



## Welcome to the Winter edition of our Newsletter.....

Our 47<sup>th</sup> concert season got off to an excellent start in November. We had a significant number of new concert goers, several of whom were first time attendees. They offer us much encouragement as we continue to work hard to grow our audiences. All those who came to the November concert will long remember the outstanding contribution of William Bracken on the piano when we were treated to a wonderful performance of Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No 1. The feedback we received from audience members was very positive. Just before the concert in November we learned that our usual Saturday date in February was not available to us so we made the decision to move the concert forward to the Sunday afternoon. We have been pondering on this idea for some time to help attract more families to our concerts and now circumstances have forced our hand. We hope that many families will have been encouraged to join us for what is usually a very popular concert in the Orchestra's repertoire. The music in today's concert will be very familiar to us all and we have enjoyed rehearsing the concert programme, particularly Mark Lansom's new arrangement. We hope you will enjoy today's performance and will be encouraged to come to our next concert on May 7<sup>th</sup>, details of which can be found overleaf. Thank you for your continuing support and please do share about your experience with your friends, family and neighbours. We would love to see them at a future WSO concert.

## "In Conversation with..."



Ian Lucas has been the MP for Wrexham since 2001. A native of the North East and a Wrexham resident since 1986, Ian and his wife Norah are regular attendees at WSO concerts. Their children, Ellen and Patrick, have both been recent members of the Orchestra. Ian talks to Orchestrate about himself, his family, work and interest in music.

**Ian, can you tell us a little about your early years?** 'I was born in 1960 into a working class family in Gateshead. My father worked in a cable making factory and my mother helped to make ends meet by doing domestic work from time to time. It was a very challenging time with much change taking place. I remember happy family times and music was always on in the house, but not a lot of classical music as my father particularly liked Mario Lanza as well as the contemporary music of the time.'

**What happened after your formal schooling ended?** 'At the end of the 1970s there were increasing opportunities to progress your education and I became the first person in my family to go to University. I was offered a place at New College in Oxford, graduating in Law. I also continued to develop my growing interest in politics and constitutional history. Oxford became fundamental to my future as it was where I met Norah, who was destined to become a music teacher. Shortly after we married, we moved to Wrexham (1986), when Norah was offered a music teaching post at Bryn Alyn School. I started work as a practicing Solicitor in Liverpool, Chester, Wrexham and North Shropshire specialising in criminal law. One particular piece of legal work was representing the bodyguard in the Princess Diana case, following her death in Paris.'

**So how did the move into Politics start?** 'The period from the mid 1970s during the Wilson/Heath era and when Mrs Thatcher came to power were influential in shaping my political awareness and I developed a keen interest in the current affairs of the time. I first stood as a Parliamentary candidate in North Shropshire in 1997 and secured the best ever result for Labour in a safe Tory seat. My desire for becoming an MP had been strengthened and I was able to secure the candidature nomination for Wrexham, succeeding John Marek. I won the seat in 2001 and have been the local MP for 15 years.'

**What does your work as an MP involve you in?** 'In addition to my 'MP duties', I am a member of the Culture, Media and Sports Committee, taking a particular interest in infrastructure development and Trans Regional Policy. I am also very interested in Home affairs, the economy, industrial policy and employment. These areas of interest are particularly relevant to my work locally as the MP for Wrexham.'

**What do you feel passionately about concerning Wrexham and its communities?** 'Wrexham has a very strong civic identity, broadly non-political with much cross party, mutual support. There are strong faith and community/social organisations. Over the last 30 years the economic base of Wrexham Borough has shifted from extraction and heavy engineering to

a more diverse manufacturing base and we have strong and growing service and retail sectors. We need more focus on cross border initiatives with the North West region and to be much more vocal in telling Wrexham's story to a wider audience.'

**Reflecting on your time as an MP for Wrexham, what stands out for you particularly?** 'Well, that is a harder question to answer. Three things spring to mind. The first was gaining University status for Glyndwr in 2008, secondly, securing the Solar Panel project for Sharps in 2004 and thirdly, the buyout and survival of Wrexham AFC in 2012.'

**Please share a little about the Lucas family and music.** 'I had little interest in classical music but was a big fan of The Beatles when I was growing up in in the late 1960s and 70s. Norah is a music teacher at Penley School and an accomplished pianist. My children are accomplished musicians in their own right, Ellen plays the Cello and Saxophone and Patrick plays the Viola and the Trombone. He is currently studying Mathematics and Music at Edinburgh University.'

**Who are your favourite composers and what pieces of music have a special meaning for you?** 'I like Beethoven, Sibelius and Grieg; I also like the music of Bernstein, Vaughan Williams and Edward Elgar. In terms of pieces of music, The Swan (Elgar), Grieg's Peer Gynt Suite and his Piano Concerto are particular favourites. I also enjoy Beethoven's 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony which I heard for the first time being performed by the Berlin Philharmonic.'

**Finally Ian let's talk about the WSO and its importance to the local arts scene and communities.** 'It makes a very valuable contribution in several ways. Firstly, it draws together some of the most talented people from the local community to perform at a consistently high level. Secondly the WSO has offered a large number of our young people (like my own 2 children) the opportunity to enhance their musical talents and performing abilities. Thirdly its charitable work for those who are affected by Dementia is a testament to the values of the Orchestra and its desire to be very much involved with those who are suffering. Similar to the issue we talked about earlier related to the promotion of Wrexham to a wider audience, the Orchestra needs to continue to work at promoting itself and winning more regular support from the people of Wrexham.'

