



MILNGAVIE MUSIC

The newsletter of Milngavie Music Club

DUDOK QUARTET FINALLY MAKE IT TO MILNGAVIE!



Next month (on February 13th) we're looking forward to hearing, at long last, a group whose planned visit in 2020 was a casualty of the Covid lock-down. The Dudok Quartet Amsterdam is one of Europe's most innovative ensembles, fearless in their quest to challenge the orthodoxies of chamber music practice.

The quartet takes its unusual name from the famous Dutch modernist architect Willem Marinus Dudok (1884–1974), a music-lover who composed in his spare time.

The Dudoks like to extend their repertoire with new commissions and fascinating arrangements of early music, and enjoy designing programmes with unexpected combinations of composers. But they also bring fresh thinking to their instruments: *'We use different types of bows for different styles of music. We preferably play music composed up to the late 19th century with unwound gut strings. For more recent repertoire we use either wound gut or steel strings.'*

The quartet's precious instruments are themselves a vital factor in their mission to help listeners delve more deeply into the music: violins made by Francesco Goffriller and Vincenzo Panormo, a viola by Jean Baptiste Lefèbvre and a cello by Hendrik Jacobs, all on loan from the Dutch Musical Instrument Foundation.

In recent years imaginative musicians such as the Dudoks and the excellent Consone Quartet, who have played for us in Milngavie three times now, have been stimulating new thinking in the chamber music world. The Dudok Quartet *'aims to show ... that music can lead us to profundity and connection especially when it provokes friction. The true meaning of music reveals itself in a shared experience in which you, as a listener, play a vital role.'*

Remembering Dr Ahilya Noone



We were sad to learn at the beginning of the year of the death of our friend and former MMC committee colleague Dr Ahilya Noone.

Ahilya was born in the former British colony of Guyana where her father

distinguished career in public health, first in London and then, from 1995, in Scotland where she was Consultant Epidemiologist at the Scottish Centre for Infection and Environmental Health.

Ahilya joined the committee of Milngavie Music Club after her retiral in 2006 and her years as Concert Secretary mark a watershed in the club's history. Her tireless devotion to seeking out the best artists for the club and her natural warmth and ability to connect with musicians made the club a place where performers felt especially valued. She made a crucial contribution to our growth and success in recent years and will be greatly missed by her many friends here.



was deputy director of medical services. She completed her secondary education in England at Badminton School. Perhaps it was there that her passion for classical music was kindled; in 1958 she performed (playing triangle!) in the premiere of Michael Tippett's 'The Crown of the Year,' which was specially composed for the school. She went on to medical studies at Somerville College, Oxford and from there had a

MEET THE COMMITTEE

Barbara MacLeod
Publicity



I am my husband's expensive souvenir from Canada! My childhood contact with music was through the church and then at secondary school where I learned to read music. I was a member of our High School (Concert) Band where I was given a clarinet.

In the 1980s when my eldest child (at Bearsden Primary) was offered a school violin to play I had a go too. Being married to a piper who loved a ceilidh, music meant live sessions with friends at home or afloat (we had a yacht). Most of the time we were cruising on the west coast of Scotland exploring remote sea lochs, particularly ones which enabled access to mountains (especially Munros!) by sea.

For 40 years I was involved with the Strathspey and Reel Society scene. I was part of the revival of Scottish music, and watched with interest as it grew in schools and the RSAMD offered courses in traditional music.

The main part of my publicity role is the production of the brochure and posters. This I do at home using desk-top publishing software on my Mac.

VISITING THE HUB

In the last edition of the Music Club's newsletter there was a general invitation to members to go along and experience an evening with the Music Hub. It had already been suggested to me that I might be interested to see what happened at the Hub so in October I took up the invitation, albeit with some hesitation. I wondered how the players, mostly amateur with a sprinkling of professionals, would feel about a visitor observing them as they gathered for the enjoyment of playing together. I need not have worried. My welcome was appropriately low-key but genuine. I guess that the players soon forgot I was there as they concentrated on the music.

That evening those attending were divided into three smaller groups, each of which rehearsed the same piece of music for about an hour, before meeting to perform for the other two groups. As a non-player I found it fascinating to watch and listen as the small group of mixed experience sight-read a piece, about which most had no prior knowledge, and then refined their performance.



