



Workers' Music Association

BULLETIN: SUMMER 2006

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Editorial Team

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Next Issue

We hope to produce the next issue by the end of the year. The cut-off date for receipt of material for publication will therefore be 30 November.

E-Bulletin

If you would like to receive Bulletin by email, thus saving the WMA the costs of both printing and postage, please send a note of your email address, with your request to Steve Randall – steve.bugster@virgin.net

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NOTICES:

DEATHS:

It is with great sadness we report the death of Stan Smith in late August. Stan had been a member of the WMA for many years, and will be well-remembered by many who have attended Summer School as a dedicated student and also as the long-time organiser of the Sunday evening Old Time Music Hall.

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I have very happy memories of working with Stan Smith on old time music hall. We used to put on an old time music

hall event every Sunday at Summer School, with Stan, Sheila Searchfield, Alice Hitchin and others whose names I have forgotten. Stan, Sheila, Alice and myself were also involved in old time music hall shows in London and around. Stan would invariably act as Master of Ceremonies and very good he was too.

Stan also taught guitar and on one occasion I was roped in as a soloist accompanied by about thirty guitars for a session at a museum. It was an old, much valued museum, vulnerable by virtue of possessing a great deal of rather fine woodwork. The event for which I was to sing was on a Sunday afternoon and I had to bring my son, then just a toddler. Because of my involvement I was compelled to leave Richard in the charge of another woman attending the museum. We had just finished when, somewhat flustered, our 'child minder' came up and said she had just prevented Richard from pressing a button which would summon the fire brigade. Phew!! Just as we were breathing a sigh of relief, and coming down the stairs, we saw the awesome sight of numerous firemen coming up the path. Three fire engines on a Sunday afternoon – very expensive! I offered my apologies to the first of these firemen and he tried to shut me up, since he knew that I might well be charged for the expense. Too late. The fire chief heard me and took down particulars. I could ill afford the cost of three fire engines on overtime and waited anxiously for a bill. As it turned out, however, the view was taken that the low siting of the alarm box (well within reach of an enterprising toddler) was a contributory factor and I was not after all charged.

I sang with Stan on other occasions, sometimes as a soloist with guitar accompaniment but more often as part of an old time entertainment. At Summer School we always did an extra old time music hall show on the Wednesday evening for the Working Men's Club where, on Stan's insistence, I always had to include either "It's All Right in the Summertime", performed in a leaf-bedecked bikini, or "I Wouldn't Leave my Little Wooden Hut", performed in a grass skirt. Happy days!

Stan was a great sport and will be remembered with enormous affection by those who knew and worked with him.

Mavis Cook

WMA 70TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

This event, which is to include music from a variety of performers, and John Tilbury as speaker, will take place on Saturday 14 October, from 19.00 to 22.00, at the Dragon Hall, Stukeley Street off Drury Lane in Central London. Tickets will cost £5.00. Further details will be mailed to all members before the event, and we hope that as many as possible will join together to celebrate our anniversary.

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GARDEN PARTY – 23 SEPTEMBER

A garden party will be held on Saturday 23 September at the home of Jan Williams, at 8 Appleby Crescent, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire HG5 9LS.

The intention is to raise funds for a youth scholarship to Summer School, and there will be live music, a barbecue and a bric-a-brac stall. Please contact Jan for more information.

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MUSIC-MAKING WEEKEND: SHERINGHAM YOUTH HOSTEL, NORFOLK

From Friday 17th to Sunday 19th November, there will be an opportunity to enjoy a weekend of making music at the Sheringham Youth Hostel. Music will include Jazz, other instrumental and part-singing.

The cost for full-board for the weekend is £73, with reductions for those staying elsewhere.

If you wish to be a part of what is sure to be a great weekend, please send a deposit of £10 to Mavis Cook, 12 St Andrew's Square, London W11 1RH as soon as possible, together with a note of your name and address, voice and/or instrument and a note of any special food needs.

Balance of fee to be paid by 28th October

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POLITICAL SINGING IN LONDON

Those members in the London area who wish to sing with a political choir are spoiled for choice, as there are such choirs meeting across Greater London.

