

# Music making in Alton



*The Orchestra Performing at Treloar School*

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# Chairman's Report

The AGM of the Alton Concert Orchestra took place at the end of the playing season in July. It was overshadowed by the news of the death the previous week of Lawrence Storey, the leader of the second violins. Tributes were paid to Lawrence, and an obituary appears elsewhere in CODA.

The Chairman, Chris Leggett, reported that the orchestra had enjoyed another very successful year. They had continued to attract new, high quality players, strengthening especially the brass, string and flute sections. A few old faces had returned, and a number of potential new players at least came along to try us out, even if they decided not to stay and play at this stage. We hope to see them all again.

Musically, the orchestra had practiced and performed a number of works new to them, including seasonal Christmas music, and now had a repertoire fit for any occasion. The Chairman thanked their Conductor, Graham Cross, for the enthusiastic and professional manner in which he got the best out of all the players, while still retaining his composure.

Two high quality concerts had been staged – with the Alton Choral Society at Four Marks last Christmas, and with Treloar School Choir in the spring. Not only did the orchestra play to appreciative audiences on both occasions, but in doing so raised over £800 for charities. A vote of thanks was proposed to Eggar's school in recognition of the great help they gave in allowing the orchestra to rehearse there.

Publicity for the orchestra had taken the form of an informative web site, [www.altonconcertorchestra.org.uk](http://www.altonconcertorchestra.org.uk), which had also been instrumental in finding some recruits. Two editions of the CODA newsletter had been produced very professionally and distributed in the community, again helping to recruit new players. The Open Evening was not quite so successful as previously, so its format may need a review.



*Treloar School Concert*

See page 8 for details of the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Festival of Christmas Music.

Come early, as last year's concert was very well attended.



# Chairman's Report

The Chairman thanked the hard-working Committee, and presented the annual awards for outstanding contributions to the life of the orchestra. This year, the cello section, Helen Dyer and Rachel Pritchard, were recognised for their excellent playing, which underpinned everything the orchestra performs. In addition, a special award was made to Daniel McGowan, not only for his trombone playing, but also for his huge contribution to the development of the web site and to publishing CODA. He will be missed when he moves away to study at Oxford this Autumn. David Budd had offered to assist with the web site in Daniel's absence.

Graham Cross reported that David Budd had offered to be coached as an assistant conductor.

The highly successful skittles evening at the 'French Horn' would be repeated in early February and a Quiz Evening, perhaps in the summer term, was suggested. Isabel Tucker was presented with a bouquet for hosting the committee meetings throughout the year.

## *Chris Leggett*

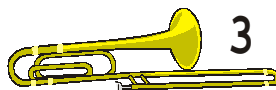


*Isabel Receiving her Bouquet*

Conductor	Graham Cross	
Chairman	Chris Leggett	Oboe
Treasurer	Rachel Pritchard	Cello
Secretary	Mac Newton	Leader
Membership Secretary	Helen Dyer	Cello
Minute Secretaries	Debbie Slater	Clarinet
	Isabel Tucker	Violin
Publicity	Lindy Wiltshire	Violin
	Chris Collins	Violin
CODA Editor	Sarah Main	Flute
Webmaster	Daniel McGowan	Trombone
Webmaster Assistant	David Budd	Trumpet
Concert Secretary	Barbara Dawkins	Violin

*What's the difference between a trombone player's kid and the other kids in the park?*

*He can't swing and doesn't know how to use the slide*



# Concert Report

Just before Easter, a large audience enjoyed the Spring Concert in Treloar School given by the Alton Concert Orchestra and the Treloar School Choir. This joining together of musical talent in a community setting was proposed by the Orchestra's conductor, Graham Cross, as one of the events to celebrate the forthcoming retirement of Judith Lazell, who has been the Head of Music at Treloar School for fourteen years.

The evening had a Victorian flavour, and the choir were dressed appropriately to give an enthusiastic rendering of a quartet of songs depicting life for children in those times above stairs, below stairs, at work and at play. The orchestra began the evening with Mozart's overture to 'The Magic Flute' and played out with a stirring medley of 'Big Band' music. Either side of the interval refreshments, provided by the 'Friends of Treloar School', the orchestra provided its own themed Victorian contribution with an arrangement of music from 'The Gondoliers' and a fine performance of Mendelssohn's 'Fingal's Cave'. Natasha Grant completed the evening with a very sympathetic reading of a poem.

