year with obvious pleasure.'

Postcards

Jo Radford has asked me to remind members that copies of the postcard of the painting of Delius's house in Grez by Ray Osborne, are still available. Details were first included in *DSJ* 128. If you wish to purchase these please send a cheque payable to 'The Delius Society' and an appropriately stamped addressed A5 envelope to: Mrs J V Radford, 21 Cobthorne Drive, Allestree, Derby, DE22 2SY

Qty	Cost	Postage
1	30p	21p (a second class stamp)
5	£1.35	28p (first) or 21p (second)
10	£2.50	42p (first) or 35p (second)

Cooking with Delius/Delia

Christopher Redwood very kindly sent in the following cartoon which appeared in *The Times* on 22 May 2004.

Medieval Love Story

Founder member of the Society, Raymond Harvey, has written to let me know that the two-act opera *Abelard and Heloise* which he has been engaged in composing, will hopefully be performed at St James's Church, Holland Park, West London late in 2005.

'Composer's Notes'

Several members contacted me after listening to this broadcast on Classic FM on Saturday 26 June. Sponsored by Prudential Insurance, the series presented by John Suchet, looked at 'the part money played in the lives of the great composers' – and this programme delved 'into the life and financial affairs of Frederick Delius'. One or two factual errors crept in, and Robert Threlfall generously thought that, 'this was probably due to reference to out-of-date books'. The inaccuracy which incensed members most was the mention

that FD had a home in London – at Hobart Place – which was of course Beecham's house, lent to him when staying there. Nevertheless, there seems to be a general agreement that the choice of music played was good – to quote Robert Threlfall again, 'a very attractive, tuneful selection – and not the obvious records'.

Jeanne Donahoo 1916 – 2004

Sadly we have to report the death of Jeanne Donahoo, of Jacksonville, Florida on 13 August. Jeanne was a Founder Member of the Delius Association of Florida, and a past President of the Friday Musicale. A tribute will appear in the next *Journal*.

Newsletter No 19 – January 2005

Please will members send all items for consideration for inclusion to Ron Prentice. The last date for copy will be 1 December 2004.

The Delius Society Journal No 137

The next edition of the Journal will be published in April 2005. The latest date for receipt of copy is 1 March.

HOMECOMING OF DELIUS

LAST RESTING PLACE IN SURREY – SIR T. BEECHAM'S TRIBUTE

The body of Frederick Delius, the British composer, who died last June at his home at Grez-sur-Loine (sic), near Fontainebleau, was brought back to this country last night to be laid in the quiet churchyard at Limpsfield, Surrey.

It was the wish of Delius that he should be buried in a country churchyard in the south of England. His grave, in a secluded corner of the Limpsfield churchyard, was chosen by his widow, and here, beneath the shade of an ancient yew, he will rest close to the grave of Mrs Harrison, who was a life-long friend.

The body was brought from France to Folkestone by Mr. Eric Fenby, an Englishman who was Delius's constant companion during his life at Grez-sur-Loine, writing down at the master's dictation the music he composed.

The remains, in a leaden shell and coffin, were brought from Boulogne to Folkestone in the Channel steamer Biarritz, and placed in a hearse to be taken by road to Limpsfield.

The casket left Grez-sur-Loine at 9 a.m. yesterday. There was no ceremony as it was taken from the Chappelle Trovisoire, where it had laid since being disinterred a few days ago, to the waiting hearse.

ROUTE TO ENGLAND

Mr. Alden Brooks, an American novelist, who was a great friend of Delius, watched the departure from the composer's home. The route was that taken by Delius when he came to London in October, 1929, for the festival of his music at the Albert Hall.

Members of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, will play compositions of Delius in the church at Limpsfield before the committal service to-day.

The Sunday Times, 26 May 1935

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From: Colin Scott-Sutherland

Celt – It appears to be derived from the Greek 'keltoi'. Used to denote a people north of what is now Marseilles (*Oxford Dictionary of Celtic Mythology*: McKillop)

I am intrigued by recent correspondence in the *Journal* on the thorny subject of Celticism, and whether it has any relevance in the music of Delius. Somhairle MacGill-Eain (Sorley MacLean) the Gaelic poet once said that a true Gael was "one who had the language". It might also be said of the Celt – one who had the language. So what is the language of the Celt?