In Central London, Raised Voices meet on Thursday evenings between 7.30 and 9.30 at the Somerstown

Community Centre, 150 Ossulston Street, Kings Cross NW1 1EE. Tel: 020 7482 5670 / 020 8748 5688
or email: info@raised-voices.org.uk

The WMA Singers also meet on Thursday evenings, from 7.15 to 9.15 at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1 (near Holborn Tube). Tel: 020 8699 1933 / 020 8346 1429 or email: annefschuman@btinternet.com

If North West London is more convenient, Red and Green Choir meets on Monday evenings from 7.30 to 9.30 at the Sidings Community Centre, Brassey Road, NW6. Tel: 020 8992 5462 / 020 7624 6212
or email: kitwilby@blueyonder.co.uk

Those who live in South East London may wish to contact Strawberry Thieves, who meet on Sunday evenings between 7.30 and 9.30 at 2 Pendrell Road, SE4. Tel: 020 7639 5815 or email: johnkategb@aol.com

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WHY NOT TRY RECRUITING FOR YOUR CHOIR, ORCHESTRA OR BAND BY WRITING ABOUT THEM IN BULLETIN? JUST SEND YOUR INFORMATION OR ARTICLE TO ONE OF THE EDITORIAL TEAM FOR INCLUSION IN THE NEXT ISSUE.

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN STUDY AT WORTLEY HALL – REFURBISHMENT APPEAL

Those members who have attended Summer Schools or AGMs at Wortley Hall may be interested to know that the Sheffield Branch of the National Assembly of Women is spearheading a fundraising campaign to assist in the refurbishment of the study named for their organisation.

If you would like to contribute, donations should be made payable to "National Assembly of Women (Sheffield Branch)" and sent to them at 57 Pearson Place, Norton Lees, Sheffield S8 9DE.

INTERNATIONAL OBOE COMPETITION 10-11 MARCH 2007 PARIS-VILLE D'AVRAY.

Programme

First round :

- 1/ Giovanni Benedetto PLATTI : Sonate en do mineur (Editions H.Hofen-Amsterdam)
- 2/ François DEVIENNE : Sonate (Editions Egge Verlag-D.56072 Koblenz)
- 3/ Maurice OHANA : Sarc (Editions Billaudot)
- 4/ Gilbert AMY : Jeux (oboe solo, maximum 4') (Editions Universal UE14988)

Finals :

- 1/ Jean-Louis PETIT : Sonatine pour hautbois (Editions Armiane)
- 2/ PROVER : 3ème Sonate (Editions IMD-Arpège)
- 3/ Richard STRAUSS: Concerto (1er mouvement) (Editions Boosey)

Sheet music for the Ville d'Avray/Paris international oboe competition can be purchased at :
Editions ARMIANE 12 rue d'Anjou, F-78000 Versailles e-mail : armiane@online.fr tel : 01 39 49 00 19

Jury : Jacques VANNEVILLE, David WALTER, Laszlo HADADY, Jean-Marie COTTET, Jean-Louis PETIT

Competition Regulations :

- 1/ The competition is open to all oboist's of any nationality without age limit.
- 2/ The first round will be held on 10 March 2007 and the finals will be on 11 march 2007 at 5 pm. The final round is open to the public.
- 3/ The competition registration fee is 50 euros.
- 4/ The Contestants will be notified as to what time they will compete in the first round. Contestants names will be randomly drawn on 1 march 2007 the scheduled according to the order in which they were drawn. Deadline of sending back the application form : 1 mars 2007.
- 5/ The jury's decisions cannot be appealed

Application

Name : Last First.
.....
adress City Country
..
Postal Code ...

téléphone fax e-mail
.....

I have applied to participate in the International Paris Oboe Competition and have understood all the rules of this competition.
Enclosed is a cheque for 50 euros made out to "Festival de Musique Française"

datesignature.....

Please address your application to :

SECRETARIAT

FESTIVAL DE MUSIQUE FRANCAISE

34 Avenue Bugeaud

F-75116 PARIS

tél.(33.1).56.28 14 57 / e-mail : jlpetit@club-internet.fr

(adress of the competition : Château, 10 rue de Marnes, 92410 Ville d'Avray.)

prizes awarded

First Prize : 1500 euros / Second Prize : 800 euros / Third Prize : 500 euros, récital in France.

