



Abergavenny Symphony Orchestra

# Newsletter

Issue no.44

March 2017

## Next Concert:

**Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2017, 8:00 pm**  
**Our Lady & St Michael's Church,**  
**Abergavenny.**

**Conductor: Dennis Simons**

Programme:

- Sibelius – En Saga
- Strauss - Horn Concerto No.1  
Soloist: Pete Geraghty
- Tchaikovsky - Symphony No. 2

Tickets available in advance from  
'Abergavenny Music' and online at  
[www.abergavennysymph.org.uk](http://www.abergavennysymph.org.uk)

Our MD, Dennis Simons says, "One hundred years ago, a revolution was taking place in Russia that would change the face of the world for the greater part of the 20th century. Also in 1917, Finland, who up to that time had been a Grand Duchy in the Russian Empire, became an independent sovereign country. During 2017, we will be marking the 100th anniversary of these two important events. The resulting concerts this year will be featuring truly exciting music of these two countries.

We are starting this anniversary celebration with that master Finnish composer, Jean Sibelius and his *En Saga*, a wonderful work of mystery and excitement that conjures up the atmosphere of Finland. This work has long been a favourite of mine and I am hoping you will enjoy it as much as I will enjoy presenting it to you.

The Russian work in this concert is the *Second Symphony of Tchaikovsky*, the 'Little Russian', a work that was an immediate success at its first performance and has remained popular with audiences ever since. It has great tunes, grandeur and plenty of excitement; not to be missed.

For our performance of the *Horn Concerto No. 1* by Richard Strauss, we are delighted to feature our very own Peter Geraghty. We are all very much looking forward to presenting this concert

*to you on April 2nd; I believe it will be an evening to remember."*

A quote from Pete: "I am looking forward very much to Richard Strauss's *First Horn Concerto*. The slow movement was one of my Grade 8 pieces in 1973 (!) so I guess you could say this piece has been a part of my life! We horn players don't have a huge number of concertos to choose from, but with the 4 from Mozart and 2 from Strauss we certainly have some good ones. It is a beautifully melodic and happy piece, with plenty to keep both soloist and orchestra busy. It was nice to see smiles in the rehearsal last Sunday, and I hope the audience enjoy it as much as the performers."



## Calendar

### Summer Concert 2017:

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2017, 8:00 pm  
Our Lady & St Michael's Church, Abergavenny.  
Guest Conductor: Michael Bell  
Programme:

- Sibelius - Finlandia
- Sibelius - Valse Triste
- Shostakovich - Jazz Suite
- Tchaikovsky - Suite No. 3

### Autumn Concert 2017:

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2017, 8:00 pm  
Our Lady & St Michael's Church, Abergavenny.  
Conductor: Dennis Simons  
Programme to include:

- Shostakovich – Festive Overture
- Rodrigo – Guitar Concerto
- Sibelius – Symphony No. 5

### Concert for Children 2017:

Sunday \*10<sup>th</sup> December 2017 (\* tbc)  
Guest Conductor: \*Tianyi Lu



## Children's Concert Review:



The children's concert in December attracted a large number of families once again. This time our theme was 'Jungle Bells' with a mixture of music depicting animals and Christmassy music. Many members of the orchestra dressed up and some even had their faces painted. Props and pictures to set the scene

were donated and borrowed – we even had a double bass (instrument) dressed up with elephant ears and a trunk. Iestyn Harding, our principal trombone player, provided us with a composition named 'Silly Old Baboon' in addition to music to accompany a 'lion hunt' led by Margie Osborne (wife of Bob – clarinet player). Any hope of order was lost when the kazoos were handed out to the children for them to join in with a rendition of 'Jingle Bells' but a good time was had by all. Many of the children attending took up the offer of having their faces painted by our two volunteers (Alan and Trina's daughter and Heather's friend) and the money raised from that and the concert meant that over £300 was raised for Nevill Hall Children's Centre Trust. Money was also raised for the school's PTA who were selling refreshments.

Next time – and there will be another concert this December – we will put the orchestra back on the stage to make room for the children to move around more freely. Tianyi Lu will be at the helm once again and we look forward to introducing orchestral music to even more young people.

To look at pictures of the event click on:

[https://www.facebook.com/pg/abergavennysymph/photos/?tab=album&album\\_id=1183075515074468](https://www.facebook.com/pg/abergavennysymph/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1183075515074468)

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## Members and Other Players

We have had a number of brass and string players joining us recently for a trial period and we look forward to welcoming many of them as members in the near future.

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## FYI

**Tianyi Lu**, who has worked with us on several occasions, has been appointed as Assistant Conductor to the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra where she will work under the guidance of Sir Andrew Davis. We are over the moon with this news and wish her all the very best.

You may have noticed the big grin on **James Joseph's** face recently. He has been busy upgrading our percussion over the last few weeks and we now have new heads on the timpani, new covers for them and we have also purchased a proper orchestral bass drum and stand.

**Easyfundraising** – total raised is now £234.10 If you would like to help to raise even more money for us, use this link:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/abergavennysymph/>

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## Orchestra Workshop Review

Our day spent working on Mahler's 2<sup>nd</sup> Symphony was an emotional experience. The day was spent in the extremely capable hands of Dennis who steered the huge orchestra and the choir that filled the balcony in a way that left us all feeling that we had experienced something very, very special.

Players have contacted us to say how much the day meant to them, but John Searight's words express how we all felt. He attended the day, selling copies of his Mahler biography and sitting in amongst the orchestra members. He said of the experience: "*What a wonderful occasion! ... I was completely won over by the enthusiasm and utter dedication of the musicians. When it came to the performance itself, I was 'gob-smacked'. OK, there were imperfections, but I've seldom heard a 'professional' performance that moved me so much. Orchestra, chorus and soloists, left me in a state of complete awe!!!*" He donated the proceeds from the books, which amounted to over £200, to us. Many thanks to him.

Get ready to tackle Mahler's 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony next year!