The highlight of the evening was the first performance of a piece of music to be submitted by Kathryn Watkins for her GCSE Music examination. Entitled 'Terminating Ternary', it was scored for violins, flutes, clarinets and horn and a recording of the piece was sent to the examination board over the summer. The audience left in generous mood, and £150 was raised for the school music department, which will be used to allow more children to have the benefit of musical tuition during their time there.

*Chris Leggett*



*Treloar School Students in the Concert*



*Treloar School Concert*

## Conductor's Spot

We start a new season in confident mood having had a really good year with some excellent concerts where the Orchestra's playing reached new heights. I look forward to this season and hope that we shall continue to grow and develop and our music will bring pleasure to those who hear us.

Please see details of the open evening and forthcoming concert and if you would like to be involved please come and join us.

*Graham Cross*



# Lawrence Storey

Lawrence, a much-loved member of Alton Concert Orchestra, very sadly died in July following a short period of ill health. He had made a great impact on the orchestra since his arrival in 1999, becoming leader of the second violins, playing with ACO in the AODS productions and taking over the job of Treasurer and Membership Secretary for the past three years.

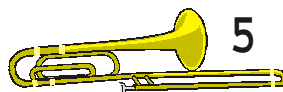
Lawrence was born in Aldershot in 1925, joined the army at a young age and learnt violin and clarinet with the Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall, which he later put to good use playing in the pit orchestras in a London theatre. He then trained to be a teacher, teaching mainly in primary schools in London, Surrey and Hampshire. Until 1976 he was the Deputy Head of Four Marks Primary School, and many local people are grateful to Lawrence for his wisdom and guidance both in the classroom and outside in extra-curricular activities.

Lawrence was primarily a folk musician, and was leader of 'The Villagers' group for 30 years, and fiddler for the Alton-based 'Minden Rose' ladies' morris. In 1999, he founded and led the Four Marks Folk Band, giving local musicians a chance to taste his type of music at which he excelled, whether playing, leading or composing. Together with others, he ran a music club called 'The Listeners' for visually impaired people. This put on a series of very high quality live concerts and also produced tape recordings to send out to members who could not attend. As well as his music, Lawrence had developed interest over the years in woodworking, photography, printing, philately and butterflies, and was the Treasurer of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Four Marks.

Lawrence will be remembered by all who knew him as a kind and caring person, who gave his utmost to the things he held dear. We were fortunate that he gave ACO his talent and time, and he will not be readily forgotten. Orchestra members extend their sympathy to his widow, Anne, and to his family.

## Diary

Rehearsal in MS1	7.15	8 <sup>th</sup> October
Open Evening	7.15	15 <sup>th</sup> October
Rehearsal in MS1	7.15	22 <sup>nd</sup> October
No Rehearsal, Half Term		29 <sup>th</sup> October
Last Rehearsal before Christmas Break	7.15	10 <sup>th</sup> December
Christmas Concert	7.30	13 <sup>th</sup> December
First Rehearsal after Christmas Break	7.15	7 <sup>th</sup> January
No Rehearsal, Half Term		18 <sup>th</sup> February
No Rehearsal, AODS		10 <sup>th</sup> March



## Water Music

As many members of the Orchestra will know, I went on holiday over the summer Down Under, travelling down the East Coast. I could write about my experiences trying to master the art of didgeridoo playing ... but I won't! Instead I will try to describe two very different musical experiences in Sydney, both of which both showed inventiveness, and humour!

We came across the first as we were walking past Circular Quay. Amongst the street entertainers, we spotted a young chap with a clothes rail, hanging from which there were several beer bottles filled with various amounts of water. After a certain amount of adjustment, the lad successfully played 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star', part of 'In the Hall of the Mountain King' from Grieg's Peer Gynt and the German National Anthem amongst other pieces!

We continued around the Quay to the Sydney Opera House. This fascinated me as soon as we did our tour of it! The Opera House contains 4 performance venues that groups can hire out from theatre production companies to full orchestras. On our one and only available evening in Sydney, I was given the choice: A Bridge Climb by night, a meal out on the harbourside or a concert in the Opera House. I chose the latter.