Competition sponsored in part by SACEM, SPEDIDAM, General Council Hauts de Seine, Commune and Concerts Association Ville d'Avray, Editions Armiane-Versailles, Egge Verlag-Koblenz

<http://int.comp.paris.va.free.fr/index.html>

ARTICLES:

DIAMOND JUBILEE SUMMER SCHOOL – IMPRESSIONS FROM THREE STUDENTS:

ANOTHER GREAT YEAR

This year's Summer School at Giggleswick School opened with a formal celebration dinner at which messages from Aubrey Bowman, Joan Horrocks and Humphrey Lyttleton were read out. After the superb meal, students then repaired to the bar where they were entertained by Summer School's own resident dance band.

Whilst many of the tutors were those who have been with us for quite some time, it was a pleasure to welcome the return of Graham Tear after a gap of several years, this time to tutor the Symphony Orchestra and the Conducting Class. We were also delighted to secure the services of Robin Garside of Sheffield as tutor for the Folk Course, and Bill Tamblyn, teaching the Advanced Composition course.

Students seem to be getting used to Giggleswick (although those who attended schools at Wortley Hall will always have a deep affection for it) and, once again, the weather was kind to us, which made travelling the distance between various areas of the school pleasanter than it might otherwise have been.

The quality of the music produced by this year's courses was superb. The Jazz courses produced fantastically enjoyable performances and, as ever, the students on these courses clearly had a wonderful time. The Opera course performed an amusing and skilful adaptation of Smetana's "The Bartered Bride", with the opening and closing choruses augmented by students on the Choir course.

As a student on the Folk Course, I can bear testimony to Robin Garside's skill as a tutor, performer and all-round good bloke! He coped magnificently with a disparate group of students, and ensured that everybody felt included in all elements of the classes. He also performed stirring work with the Ceilidh Band under Lousia Ridgway.

This year saw the introduction of a new course under the direction of Bill Tamblyn which was billed as "Singing for Pleasure" but, in the event, the course concentrated on World music, with students singing a broad repertoire of songs from Africa, South America and the gospel tradition. The sessions also acted as a physical workout, as it proved impossible to sing these songs standing still! Students on the Advanced Composition course also really appreciated Bill's idiosyncratic teaching style.

Brass Band and Strings courses also produced some beautiful music, and this year the school delivered another innovation, with Solo Singing students having the opportunity of singing with the String Orchestra. I have to say how magnificently Elizabeth Jack sang with them at their course concert – it was a delight and privilege to hear.

Once again it was a joy to see growing numbers of younger students contributing so much to the school, and a family with a young child all taking full advantage of everything the school had to offer and performing together to great acclaim. I was also delighted with the way the "younger elements" entered fully into the spirit of the school – dancing the night away at the ceilidhs, and not being too proud to act as bunny rabbits (it's a long story!).

Whilst Giggleswick School may not yet hold the place in our hearts that Wortley Hall does, students on all courses seem to have had a good time this year, and the quality of music produced at the final concerts and during the informal concerts during the week was such that I don't think the school can be deemed anything other than a success.

Jennie Vaughan

FROM A FIRST-TIMER: COME! ENJOY!

WOW!

How can I start to tell you how I feel?
It's been a wonderful week of experiences,
surrounded by fantastic sounds,
creating such joy within me!

I can't thank everyone enough for the welcome they've given me,
making me feel a part of the whole and not alone.

Allowing me to discover, flourish and grow,
feeling not inadequate, but
supported and guided through my journey,
that has allowed me to
try new ideas,
exploring all possibilities.
Enjoying my feelings of achievement, knowing
I'm not laughed at when I make blaring mistakes.

Every step of the learning curve
has led me to a new beginning,
giving me courage to travel on.

I'm coming back next year.
Everyone should try this – at least once!

COME

ENJOY

Jackie Matthews

(Written at 2.00 am when I couldn't sleep because of all the music going on in my head!)