> 'Its history is itself one long lament: it still recalls its exiles,
> its flights across the seas ….its songs of joy end as elegies;
> there is nothing to equal the delicious sadness of its national
> melodies ….the essential element of the Celt's poetic life
> is the adventure – that is to say the pursuit of the unknown,
> an endless quest after an object ever flying from desire.' (1)

This is certainly heard in Bax, a tireless hunter of dreams – but although he never completely lost the inflexions of an Irish/Celtic tongue, the quest drew him inexorably to the North. Can this also apply to Delius? Surely. There are trolls in *Eventyr* and fairies and goblins in *Over the Hills and Far Away* – there is even mountain music in the *Requiem*. And there is melancholy:

> 'As with the sweetest music a tinge of sadness was in
> every note. Nor do we know how much of the pleasures
> even of life we owe to the intermingled Sorrows . . .' (2)

If Delius's pursuit of the Celtic ideal is undertaken with less urgency than in Bax it covers the same territory. For it was Yeats who said that 'our legends are always associated with places' – and if Delius's Celticism has a focus – as Bax's was the sea – then perhaps it is in the Norse ranges of the Jotunheim?

It is not necessary to try to relate this aspect of Celticism – if so it be – to the Hebridean songs of Marjorie Kennedy Fraser. Whether Delius ever encountered these I do not know. But MacDowell did – and Grieg and MacDowell had a more penetrating influence on British music than is generally realised.

A curious sidelight – in an earlier exhibition in Bradford of Delius's work, there was exhibited a book from his library *The Eskimo Music* which surely indicates that he had some interest in the folk music of the North. If one may ally Celticism with mysticism, then no better solution to the argument could be found than the final

pages of Professor Hutchings' fine study. (MacMillan 1948)

References:

1. J E Renan, *Poetry of the Celtic races and other papers*, Hutchison 1896.
2. George MacDonald, *Phantastes*, Chatto & Windus, 1894

From: Lionel Carley

May I offer two or three small corrections to page 43 of the excellent piece in *DSJ*135 written by Brian Radford and Stewart Winstanley about last September's much savoured event in Grez? Two names should read Caroline Benedicks Bruce rather than Clair Blair Bruce and Louise Courmes rather than Cormes. . . . Otherwise, it's just that I didn't, as reported, visit Grez for the first time in the early 1950s. I vaguely recall life as a schoolboy at that particular period – one who might just about have heard of Delius, but certainly not of Grez-sur-Loing. In fact it was some fifteen years later that I first made the journey – and memorable it was too, though I met no-one on that occasion who had known the composer. A year or two later 1 went again, this time well prepared, and so was able to meet Louise Courmes, André Baron and Gaston Fleury. Mme Courmes had lived in the 'Delius' house as a child (that is, before either Delius or Jelka arrived in the village) and had been a good friend of Jelka's, André Baron had been the Deliuses' chauffeur and M Fleury had been one of the pallbearers at the composer's funeral.

As I say, all this was some fifteen years later than the *Journal* has it, and I'd rather like to recoup those years before any more time goes by.

. . . In a narrow transept that is roofed with aged oak beams were gathered more than a score of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, who played, for Delius's requiem, four of his own works. Sir Thomas Beecham, standing against a pillar, directed the players with his expressive hands.

First was "Summer Night on the River," then presently the familiar loveliness of the serenade from "Hassan," and afterwards the "Elegy" for cello and orchestra. No hymns were sung: and, a few short prayers said, we went to where Delius lay.

A sheaf of roses had been laid on the brink of the grave by an unknown white-haired woman in black, and she had written these words on a card, "To the master whose music has brought the joy of heaven into my life of sorrow."

Monday 27 May 1935, unidentified newspaper cutting headed – 'Delius Music at His Reburial – Sir T. Beecham Conducts – A Woman's Roses' – from F.G. PRINCE-WHITE

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Editor is grateful to Marjorie Dickinson, Secretary to the Delius Trust, for assistance in compiling the following listing. I would be grateful to hear from any member who knows of an event suitable for future inclusion in this column.