There were three performances in different venues within the Opera House: Asian dances, Howard Katz or an interesting programme of folk dances and two pieces by the composer / conductor Tan Dun.

I chose the latter after considering my husband's endurance levels and his wallet, and we bought the last two tickets – right at the back!

Whilst I enjoyed the Sydney Symphony Orchestra playing the folk dances, the highlights were the two pieces by Tan Dun. The first was the soundtrack to '*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*' accompanied by clips from the film shown on a big screen. The second – *Concerto for Water Percussion and Orchestra* – was the one that fascinated me most. The percussionist, David Cossin must have used all instruments (and many non-instruments) available to him – gongs, agogo bells, slinkyphones, drums – all being played just above, or semi-submerged in, a hemispherical transparent water basin! Even the Chardonnay on the terrace overlooking the Harbour Bridge in the interval only added to the surreal water experience.

If this has *whet* your appetite, I recommend that you get a bowl of water and try and find as many different sounds as you can! Maybe this is one for the bath too...! It was certainly a most enjoyable way to spend our final evening in Sydney ... and indeed in Oz itself. And in case the ACO is interested, rooms in the Opera House can be hired for a performance at a cost of about AUS \$1000 an hour!

**Sarah Main**



# Thinking of Joining Us?

## Then come to our Open Evening on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> October

*This is our third Open Evening and will be held during our rehearsal night on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> October in the main hall of Eggar's School starting at 7.15. This will give musicians interested in playing orchestral music locally an opportunity to come along with their instrument and meet the Conductor, Graham Cross, and members of the orchestra.*

### **We meet at Eggar's School every Wednesday (except in school holidays) from 7.15 to 9.00**

The cost of joining is, £5 for students and £10 for adults. We always welcome new players to the orchestra – there is no audition required to join and we do not insist on you attending every rehearsal. If you are thinking of joining then please contact one of the following:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Telephone Number</b>	<b>Position</b>
Graham Cross	(01420) 562234	Conductor
Chris Leggett	(01730) 893032	Chairman
Mac Newton	(01962) 773130	Secretary

Or visit our website: [www.altonconcertorchestra.org.uk](http://www.altonconcertorchestra.org.uk)

#### **Mission Statement**

The Orchestra exists to serve the local community and to provide a forum for all musicians who enjoy playing in an ensemble. We have a policy of welcoming anyone without the requirement of an audition and we maintain no restrictions on section size within the orchestra. The music we typically play will require someone of at least Grade 3 standard but exams are not expected. The age range of players encompasses year 9 school musicians to retired members. We offer the opportunity for school players to stretch their playing ability.

Our music repertoire is wide and varied to suit all tastes and ranges from classical symphonies to show music incorporating big band and swing. The string section plays together and we are developing the wind section into a separate ensemble. Whatever your musical taste it should be well provided for.

The Orchestra is run by a chairman and committee and the involvement of members in organisation is encouraged and welcomed. We have social evenings from time to time and produce concerts 3 to 4 times a year. Members pay a termly fee to cover music cost etc. We pride ourselves on our friendly, hardworking approach to our music making.

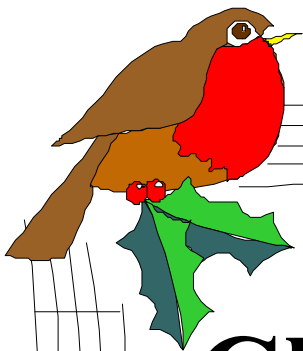
We are fortunate in enjoying a close community relationship with Eggar's School and are very appreciative of their support with rehearsal accommodation.

Come and see for yourself.

We welcome opportunities to perform locally in aid of community causes.

Printed in the Ian Karten CTEC Centre at Treloar College, Alton (01420 87640)





# Festival of Christmas Music

With

**Alton Concert Orchestra,  
Alton Choral Society**

And

**Yourselves**

**Admission free; retiring collection**

For more information visit our website  
[www.altonconcertorchestra.org.uk](http://www.altonconcertorchestra.org.uk)  
Or contact Graham Cross (01420) 562234

The Festival is at the  
**Church of the Good Shepherd  
in Four Marks**

It starts at **7.30 pm**  
on **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December**