The Best Summer School EVER!

All the tutors, without exception, were excellent and we had some new young students, some of whom were brilliant. The whole organised by a united and friendly committee.

Yes, there is sadness too. Old stagers like me miss Wortley, a place to which I had become sentimentally attached. I also missed old friends who had passed on or did not attend. But then, I suppose we have to make way for the youngsters I say with reluctance at the age of 83!

Giggleswick School has disadvantages for older people (I had to climb on a chair to get into bed). I miss the lounge where the whole school could congregate, but this couldn't happen now as the school has become so large. In fact Giggleswick has the advantage that it could take even more students as the school becomes ever more popular, as I predict it will.

Wendy Corum

RULES...RULES...RULES...RULES...RULES...RULES... RULES...RULES...RULES...RULES...RULES...RULES...

On the Agenda of the Annual Meeting this year there were a number of proposals to change the Rules of the WMA. Unfortunately there were not enough members at the meeting for the changes to be discussed. Since then the Executive has asked the Rules Committee to continue to review the Rules and suggest changes where appropriate.

As a member of the Rules Committee I am asking you, the members, what you think of the Rules. You can download them from the WMA website.

<http://www.workersmusic.co.uk>

Have a look at them. If you think they should be changed let us know. Even if you are only concerned about a small change to one or two rules write, to Mavis Cook, our Secretary, explaining your point. It doesn't have to be technically or legally laid out, the WMA has members who have experience in this area.

Like other organisations, I suspect that most members will not feel enthusiastic about looking at the Rules. We **ALL** find rules boring and there is always something more enjoyable to be doing. BUT rules are very important. Good rules allow an organisation to be run efficiently and for the different views amongst members to be resolved impartially, objectively, **AND AMICABLY**.

So, have a look at them. You will see that some of them are out of date and some could not be tested legally at the current time. The Rules Committee has a duty to bring forward amendments to bring the Rules up to date. Let us have your views so we can consider them as part of our deliberations. There is nothing in our procedures that prevents you from submitting your changes directly to the next Annual Meeting. But, please take this extra opportunity to put your views on the rules to the Rules Committee so that we can be sure we are reflecting the views of you, the members, in our deliberations. **Rob Harper**

DOUBLE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birmingham Clarion Singers gave an inspiring concert at All Saints Church, Kings Heath, Birmingham on 24th June in celebration of Mozart's 250th birthday and Vice President Katharine Thomson's 100th birthday.

We had some superb singing by the Singers, the opening "Hymn to Friendship" setting the mood for the programme. We then heard a selection of Mozart, with contributions from soloists that included Jeremy Ballard (violin) and Antoine Mitchell (piano) playing Adagio E major K261, Helen Mills (flute) and David Carroll (guitar) playing their own arrangements of three pieces by Mozart, Adam Nager (baritone) singing from Eine Kleine Deutsche Kantata (Little German Cantata) and Richard Black (piano) playing Eight Variations on a Theme Attributed to Mozart by composer Aubrey Bowman.

All the music was presented with warmth and passion, and it made it all the more worthwhile when Katharine Thomson in person (100 years old) joined the audience in the second half. Thank you Clarion Singers and all the other artists. A special thank you to Rob Harper who gave me a lift to the station after the concert!

This was a memorable feast of music. Thanks again.
Paul Williamson

Concert of Music by DAL Strutt & Keith Sparrow, Conway Hall, Holborn, 15th July 2006



Keith Sparrow and Maria Caravanas, performing at the concert

Although the audience was small, the concert opened promptly at 7.30, with Dal's **Sonorities for Piano**, which she describes as "a piece in free style exploiting the sonorities of the instrument". Listening to the sounds, enjoying the vibrations of the strings, marvelling at the patience and bravery of the pianist, who held the notes, and left the spaces between sounds, to allow the full quality of sound to be enjoyed by the ears, was a fascinating experience.

Her **Essay for Cello** sympathetically performed by Nicholas Cherniavsky, was somewhat similar in style, contrasting effects being achieved by means of stroking the bow, plucking with the fingers, and striking strongly with the bow, giving the audience surprises every now and again.

