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This newsletter is the first I have been asked to edit and I think it will be agreed that my friend and fellow Committee Member, Charles Barnard, thoroughly deserves to be allowed a rest after all the hard work he has put into this task for so long past. Assuming the editorship has brought home to me how much Charles has placed us in his debt and I shall miss the humour and enthusiasm that made his work so delightful to read. I have the additional disappointment that now there will be no pleasurable surprise on seeing the envelope arrive by the early morning post as I shall know all its contents in advance.

It will be seen that I have taken advantage of the excellent suggestion, made in the last newsletter (November), that a questionnaire should be distributed to all our members, and you will find it included with this newsletter. We should like to see a reply from every member with as many additional comments, rude or otherwise, as possible. To assist you in pinpointing possible shortcomings - and every constructive criticism will be a positive contribution to the Society - the 'Objects of the Society' are reprinted from the Constitution on the back of the questionnaire. Your views will provide a very valuable basis for discussion at the forthcoming A.G.M. (30th April) and I hope to give a digest of the questionnaire answers in a later newsletter.

Phoenix from the Flames

As members will know, the Requiem has been given again at last, in a fine performance in Liverpool, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir, Charles Groves the conductor, with Thomas Hensley and Heather Harper as soloists, all distinguishing themselves. Delius considered this to be one of his best works and his opinion has been vindicated by the majority of the critics following the new performance. It is amusing to contrast their enthusiastic reviews with what has been said by those two devoted disciples, Philip Heseltine and Sir Thomas Beecham:-

HESELTINE: "...a transition from the truly sublime to something very near the ridiculous."

..."the weakest of all Delius's mature works.....(it) lacks coherence and organic unity.....(is) vacillating, uncertain - and contains more than one of Delius's very rare lapses into sheer banality".

BEECHAM: "Let confession be made at once that here we are confronted with the most curious flight of futility that ever misled the intelligence and deceived the instincts of a great artist".

....."it is typical of the state of self-delusion into which most composers and authors fall over the value of their own words that...we find Frederick (Delius) writing: 'I do not think I have ever done better than this.' "

ANDREW PORTER (Financial Times):

"The Liverpool Philharmonic's lovingly prepared, sensitively executed performance revealed that the Requiem is one of Delius's finest works: a score of great beauty, imagination and formal control. I am longing to hear it again."

....."the sense (of the text) is clear, and it moved Delius to compose a score....in which rapture never becomes self-indulgence, and in which the discoveries, harmonic and textural, of that extraordinary mind and ear are set out in concise, masterly and inspired form. The Requiem now appears as the crown of his major compositions....."

The Times....."this is real, unique music by any standards. I long to hear it again, very soon."

GERALD LARNER (Guardian). "The reason for its neglect is, ostensibly, that the music is not good enough....But, having heard how beautiful the music is, the real reason must be its irreligious text. One commentator blames the text for what he considers to be the failure of most of the music, but, in fact, it is skilfully constructed...."

(The final section is) "an apotheosis of Delius's spring music in a wonderfully radiant and extended passage of ethereal orchestral scoring and rhapsodic choral writing. Spring here is worshipped as the symbol of renewal. Without experiencing it in this context, it is impossible to appreciate any of Delius's nature music.

The last line in Mr. Lerner's report needs to be emphasised and, in fact, it is in this Nietzschean context that Delius's nature achievements should be understood. This was brought out finely in the lecture given by our Chairman, David Simmons, on 'Delius and Nietzsche' (January 29th at Holborn Library) so that, without necessarily sharing the composer's views, it was easy to see how Edvard Munch could admire Delius's 'fine optimistic nature'. Andrew Porter says of the Requiem that it is 'fired by manly joy' - an apt phrase.

We must be grateful to the Trust for making this performance possible, and for making a miniature score available in time for the performance (Boosey & Hawkes; 10/-). A vocal score is in preparation. The B.B.C. recorded the performance and it was scheduled for broadcast on March 14th, at 3.30 p.m. This date and time has now been postponed, I understand, and I urge all members to write and demand an evening relay for an event of such importance. Andrew Porter has suggested that the work should be given at the Proms, and this also should be urged on the B.B.C. Planners.

Jacksonville Delius Festival 1966

The admirable annual Festival has taken place at Jacksonville this month. As will be known, Mr. & Mrs. Emanuel have been regular visitors, representing the Delius Trust. This year it has also been possible for Mr. & Mrs. Fenby to attend, and as you will see from the summarised programme given below, Mr. Fenby has taken a very active part in the proceedings.

February 2nd, at 1 p.m.
Woman's Club of Jacksonville

Concerto in C minor for Piano
Gerson Yessin, piano
W. James Crosland, second piano.