**Looking towards the 50<sup>th</sup> concert season, how would you like to see us celebrate this milestone?** Firstly, a concert that includes many of the past members of the Orchestra who have gone on to develop their musical capabilities, returning to perform in a single concert. Work to develop stronger cross-border connections with Orchestras such as the RLPO and The Hallé. A more attractive mixed programme of music that will have wider audience appeal and finally, a concert which includes some of the local school orchestras and choirs performing in a special celebration concert on the Glyndwr stage in the first half of a WSO concert.'

**Ian, thank you for taking the time to talk with Orchestrate and for the support you and Norah have shown us over many concert seasons. We hope you will enjoy the rest of the 2016/17 concert season.**

*Orchestrate is published periodically during the concert season to provide up to date information about the Orchestra. For more information please visit our website [www.wrexhamorch.co.uk](http://www.wrexhamorch.co.uk) or send an email to our Friends email address (overleaf)*

## Future Dates for your Diary

(All our concerts start at 7.30pm and performed at the William Aston Hall, Glyndwr University, Mold Road, Wrexham LL11 2AW)

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

**Sibelius** – Pohjola's Daughter  
**Rachmaninov** – Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini  
**Shostakovich** – Symphony No 5  
**Conductor:** Nicholas Simpson  
**Soloist:** Teleri-Siân

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2016**

**The WSO Mahler Charity Concert**  
**Mahler:** Symphony No 5  
 Sponsored by Betrinac  
*Raising valuable funds for those who are affected by dementia*  
**Conductor:** Richard Howarth

**Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

**Mendelssohn** – Overture "Ruy Blas"  
**Schuman** – Cello Concerto  
**Brahms** – Symphony No 1  
**Conductor:** Nic Fallowfield  
**Soloist:** Timothy Gill (Cello)  
*(Principal Cellist of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra)*

**In May we welcome Nicholas Simpson and Teleri-Siân as our special guests.....**

### Nicholas Simpson - Our Conductor



Nicholas Simpson studied composition in London with John Tavener and now conducts orchestras across the North West. His own music has been played in both Europe and the United States. He is very much looking forward to conducting Shostakovich's thrilling 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony in the Orchestras May concert which will be the first time he has conducted the WSO. Nicholas shares 'This piece represents the composer's audacious attempt to write music in the popular style demanded by Stalin whilst simultaneously mocking it and expressing horror at his own predicament, a musical, political and emotional challenge which led to the greatest triumph of Shostakovich's career'.

### Teleri-Siân - Our Soloist



Teleri-Siân says 'Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini' endures even in an age dominated by popular music, appealing directly to the emotions of musicians and non-musicians alike. It sits naturally under the fingers and is satisfying to play despite the difference in size between the composer's hands and mine. I was fortunate enough to perform this piece for the first time with Wrexham Symphony Orchestra while I was still a student. It will be lovely to play it on home territory again and working with Nick Simpson is always fun!

Teleri-Siân is '... a player of great sensitivity, who shows the ability to shape musical lines instinctively. . '.

**Here are some exciting ways you can follow us, keep involved, support and help us**

#### Web Site and Social Media Communications

You can keep up to date on all WSO news and events through our website at [www.wrexhamorch.co.uk](http://www.wrexhamorch.co.uk). You can purchase tickets for our concerts through the website.

We also have a Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/wrexhamorch](http://www.facebook.com/wrexhamorch)), a Facebook group (<http://tinyurl.com/na9rtdv>) and a Twitter feed @wrexhamorch.

#### A Friend of the WSO enjoys a great benefits package

The Friends of WSO scheme enables you to enjoy a range of benefits and to receive priority booking and seats reservation in your favourite part of the William Aston Hall, our regular concert venue. You will also be the first to learn about our new season's programme. Our scheme offers Gold, Silver and Bronze levels of membership. Pick up a leaflet during tonight's concert or send an email request to [friendsofwrexhamsymphony@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:friendsofwrexhamsymphony@yahoo.co.uk).

**We would like your ideas to help us celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert Season in THREE years' time**



The average 'life' of an organisation is between 35 and 40 years, so reaching 50 years is something to be proud about and to celebrate a fine achievement. It is important that the views of our audience are taken into account. We have already started to think about it as we plan our concert seasons a couple of so years ahead. So will you please put your thinking caps on and let us have your ideas over the next 6 months or so. A particular piece of music, a special guest conductor or soloist, a tribute concert etc... we are open to your ideas and suggestions. You can send them to the Friends email address above, or write them down and hand them to one of us at a concert. You can also post them on the WSO Facebook pages or through our Twitter feed. We will take the ideas into account as we make plans for a very special concert season and let you have updates from time to time.

**Our next Newsletter** will be published in time for the May 7th concert and will also be available through our website and Facebook page. Please do let us know what you think. If you have any comments about the Orchestras concert programme or if you have any suggestions for items you would like to see in Orchestrate. Speak with us at a concert or send an email to [friendsofwrexhamsymphony@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:friendsofwrexhamsymphony@yahoo.co.uk).