Taking Refuge in the Trinity, described as an old Celtic prayer, was sung by the composer, who produced a high quality alto voice, strong and pure, beautiful to hear.

Suite for Cello a piece in five movements, which Nicholas played with verve, was just a few minutes too long for my taste. Again, changes of mood were experienced, and the instrument very fully explored.

Her song, **A Plea for Unicorns**, was a one-minute lament for lost belief in magic and imagination. Dal is a composer of nerve, brave enough to let the silences illustrate the sounds, and it is always entertaining to hear her work.

No two composers could be more different in approach and style than Dal Strutt and Keith Sparrow, as was proved to be the case at this event. Keith's melodious settings of poetry were strongly performed by Maria Caravanas in her usual professional style. **Absent-mindedness**, by Alison

Prince is a realisation of the poet's condition, and a clever re-thinking of the meaning of the word. The music follows the free style of the poem.

Cecil Day Lewis compares his love to a **white tree rose**, and fancies her thoughts as stars, and the music reflects this theme in washes of arpeggios. **Song** by Sir William Davenant, is a call to a new day, a call to his love to wake up. My favourite, **One Day the young will die no more**, by David Martin, (*poet of the Spanish Civil War*) is a call for peace, and hope.

Graham Marsden (Baritone) continued the recital of songs by Keith, with **Elizabethan Sailor's Song**, by Charles Causley, a love song on returning to his duties on board ship, where she may not follow, very brisk and light.

Shakespeare's Sonnet No. 26, musing and soulful, conveying the meaning of the words in sound. **On Wenlock Edge**, A. E. Houseman, the music rushes to and fro along the keyboard, reflecting the wind and weather, and the history of this place.

The final piece of this programme **Sonata for Clarinet, Cello and Piano**, performed by Keith at the piano, Nicholas on the cello and Jill Anderson on Clarinet, was a lively interwoven mix of airs that kept my interest to the end, which came upon me very suddenly. I would like to have heard more, or the whole thing again.

If you were put off by the entrance price, it is a shame, you would have certainly got your money's worth.

Anne Schuman

From **Aubrey Bowman** : "An interesting programme, thought provoking on the one hand and on the other hand stimulating to the senses as well as the mind, and with the highest degree of professionalism from the excellent performances."

MUSIC EDUCATION IN VENEZUELA

Following the recent brief visit to Britain by Venezuelan President **Hugo Chavez**, it is timely to tell MANA members about an inspiring musical education programme which has been developing in Venezuela for over 30 years, and which is now being actively supported by the Chavez government, which has passed a **law guaranteeing every child the right to a musical education.**

Dr. Jose Antonio Abreu, a former Minister of Culture, initiated the programme back in 1974, at a rehearsal in an underground car park, with just a handful of children. Today it is estimated that a quarter of a million young Venezuelans are either playing an instrument or singing in a choir. The programme has transformed the lives of many under-privileged and at-risk youngsters in the process. Whereas in 1975 there were only two symphony orchestras in the whole country, today there are around 200 – both amateur and professional – with at least one professional orchestra in every state.

Dr. Abreu sees musical education as a vital part of growing up. Children as young as 2 or 3 are given the chance of handling and playing on an instrument. "Historically" Abreu says "classical music was performed by an elite for an elite, and then by an elite for the majority. Now it is being performed by a majority for a majority."

Venezuela has been visited by some of the world's leading musicians such as **Placido Domingo**, **Claudio Abbado** and one of MANA's most eminent Patrons **Sir Simon Rattle**, who said during his visit that if he were asked where the future of classical music lay he would answer "Here in Venezuela." Rattle was interviewed in a recent film **Tochar y Luchar (Play and Struggle)** which pays tribute to the musical education movement. He describes it as being like a "resurrection, which doesn't just enrich lives, it also saves them, promoting social and psychological health."

So while many schools in rich countries in North America and Europe, including Britain, are taking music off the curriculum because of lack of funding for instruments and teaching time, a poor country like Venezuela finds the money to make music education a priority.

Makes you think, doesn't it?