February 3rd, at 8.30 p.m.
Civic Auditorium

In a Summer Garden
Danse Rhapsody No. 2 Ballet
Eventyr
Double Concerto for Violin and Cello
Thelma Johnston Baggs Concert Ballet
Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra
John Canarina, conductor
Derry Deane, violin
Roger Drinkall, cello.

February 4th, at 11 a.m.
Friday Musicale (repeated the following day at St. Augustine).

Frederick Delius - Personal Recollections of My Years at Grez-sur-Loing.
Eric Fenby, O.B.E.

Sonata No. 3 for Violin and Piano
John Rodney Schmidt, violin
Eric Fenby, piano.

February 5th, at 8.30 p.m.
Jacksonville University
Recital Hall of the Fine Arts Building

The Music of Frederick Delius
Lecture by Eric Fenby, O.B.E.

Two Aquarelles
Midsummer Song
When Splendor Falls on Castle Walls
Wedding Music, from 'A Village Ronce and Juliet'
Closing Scene, from 'Koanga'
Jacksonville University Singers,
Edward Bryan, director.

In a letter sent to us from his former address in London, our member, Mr. Michael Manning, informed us that on his way over from the Bahamas he attended the Festival in Jacksonville, which he described as "extraordinarily good". We here were of course very gratified to hear from Mr. Manning of this further personal link between the Delius Society and the Delius Association of Florida.

Delius Society of South Africa.

Following correspondence with our member, Mr. Scorgie, about the formation of a branch of the Delius Society in South Africa, your Committee decided that our common aims could be as well served, and more fairly administered, by the formation of a separate Delius Society of South Africa, whose members would automatically become honorary members of our own Society. Thanks to the energy and enthusiasm of Mr. Scorgie, this has now been formed, with an initial membership of about 30, under the chairmanship of another of our members, Dr. Findlay, and with Mr. Scorgie as Hon. Secretary.

The inaugural meeting of this Society took place on the 29th November, 1965, at which a constitution was discussed, and at which, to quote from Mr. Scorgie's report:

"Dr. Findlay gave a short resume of his time as a Delius record collector and enthusiast, dating from his school days. He played 78s only - "Summer Night on the River" was his first disc acquired in 1934, I think. Then he played the 1st movement of Delius' Sonata No. 1 (Harrison and Arnold Bax); an extract from 'Sea-drift' - he sent 10/6d. for four months to acquire the Delius Society album - and a section out of 'The Village Romeo & Juliet'. In addition, Dr. Findlay had prepared several slides of Delius taken from the biographies, which were projected on to the screen."

The Delius Society of South Africa is fortunate in being able to use for its meetings a theatre and equipment - epidiascope, projector and 3-speed gramophone - provided by the Shell Petrol Co. free of charge to non-profit making organisations, such as the Society.

The next meeting of the Delius Society of South Africa was to take place on February 15th, with a lecture on Whitman and Delius by Mrs. Scornell Leon, the President of the Southern African Theosophical Society.

We sincerely congratulate Mr. Scorgie on the initiative and devotion to Delius which has brought this Society into being, especially since, as Mr. Scorgie has pointed out, there is at present no "tradition" of Delius in South Africa.

Midland Branch Newsletter

Friday 3rd December, 1965.

A meeting was held at Joan and Brian Dunn's house in Nottingham. Several members made interesting tours of the vicinity before finding the venue, and Jerry Rowe only arrived after the first item (Britten's Simple Symphony) had finished; this caused considerable apprehension as he was scheduled to talk about Sibelius's 6th Symphony. However, he did arrive, and gave a most interesting introduction to this too-seldom performed work. The Delius item was "North Country Sketches" which some members found a "tough nut" compared with other Delius works previously heard at meetings.

Thursday 9th December, 1965.

Nottingham Music Club Chamber Orchestra gave their annual concert, and member Brian Dunn (bassoon) had persuaded them to play some Delius. The works performed were 'Inelin' Prelude and Intermezzo' from 'Fennimore & Gerda'. We should like to express our appreciation to Brian for his enterprise, which was rewarded by very sensitive performances of both works; in particular we thought the bassoon in "Inelin" was particularly effective!

Tuesday 4th January, 1966.

A New Year Party was held at Dick Kitching's, and included a splendid punch prepared by Jerry Rowe, consisting of red wine onto which was poured burning rum. The resultant fireworks were most dramatic.

/ Tuesday 25th January

Tuesday 25th January, 1966

Mr. Stanford Robinson, a Vice-President of the Delius Society, gave a talk in Derby on the 25th January last, at the invitation of the Committee of the Delius Society. This was, of course, the highlight of the Branch's activities so far."

A report which Mr. Dick Kitching, Chairman of the Midlands Branch, sent us on this latter event, will appear in the next issue of the newsletter. In the meantime, our thanks to Mr. Dick Kitching for all his hard work and usual efficiency in arranging this meeting, and to Mr. Rodney Meadows of our Committee for having looked after the arrangements at this end, so far as we in London were concerned with them.