Some events were notified too late for inclusion in the previous *Journal*, and have already taken place. They are included here for the sake of establishing as complete a record as possible.

Sunday 16 May at 8.00 pm
West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge
The Walk to the Paradise Garden
Cambridge University Symphony Orchestra
Conducted by Geoffrey Paterson and Tagbo Ilozue

Saturday 10 July
Corn Exchange, Cambridge
Sea Drift, soloist: Gavin Carr
Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Martin West

Saturday 17 July at 7.00 pm
Royal Albert Hall, London – Proms 2004
The Nation's Favourite Prom
The Walk to the Paradise Garden
Hallé Orchestra conducted by Mark Elder

Monday 19 July at 7.00 pm
Royal Albert Hall, London – Proms 2004
Sea Drift
Thomas Hampson (baritone), BBC National Chorus and Orchestra of Wales
Conducted by Richard Hickox

Saturday 7 August
St Mary's Church, Brigg
Brigg Fair
Conducted by John Pryce-Jones

Wednesday 15 September at 1.00 pm
Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery
In a Summer Garden (arr Heseltine)
Peter Duffy (piano)

Tuesday 21 September at 7.15 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY MEETING
New Cavendish Club, 44 Great Cumberland Place, London
'Conducting Delius etc' – a talk by Christopher Slater

Sunday 26 September at 7.30 pm
West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge
Paris
Cambridge Orchestra conducted by Darrell Davison

Sunday 10 October at 3.00 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY (PHILADELPHIA BRANCH) MEETING
Peter King Residence, South Marshall Street, Philadelphia
Fall Soirée – includes performances by Delius Society members

Saturday 16 October at 7.30 pm
Bridgewater Hall, Manchester
Cello Concerto
Alban Gebhardt (cello), BBC Philharmonic Orchestra/Sinaisky

Sunday 17 October at 2.30 pm
The Voicebox, Forman Street, Derby
DELIUS SOCIETY MIDLANDS BRANCH 40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
Recital and buffet – Tickets obtainable from Graham Parsons

Monday 18 October at 12 noon
Stratford-upon-Avon Music Festival – Town Hall, Stratford-upon-Avon
Cello Sonata
Naomi Boole-Masterson and Fali Pavri

Tuesday 19 October at 7.15 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY MEETING
New Cavendish Club, 44 Great Cumberland Place, London
'Grieg in England' – a talk by Lionel Carley

Tuesday 19 October at 12 noon
Stratford-upon-Avon Music Festival – Town Hall, Stratford-upon-Avon
Four Old English Lyrics
Harriet Fraser (soprano), William Hancox (piano)

Wednesday 20 October at 7.30 pm
Stratford-upon-Avon Music Festival – Town Hall, Stratford-upon-Avon
Summer Night on the River
On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring
Orchestra of the Swan

Thursday 21 October at 12 noon
Stratford-upon-Avon Music Festival – Town Hall, Stratford-upon-Avon
Sonata No 3 for Violin and Piano
Ruth Palmer (violin), Katya Apekisheva (piano)

Friday 22 October at 12 noon
Stratford-upon-Avon Music Festival – Town Hall, Stratford-upon-Avon
Three Preludes for Piano
Nicola Elmer

Saturday 23 October at 7.30 pm
Mole Valley Arts Festival - St George's Christian Centre, Ashtead, Surrey
Intermezzo from *Fennimore and Gerda*
Slater Symphony Orchestra conducted by Christopher Slater

Saturday 30 October
The Pump Room, Bath
Sonata No 3 for Violin and Piano
Bath Recital Artists' Trust
Ruth Palmer (violin), Bobby Chen (piano)

Sunday 14 November
Victoria Theatre, Halifax
Sea Drift
Halifax Choral Society, North of England Concert Orchestra
Conductor – John Pryce-Jones

Thursday 18 November at 7.15 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY MEETING
New Cavendish Club, 44 Great Cumberland Place, London
'Delius's Symphony for Two Orchestras – *A Song of the High Hills*'
– A talk by Robert Matthew-Walker

2005

Saturday 29 January at 2.00 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY (PHILADELPHIA BRANCH) MEETING
St Paul's Lutheran Church, Easton Rd, Glenside, PA
Delius's Birthday – a rare video program – inc. *Sea Drift*, *Elgar* (Ken Russell)