Joan Horrocks

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STRAWBERRY THIEVES

The Strawberry Thieves, under their conductor John Hamilton, gave a stirring performance at the start of an evening of outstanding cultural quality drama and music, in the Vauxhall Community Centre on Tuesday 29th August, which was followed by a play about the struggle of the Palestinians living behind the wall built by the Israeli Government.

The actors in this play were Palestinian youths who live in the Balata refugee camp, and they had written this piece themselves, and as it was spoken in Arabic, a translation was provided for the audience. This was not entirely necessary, they were so excellent at the mime and dance that the audience was moved to tears – followed by rapturous applause.



The performers from Balata refugee camp

One of the dances required the participation of the entire audience, which certainly melted any lingering coolness that there might have been among those present.

As hosts to the group, New Generation, a group of Colombians living in London, also took part in this evening's entertainment, with dance and drumming, and their painted faces and costumes swirled about as they leaped and stamped about.

Music for these events was provided electronically (and very loudly), the stage was bare, the drapes minimal, and two cardboard boxes represented the checkpoint.

The visit of the Balata group was made possible by raising money at events such as that put on earlier in the year, and organised by Strawberry Thieves choir members, at the Rivoli, a glorious music hall style theatre in Brockley, South London, where £2,000 was raised in June. Attila the Stockbroker, Dr Jazz and David Rovics were the stars which drew in a large audience.

Anne Schuman

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FIREBRAND OF ZURICH –

(Extract from an article in The Guardian, 13 April 2006, by David McKie)

Father Michael Seed, who some believe will steer Tony Blair into the Catholic church when he ceases to be prime minister, is clearly a remarkable man. His recreations listed in Who's Who are: politicians, pizza and Zwinglianism. The latter is somewhat surprising since Zwingli died at Kappel in 1531 at a battle with the Catholic cantons of Zurich.

In listing Zwinglianism as one of his recreations, Father Seed presumably does not mean to imply any blanket subscription to Zwinglian views, some of which must in Catholic eyes amount, I imagine, to heresy, while others at very least must be classified as misguided: for instance, his teaching (which seems especially topical on the day before Good Friday) that music ought not to be used in worship.

This suspicion of music, as some kind of man-made, man-centred distraction has persisted in some Protestant churches. The 20th century Swiss composer Frank Martin, who grew up in a Calvinist household, was so moved, according to Grove, by hearing Bach's St. Matthew Passion when he was 12 that he became obsessively devoted to Bach. Yet his Mass for Double Choir, written in 1922, was at his insistence left unperformed for something like 40 years. As recent outings on Radio 3 have established, it's a quite exceptionally beautiful work; and that seems to have been the problem. He seems to have feared that the savouring of its beauty would distract listeners from the recognition of the glory of God.

Those who love music in churches, though, might very well cite against Zwingli the specific instruction in Psalm 150 that God should be praised with the sound of the trumpet, the psaltery, the harp, the timbrels, the stringed instruments and the pipe, the loud symbols and the high-sounding cymbals – an edict that, by extension, ought presumably now to justify such later inventions as the saxophone, trombone and synthesiser. Perhaps some latter-day Zwinglian – or some student of Zwinglianism, like Father Seed – could explain on what grounds this direct and unambiguous biblical ordinance ought not to be dutifully honoured.

Submitted by Mavis Cook

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HIROSHIMA DAY : 61ST ANNIVERSARY

The **WMA Singers** and **Raised Voices** provided the music at the annual Hiroshima Day ceremony in Tavistock Square, on the 6TH August – the 61st Anniversary of the dropping of the first atom bomb by the Americans.



The day was sunny and very hot, but the people were attentive to the speakers, who included Jeremy Corbyn, MP who chaired the occasion, The Mayor of Camden, Kate Hudson CND Chair, while Pat Arrowsmith read two of her poems.

The religious community was represented by the Vicar of St. Pancras Church; a Buddhist monk from the Battersea Peace Pagoda and Sheikh Dr Muhammad Yusuf, an Imam and Research Fellow of the Interfaith Alliance. Rose Hacker, at 100 years of age, stood and spoke strongly about learning to control feelings of rage, anger and hatred which she believes are born in every child, and 11 year old Sonia, who founded an organisation called **Children against War** made an appeal which brought tears to my eyes. She presented the Japanese monk with a sack full of 1,000 paper cranes of different colours.