Forthcoming Events

"Mass of Life" on March 22nd, 1966

As many members will know, booking for this opened on Monday, 21st February, and prices are as follows:-

Loggia Boxes	.....	12s.6d. per seat
Second Tier Boxes	.....	8s.0d. " "
Stalls H J L M	.....	12s.6d.
" G K O	.....	10s.0d.
Arena	.....	8s.0d.
Balcony	.....	5s.0d.
Upper Orchestra	.....	4s.0d.
Gallery Promenade	.....	2s.6d.

Whilst the Society does not propose to make a block booking as such, the Hon. Secretary would be pleased to assist individual members, especially those out of London, who find it difficult to make their own booking arrangements (cheques or other remittances should be made payable to Miss Estelle Palmley, since she will not be wearing her 'official' hat.); or applications can be made direct to the Box Office at the Royal Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, London, S. W. 7. by post (remittances made payable to the Royal Albert Hall and accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope).

As on the last occasion, the Society is arranging for coffee and biscuits to be served free of charge to members in the interval, but this time in the HENRY COLE room. We are advised that this room is "located on the Grand Tier between Boxes 15 and 16, but on the other side of the corridor". We are also advised that "difficulty may very well be experienced by members who will be seated other than in the Boxes, Stalls and Arena, as the remaining parts of the house are completely locked off and only provide admission to and from the levels in the house concerned and the street".

We do hope that those who had difficulty in locating the Prince Consort room on the last occasion will have more luck with the Henry Cole room this time!

Our Secretary is enquiring if permission can be given for members of the Delius Society to attend the final rehearsal of the 'Mass of Life' at the Albert Hall on the morning of 22nd March, but would like to know how many members would in fact be able to attend such a rehearsal? Please write in good time on this to the Hon. Secretary, 45, Redhill Drive, Edgware, Middlesex.

As you know from our November newsletter, the BBC pointed out that a performance of the 'Mass of Life' in November 1964 was not well attended, and though we feel that the high prices charged on that occasion were partly responsible, we could not put this forward as an 'excuse' on this occasion, so we must hope that all Delians will do what they can individually to ensure a better attendance this time.

A reminder that the artistes on Tuesday, 22nd March, will be Elizabeth Simon (soprano); Norma Procter (contralto); Duncan Robertson (tenor); John Shirley-Quirk (baritone); with Sir Malcolm Sargent conducting the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Royal Choral Society.

/ 6th April

6th April, 1966

The Royal Philharmonic Society is presenting a programme of 'English' music at the Festival Hall on Wednesday, 6th April, as follows:-

North Country Sketches	.....	Delius
Concerto for Cello & Orchestra (Commissioned by the Society)		Rawsthorne
Symphony No. 1	.....	Walton

Sir Malcolm Sargent will be conducting the New Philharmonia Orchestra, with Christopher Bunting as soloist, and prices are Choir 7s.6d. Annexe 7s.6d. and 15s. Grand Tier 7s.6d. 10s. 15s. 21s. Stalls 15s. 21s. and 30s. Terrace 10s. 15s. 21s. and 30s. Boxes 21s. and 30s.

30th April, 1966

Our Annual General Meeting will take place on Saturday, 30th April, this time at the Arts Council, 4. St. James's Square, London, S. W. 1. and will start at 2.30 p.m.

This will be followed at approximately 4.15 p.m. with an interval for tea before a short 'live' recital of Delius music for violin and piano (to include the 1st violin sonata) at approximately 5.15 p.m. The artistes will be Alan Rowlands (piano) and Arthur Saltmarsh (violin), and it has been suggested that we could open this part of the proceedings to friends of members - to whom we extend a cordial invitation. There will be the usual dinner at Bertorelli's at 7.30 p.m. and we are asking for an alternative menu for vegetarians on this occasion.

An Agenda for this meeting, and minutes of the 1965 AGM, together with application form for the dinner, will be circulated as soon as possible.

Secretary's Notes

"I feel a short report is due on the last three meetings of the Society which took place at the Holborn Library on 22nd September and 2nd December last year, and 29th January.

Members will perhaps realise that owing to pressure on the accommodation, dates have to be booked for the library hall many months in advance, at which time we frankly often have very little idea of our possible programme for any particular date.

It is largely due to our Chairman, Mr. David Simmons, that we have been able to offer members - who had enough faith in us to turn up for the meetings without prior notice of our programme - two most enjoyable evenings, and an interesting afternoon lecture.