It was interesting to listen to three performances and then to hear frank but kind and constructive comments from one of the professional players. [Ed: this slightly competitive format followed by feedback is an extremely unusual event for the Hub. We're usually very egalitarian and each group plays different pieces.]

I found the whole evening enjoyable, interesting and informative. While chatting during the tea break which followed the performances, several participants were kind enough to tell me facts about their instrument which were new to me.

Anyone can go along to a Hub session. All the organisers ask is that you contact them beforehand to arrange a date. (They can only cope with so many visitors at a time!) I certainly found it a worthwhile experience.

Deirdre Holding

[Ed: speak to any committee member at a Friday concert to ask about coming along. Information about the Hub can be found on the Music Club's website.]

Ask the Resol String Quartet

Melody and drama in Schubert's early string music was the focus of the Music Hub Autumn workshop, coached by the Resol String Quartet. Milngavie Music subscribers joined us in the foyer for a thrilling up-close performance by the Resols of Schubert's D.173 quartet. The informal setting gave a chance for questions and an insight into professional quartet life:

Q: How do you start to practice a piece?
'With chamber music you're playing everyone else's part not just your own, so study the score' (we noticed some playing from the score too). 'Listen to lots of different performances to get to know the piece'.

Q: How do you arrive at a common interpretation?
'Lots of rehearsals!' Aside from weeks of personal practice, they expect to spend three days of rehearsal time on a single quartet. They are focused by the questions: 'What is the character we're trying to convey? What are we meant to be communicating?' Body movement and gestures are used to transmit musical intention to each other and the audience, well-demonstrated in their performance. Lastly, they maintain a continuing commitment to 'A spirit of discovery and staying open to each others' ideas'.

See the Resol String Quartet in action on Saturday 17th January at 11.30am in New Kilpatrick Parish Church.

Rising Costs

The committee is grappling with rising costs, particularly artists' fees which have gone up around 15% in the last two or three years. We are determined to maintain the high standard of performer we have all come to expect, so regrettably we shall have to increase single ticket and subscription prices for next season.

AUDIENCE spotlight



We (John and Christine Davies) have lived in Milngavie since 1987 but didn't come across the Music Club until we heard that a friend of our elder daughter was performing. Our first subscription was for the season 2019–20 and we have been coming ever since. We enjoy the variety of music and the range of instruments. We are so lucky to be able to attend such impressive concerts within a few minutes' walk of our house. The programme notes are also much appreciated in giving interesting background information on each piece and the links between the pieces in the programme.

Neither of us plays an instrument but our two daughters were more accomplished on the violin and oboe. We (usually!) enjoyed hearing them practice and we hope that this desire to make music passes to our grandchildren. Our daughters were enthusiastic members of the Bearsden and Milngavie Youth Orchestra. John helped to run BMYO for some years and we notice that the audience of MMC includes several former organisers of BMYO.

We moved to Milngavie on taking up jobs at Glasgow University. Since we retired, we have joined the Bearsden and Milngavie u3a (<https://bam.u3asite.uk/>), an organisation for members to '*learn together, make friends and have fun*'. John is the Membership Secretary and is always happy to talk to anyone interested in joining! BaM u3a now has over 900 members and 60 interest groups. Several of the groups are based around music, such as Music Appreciation, Operagoers, Operatic Music Entirely and the Ukulele Band.

The new Scottish Consortium of Music Societies is slowly gaining members (including MilngavieMusic). Their developing website now has a list of concerts from the affiliated music clubs across the country. Going on holiday in Scotland? Or just fancy a day out with music? Have a look at the list to see if there are any lovely chamber music events at your destination!



<https://scoms.org.uk/>

Taking Performance to Another Level

Did you notice our new staging when Colin Currie came to play for us in November? No, of course not! You were too busy being dazzled by the array of instruments on the stage and the variety of fantastic sounds Colin produced.

The platform at Cairns Church makes sight-lines good for the whole audience, but the steps make life difficult for larger groups or those with lots of equipment. We commissioned Grant Rutherford, a local carpenter, to solve the problem. The staging is custom-built to fit the curve of the steps and provides a larger level surface for performers. It comprises six easy-to-transport sections.