The sister of one of Hiroshima's victims expressed her emotions at discovering that there were people all over the world who were attempting to maintain a kind of peace, and hoped that this campaign would eventually prove successful in obtaining the destruction of all nuclear weapons, and all wars. Tony Benn spoke, in his usual casual manner, suggesting that people found it easy to send other young men to die, who had never faced war themselves, and he named Bush and Blair as prime examples.

The choirs sang:- *"No More War"*, *"Against the Atom Bomb"*, *"Hiroshima Survivor's Song"* (in Japanese), *"No More Iraqs"*, *"Who Do They Think They Are?"*, and the whole gathering joined in with the final rendering of *"The H-Bomb's Thunder"*, before settling down for a picnic and get-together in the park.

There was a stall of WMA literature, which resulted in sales amounting to £25.35.

Anne Schuman

LETTERS:

To the Editors of the Bulletin.

I cannot allow the inaccurate allegations in a couple of recent letters in the columns of the Spring 2006 Bulletin to go unchallenged.

Audrey Brown's letter

The letter by Audrey Brown partly answers Mavis when it speaks of missives from me. If they were bereft of content there would be nothing for her upon to comment. Audrey can't have it both ways. Unfortunately and disappointingly it seems that Audrey wishes to support damaging policies without being criticised for it. If someone agrees to be elected to office, they must be prepared to be accountable for what they do.

She doesn't like my proposals to stop the WMA from going broke and ceasing to exist. It doesn't seem that the EC has chosen a good treasurer does it? Getting hysterical and threatening me will not put money in the WMA bank account. Some people will not face the truth. We cannot go on having an EC living in different parts of the country. Even a company generating a steady flow of income would not be happy carrying the expense of such costs. Why can't she see it?. Comparisons between Unison/NALGO and the WMA do not make any sense. What is the annual subscription to those unions these days? About ten times the WMA sub. And they have more than 200 members paying it. Face realities Audrey. And many unions are having to carry out structural changes because of financial pressures. Its called survival and making more effective use of resources. My own union Natfhe has just merged with AUT to form a new union (UCU) for the University and tertiary sector of education.

All I was suggesting is a return to the position which we had about five years ago where by having a largely London-based EC our monthly costs were not a financial burden to the membership. Our constituencies are not regional as they are with Parliamentary boundaries. For Audrey to confuse the two is a pity. What is needed is a team who will work for the benefit of the objectives of the WMA, and for sixty or so years it was London-based. Did that make it undemocratic?

Which Committee does Audrey refer to when she writes 'Committee'? It is unclear whether she means the Executive Committee or the Summer School Committee. This is one of the problems. She and others who are on both committees mix up their priorities. It is only they want to control everything by being on both that we are in this mess. How can the Summer School Committee be accountable to the EC when most of the SSC are on the EC? Does Audrey's Unison experience suggest that is

good practice? I doubt it.

I am accused of imposing things on the WMA. I don't, and I can't impose anything, so Audrey's dramatic language is misplaced. Every motion I have put to AGMs is a legitimate motions. If she reads Company or Constitutional Law, or the advice given in TUC publications she would know that.

Mavis's Letter

For Mavis to pretend that she had no idea for the reason for the court appearance is totally amazing. There has been constant correspondence between her and me, copies of which I have always given to the other members of the EC so they knew exactly what was being written. The principal matters have been the ones about the right for the meetings of the membership to instruct the EC if they wish, and the right of every member, not just me, to have a list of members. This debate has gone on for 3 years, and for Mavis to act as if she was surprised is pure hypocrisy. I have made the case which I put to the court in WMA debates over and over again, and they have been rejected by many of the EC. It left me no option but to take the matter to court to establish these right for all members, not just me.

If one reads Vernon Frosts report we see that he offers to send anyone a copy of my submission to the Court. And he wrote that before attending the court with Mavis.