As noted in my Secretary's notes for October, Mr. Malcolm Walker, at very short notice, presented us with a programme of tapes and records on the 22nd September, and it was on this evening that we learned for the first time of a performance of the Requiem which took place in New York at the Carnegie Hall on 6th November, 1950. The artistes were Inez Manier (soprano); Paul Ukena (baritone) with the Collegiate Chorale, presented by the National Orchestral Association, director William Jonson.

An interesting follow-up to this came from our member, Mr. A. J. Noakes, last reported in New York, from where he wrote to his Mother (also a member) as follows:-

"I asked Searle Wright, the organist of Columbia Chapel, about the Requiem, and he was astonished; William Jonson the conductor of that performance, and either one or both of the soloists, were students of his, and he coached Jonson in the role of conductor. Jonson had wanted to do something of Delius and preferably one off the beaten track, and chose that. Both Mr. Wright and the Secretary of the Columbia Choir are keen Delians, and enthusiasts for English music of all periods. (Mr. Wright has particularly sought out and performed all of Holst's and Walton's choral music). He liked the work (Requiem) very much and was interested to hear of the Liverpool performance. The Collegiate Chorale has had many vicissitudes and takes many forms; at one time it was 300 strong; it has usually specialised in rare music, and is now a small and very high quality group at Julliard."

/ On 2nd December

On 2nd December, Mr. Charles Barnard presented a further selection of his beautiful slides, to the Beecham recordings of "In a Summer Garden", and "North Country Sketches". I was surprised to hear, by the way, that some Midlands members at their meeting last December found this a "tough nut" compared with other Delius works previously heard at their meetings, as it seems to me to be pure "programme" music of the most exquisite kind, though I would agree that 'March of Spring', with its oriental strains, suggests something more barbaric than the Yorkshire moors!

In the second half of the evening, Mr. Lionel Bentley, Mr. Jack Brymer and Mr. Gerald Jackson, took part in a discussion on Sir Thomas Beecham and Delius, and not for the first time, the conductor often got the upper hand of the composer!

Mr. Brymer said how much he regretted that "Brigg Fair" should sometimes be treated as a set of variations, instead of a rhapsody, and felt the meaningful words of the folk-song on which it was based gave a clue to the correct interpretation of the work.

Mr. Bentley said he well remembered as a very young musician taking part in the Delius Festival of 1929, and the work which most impressed him at that time was "Sea Drift". He also took part in the subsequent recording, and recalled Sir Thomas Beecham reciting the words "Once Paumanok" to try and recreate the atmosphere of the work in the studio.

Mr. Jackson, with deep chuckles, added to our Sir Thomas Beecham folk-lore, though it was a little deflating to hear that whenever Sir Thomas was in a rage - a not infrequent occurrence - his valet, Mr. Smith, knew that the only music to soothe the conductor was a recording - not of Delius - but Mozart!

On 29th January, Mr. David Simons lectured on "Delius and Nietzsche", which he illustrated with readings from Nietzschean texts. In introducing the lecturer, Mr. Rodney Meadows, acting chairman for the meeting, said that he interpreted his role for the evening as partly to prevent fighting breaking out in the audience, which would certainly have been the case had such a lecture been attempted some years ago. However, Mr. Simons demonstrated that the widespread misunderstanding of Nietzsche's philosophy was due to the activities of a villainous sister - and the Nazis - for their own ends; he was by no means the German imperialist and anti-Semite he had been purported to be. The philosopher had exercised considerable influence not only on Delius, but also on other outstanding figures of that time, notably Bernard Shaw ("Man and Superman"), but he was by no means as dogmatic as he seemed, and expected his theories to be challenged, saying, "a pupil badly repays his teacher if he only remains a pupil".

The playing of a part of the 'Mass of Life' recording was an obvious choice to close this lecture, and questions were then invited. Mr. Meadows, as I understood it, seemed to wish to separate the music of Delius from the Nietzschean texts, in other words, to assess what remained of the essential Delius without Nietzsche; a question which is lent added interest by the critical responses to the Requiem.

At the end of the meeting, Mr. Aprahamian and Mr. Threlfall played a short composition by Nietzsche "Hymn to Life" on the piano, which certainly demonstrated that Delius had nothing to learn from Nietzsche as a composer!

On that morning, the birthday of our composer, Mr. Fenby and Mr. Emanuel had left for Jacksonville, and so were unable to be present, but Mr. Fenby had paid a warm, written tribute, to our guest of honour on this occasion, Mrs. Rachel Dugmore, for her work on Delius manuscripts and papers. Mrs. Dugmore was due to leave England for Montreal "for at least two years", and this was our opportunity to express our appreciation to her for the help she has given the Society, and me personally as Secretary. Her sunny personality, and grasp of her subject, particularly Delius' "Norwegian" period, will be sadly missed, I fear. "

New Members. The list given us by our Treasurer of new members, and changes of address, is held over for our next issue.

John White
Newsletter Editor.