

60 Glorious Years . . .

The 60th anniversary concert in Kendal Parish Church last June was a truly memorable event, combining stirring playing from the orchestra with a host of special features -- John Kenny's antics with carnyx and didgeridoo, a typically energetic guest performance from Catherine Bott of Radio Three, the partnership with the excellent Amabile Girls' Choir, and the premier of Anthony Milledge's overwhelming *Musick's Empire*, specially commissioned for the WYO. "Such was the quality of music and song, that I could have been at any of the major concerts halls in the UK, be it the Bridgewater or Royal Albert," was the verdict of Westmorland Gazette's Adrian Mullen. "Special occasions in our region's music world do not come much better than this..."



Other concerts - successful concerts were also held at Queen Elizabeth School, Kirkby Lonsdale, in November, where the audience could all see our conductor's entrance as a Jedi to best advantage from their excellent new tiered seating, and at..... Kendal's Westmorland Hall as part of the Mary Wakefield Festival in March when WYO performed pieces by Gabrieli, the American William Schuman and their favourite *Into the Storm* by Robert Smith to full fury in this large auditorium.

Hoodie power

Players have worn their new WYO "hoodies" with pride, a fetching design of white lettering on black. The WYO "brand" was in evidence at the latest fund-raising event - a bag-packing at Morrisons in Kendal in May, which raised more than £500 despite the recession. Thank you to all who contributed and all who took part!



Levens Merang-a-tangs

The Levens Merang-a-tangs are a group of children between 7 and 9 years old who love to drum! Under the leadership of class teacher Rachael Wadey, drumming forms an important part of normal music sessions at Levens. Everyone is involved in playing a range of different sizes, shapes and colours of drums and percussion instruments that are similar to those played all around the world. The name "The Levens Merang-a-tangs", suggested by one of the group, was inspired by the first piece that they learnt called the Merengue. The children's energy and enthusiasm for making music together is so evident when they perform - do come along and hear them play at the start of the WYO June concert - they promise a rousing start to a wonderful evening of music.



Blog - another innovation is the orchestra "blog", just launched on the WYO website. Only one contribution so far, but these are early days. Players, helpers, friends, "Friends" -- how was it for you? So sharpen your laptops and have your say. Nothing too serious, mind you. Refer our website →→→

Have you visited:

www.wyo.org.uk

Our Composers

Another highlight of the year has been a piece specially written by our own **Matthew Bell**, cellist, Queen Katherine's student and burgeoning composer. *Firestorm and the Phoenix* evokes the violence and fury of a forest fire then, when this dies down, a phoenix emerging from the ashes.



"It's a real honour and I'm very grateful to Noel for giving me the opportunity," says Matthew. While aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the Orchestra, he insists there's been no "dumbing down". "I always wanted to keep the music at the forefront and that's been my motivation."

Matthew, 18, is taking A levels in Music, History and Economics and hopes to study PPE at university next year, while keeping up his music. "There should be plenty of opportunities for joining orchestras... and hopefully some composing too."

..... our Scientists

The Gazette kindly features WYO regularly and it doesn't stop even when players leave - recently noting how **Tim Leighton**, Professor of Ultrasonics and Underwater Acoustics at Southampton University, claimed that his time in WYO had



Photo: Brian Bell

not only inspired him to follow a career in 'sounds' but taught him how to be a 'Performer'! He tells WYO News: "I still keep playing - I play oboe and Cor in an orchestra, and have an organ installed at 90 degrees to my work desk, so that if I need to think I turn from my papers to the organ I am very glad the WYO is doing well ... your web page looks great - though all your past players were after my time!"

Ed: *There's room in the website Past Players section for many more!! Or post up an entry on the Blog - see over.*

..... and other past players

We have heard that some move on to other Orchestras **Gareth Brookfield**, last WYO leader, to Cambridge University Orchestra, **Ruth Leavett** to University of East Anglia Orchestra on flute and **Ben Leavett** to Bristol Sinfonia and now the Lambeth Orchestra on violin.

Meanwhile Chris **Bert** Talbot (WYO double bass) has hit the headlines with his band **Wild Beasts** on percussion and vocals.....*Wild Beasts just might be one of " if not the " most interesting young band in the Kingdom. ...*
thequietus.com

And on the same day as our Summer Concert - a WYO marriage - Hannah Kelly, flute to Tom Montgomery, percussion.

..... *the values of WYO!!*

Fun Night

Much bread was scattered on the water at a Fun Night in March. The Castle St Centre was packed out with young potential players and



their parents; so much so that it was suggested that in future orchestra members come in the back door to prevent traffic-jams in the corridor. They came from as far afield as Keswick and Carnforth and a good time was had by all 98 players present.



Future projects

For 2010 the orchestra is looking at a joint project with the Liverpool Philharmonic involving Cumbria, Lancashire and Merseyside. Details to follow when confirmed. There was also much enthusiasm from players' representatives for a trip to next year's Edinburgh Festival involving performances in Glasgow as well as the Scottish capital under the auspices of the National Association of Youth Orchestras.



2009

- **Saturday 28th November**
The Lakes School - jointly promoted with Windermere Rotary Club.

2010

- **Saturday 13th March**
Kirkby Stephen Grammar School - Spring Concert
- **Saturday 26th June**
Kendal Parish Church – Summer Concert with Amabile
- **Saturday 27th November**
Casterton School Hall – Autumn Concert