In other words he and Mavis, who claimed to be representing the WMA lied to the judge when they said they had not seen my submission and claimed they did not know why they were called there.

So what did the court rule

Court ruling one.

"Declaration that members of defendant Association entitled to inspect register of members and take copies of names and addresses."

Please notice it says members not Roy Bride. This a right of all members although is being depicted as just a personal gain by Mavis Vernon , Audrey and others. I have spent nearly £300 of my money to establish a right for all members.

One EC member wrote that he was looking forward to appearing in court. He thought I wouldn't do it perhaps. The EC has even attempted to sabotage the right of members to requisition an Extraordinary General Meeting. Mavis sent a letter to members saying it was not a legal meeting, when it was most certainly called by more than twenty qualified members according to rule 4d.

Mavis begins her letter by referring to a wasted morning in

court. That is what she thinks of your rights. Dear me, confirming members rights was just a little irritation, and almost interfered with her enjoyment. When I think of the vile things she has written about people I shall weep not even one little tear.

She makes the case about me being better off than her. Yes, that is true, but I would not use WMA funds as she does to pursue a private vendetta as she has, and not just against me either. I paid the court fees so it should not cost the WMA anything. I have also paid for a full transcript of the hearing so there is no need to spend WMA money on that.

Mavis and Vernon Frost are still making libellous accusations in letters to me about theft by another respected member, and they do not seem to be worried about potential costs if they had to pay damages by their false accusations. Audrey doesn't seem even slightly interested in shutting them up or expelling them for this behaviour.

Mavis was written to by the Financial Services Authority (FSA) about my complaint. They wrote to her about these matters. It was the FSA who advised me to take the matter to court. To pretend that she didn't know what it was about is disingenuous to say the least. Indeed, originally I had intended to take the matter in a Magistrates court, and an officer of that court had obviously been in touch with Mavis. At the AGM last year March 2005, the matter which went to court was reported there, so she knew what the issues were. I tried repeatedly to have the matters settled at AGM's but have had continual rebuttals by those who would not see members rights. And Audrey has the gall to talk about democracy! If one writes to the EC some of them complain about being challenged. And many of them don't even have the courtesy to reply. What would members say about their MP if he/she refused to answer to their electorate? "Kick them out", I would think. If people offer themselves for office they should be prepared to do the job properly, and be answerable for what they do.

In addition to that I had to write to the Financial Services Authority to respond to a political smear about me in a letter to them by Vernon Frost.

If 'clobbering' is revealing that Mavis had been misleading our members for 3 years then the WMA would have been better off if she had been 'clobbered' 3 years ago.

As a last minute piece of information, I have to say the Court Action is not yet over. I regret this, but it being forced upon me by others. Details will be made known shortly.

As for what I shall write to members. I promise it will be

accurate, and supported by evidence. I will not make attacks upon people on the basis of their personal characteristics, my comments will be on what has been done or not done. I will challenge unfairness, authoritarianism and any refusal to be accountable. I will defend the WMA against any attack on its constitution, its funds, and the rights of members. I will criticise any undermining of the purposes for which the WMA was created and press for objectives to be promoted in any way possible in any WMA function. Those are my intentions. I do not see how Mavis can regard them as unwelcome. Are they to her?

Roy Bride

BULLETIN CONTENT – INFORMATION AND LETTERS

Members are reminded that Bulletin is for **all** of them, and that the editorial team can only work with whatever is sent to them!

If you wish to see musical cartoonssend us some! If you want to recruit for your grouptell us all about it.

Have you seen a really good film lately, or bought a wonderful CD? Don't keep them to yourself – write a review so that we can all enjoy them too!

Share some of your musical memories with the rest of the membership, or use Bulletin to request information on musical topics that have always proved tricky. There is a wealth of experience amongst our membership, and it is a precious resource that should be put to good use.

Please help us to keep improving Bulletin, by supplying the articles that will make it a newsletter that everyone will be keen to read.

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ECO-FRIENDLY BULLETIN

Help us to save costs and to save the planet by having your Bulletin emailed to you.

If you wish to receive Bulletin by email, please email Steve Randall at steve.bugster@virgin.net and inform him.