The finishing touch was staining the wood: another job for the committee! We had a lot of fun, and it was very quick with seven of us getting stuck in.



What's on at Douglas?



Following the success of our Variety and Christmas concerts in the Autumn, two tempting concerts are planned for March. It would be fantastic if people came to support our talented young musicians. Both concerts are at Douglas Academy and tickets will be available on the door (£8).

The first concert is our Annual Recital: a selection of the best performances that Douglas has to offer. There will be plenty of solo performances, from piano to vocal repertoire. Chamber groups, tutored by many established Scottish musicians, also feature. This event is on **Friday 6th March** at 7.30pm, and is our showcase concert. Don't miss it!

The second concert is the Spring Concert, where we also have a large variety of ensembles playing: three choirs, three orchestras, a wind band, and a recently-created percussion ensemble. This concert will be more varied and light-hearted than the annual recital. It takes place on **Wednesday 25th March** at 7.30pm.

Gregor Bates

LOOKING BACK

Over the years, Milngavie Music Club has hosted many fine piano trios, and we look forward to welcoming a distinguished one in our March 20th concert. But one very special trio, which played for the club in 1960, came to Milngavie from Czechoslovakia, as it then was.



En-route to Milngavie?

The Suk Trio was the mainstay of our four-concert weekend 'festival' that October, when they played not only trios but violin-piano and cello-piano repertoire as well. Individually, they were among the great Czech musicians of the post-WWII years. Their leader, Josef Suk, had an incredible pedigree: grandson of the composer Josef Suk, and great-grandson of Dvořák, no less! Like Suk, the pianist Jan Panenka had a world-wide reputation as a soloist and all three, including cellist Josef Chuchro, were closely associated with the great Czech Philharmonic Orchestra.

Curiously, though they played solo and duo sonatas by Martinů and Janáček in their programmes, they played no Czech trios.

We'll remedy that omission in March with the great G minor Trio by Smetana, played by the Shaham-Erez-Wallfisch Trio.



MUSIC HUB ACTIVITIES

Autumn 2025

The Music Hub is bristling with energy these days which you might not expect in a group of players with an average age somewhere north of 65! Our numbers have increased which means we now have to hire four rooms at Bearsden Cross Church. The extra room is helpful because it makes it easier to develop our less-experienced players.

Our most recent signing has been playing the violin for less than a year so if you visit the Music Hub you will hear music played at many different levels. If you want to see us in action on a Tuesday night you will be very welcome. [Ed: see Deirdre's article on page 2 about doing just that.]

You may have spotted us providing music for the Bearsden Festival in early December and this term a trio has paid two visits to Abbotsford Care Home where an hour of musical entertainment is much appreciated.

Our second informal Christmas Concert was a great success; we were allowed to use St. Andrew's Church in Milngavie for free which helped us to raise £410 for the charity Shelter. I like to think that was down to the quality of the playing but maybe the sherry served with homemade mince pies had something to do with it.

At the beginning of November we had a near disaster when Bearsden Church's boilers were condemned. We could have been left without a home but with some small electric heaters, a lot of extra clothes and undimmed enthusiasm, we played on regardless. The whole term has been, on many levels, a great success.

Pat Field

PUZZLE CORNER: CONNECTIONS

Arrange the 16 items here into four groups of four by figuring out the common themes or categories for each group. Can you spot them? There's a modest prize for the first person to mail newsletter@milngaviemusic.org correctly identifying the groups and the connecting category, but it's really about the satisfaction of being as twisty as your puzzle setter. Answers in the next newsletter. Hub players are not eligible for this competition!

Beethoven	Antarctica	J.S. Bach	Mozart
O.U.P.	Handel	Italian	Peters
Scottish	Bärenreiter	Britten	New World
Guistini	Schumann	Faber	D. Scarlatti

MilngavieMusic Spring 2026 Schedule

16 January
13 February
20 March
24 April

Elena Urioste and Tom Poster
Dudok Quartet Amsterdam
Shaham-Erez-Wallfisch Trio
Dunedin Consort
preceded at 6.15pm by the AGM