Tuesday 15 February at 7.15 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY MEETING
New Cavendish Club, 44 Great Cumberland Place, London

Saturday 5 March at 2.30 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY (WEST OF ENGLAND) BRANCH MEETING
'Strindberg, Delius and their friends'– a talk by Christopher Redwood

Tuesday 15 March at 7.15 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY MEETING
New Cavendish Club, 44 Great Cumberland Place, London

Saturday 9 April at 6.30 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY (MIDLANDS BRANCH) MEETING
'Delius - a young person's view'– James Baker and Joanna O'Connor

Tuesday 19 April at 7.15 pm
DELIUS SOCIETY MEETING
New Cavendish Club, 44 Great Cumberland Place, London

Wednesday 27, Thursday 28 and Saturday 30 April at 8.00 pm
Verizon Hall, Kimmel Center, Philadelphia, USA
The Walk to the Paradise Garden
The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Rossen Milanov

A LETTER FROM Mr. FREDERICK DELIUS

Grez sur Loing,

France

28.9.29

I want to say that all of my works as recorded by Sir Thomas Beecham by the Columbia Graphophone Company are most beautiful and delicate and in every way satisfactory. They are the most beautiful records that I have heard.

Frederick Delius

The Columbia Records of Delius Works are given on centre pages

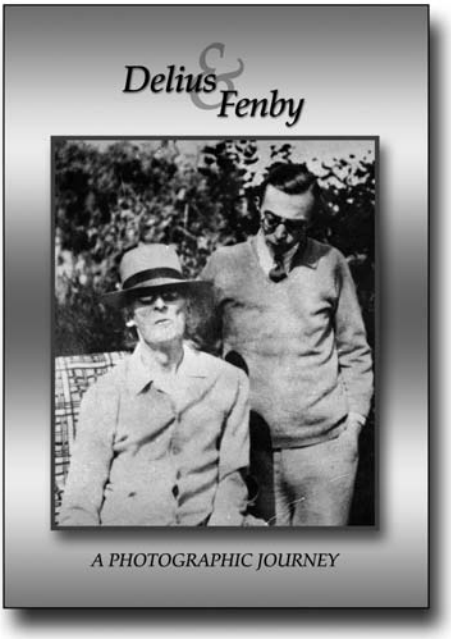
Please note that further details of Delius Society events (London only) may be obtained from Programme Secretary James Baker,
83 Hartswood Road, Brentwood, Essex CM14 5AG (telephone: 01277 215208)

Details of Delius Society (Midland Branch) events may be obtained from
Midlands Branch Chairman Richard Kitching,
Ravensdale, 41 Bullhurst Lane, Weston Underwood, Ashbourne, Derby DE6 4PA
(telephone: 01335 360798)

Details of Delius Society (West of England Branch) events may be obtained from
West of England Branch Chairman Ronald Prentice,
The Mill, Ash Priors, Taunton, Somerset, TA4 3NQ
(telephone: 01823 432734, email: ron@the-mill.co.uk)

Have you visited the website recently? (www.delius.org.uk) It is updated regularly and future events that we hear about too late for inclusion in the *Journal* or *Newsletter* are added to STOP PRESS in 'Forthcoming Events' in the 'News' section. You can also find excerpts from the latest *Journal* online.

coming soon...



Produced for The Delius Society by Design & Print - Oxford

THE DAILY MIRROR, Monday, May 27, 1935.

Broadcasting - Page 22

Daily Mirror

THE DAILY PICTURE NEWSPAPER WITH THE LARGEST NET SALE

No. 9,825 Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper. MONDAY, MAY 27, 1935 One Penny

MORE SECRETS OF NEV

Final Discus

TRIBUTE TO DELIUS

Sir Thomas Beecham, speaking at the grave of Frederick Delius, the famous British blind composer, in Limpsfield (Surrey) churchyard yesterday. The coffin of Delius, who died in France last June, had been interred at midnight. See story on page 3.

Force Thre Australi

SECESSION CLAIM PUSHED

A THREAT of "argument b made yesterday by a Western Australia's bid to sec Commonwealth.

Mr. H. K. Watson, chairman of