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HARMONY.



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LOVE.



PAN

The Journal of the
British Flute Society

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The British Flute Society was formed in January 1983.

from the constitution:

'The objects of the Society shall be to advance the education of the public in the Art and Science of Music and in particular the Art and Science of Flute playing in all its aspects by the presentation of public concerts and recitals and by such other ways as the Society through its Committee shall determine from time to time.'

The Editor warmly welcomes contributions to Pan, and invites manuscripts – typed if possible – by post to 30 Grove Road, Stratford-on-Avon, Warwickshire CV37 6PB.

Views expressed by the contributors are their own and do not necessarily voice any official views of the Society.

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The Annual Convention of the National Flute Association in Philadelphia, USA 18-21 August

TREVOR WYE

This year's Convention was devoted to the life and work of the great American flute player, William Kincaid (1895-1967).

Many of his ex-students were at the Convention to honour his memory. Kincaid was solo flute in the Philadelphia Orchestra from 1921-1960.

The Convention was held in the Bellevue Stratford Hotel and admirable it was for our purposes with its Grand Ballroom and numerous other halls in which the concerts, discussion panels and lectures were given.

One of the reasons I went was to hear Richard Davis from the Royal Northern College of Music who was a semi-finalist in the Young Artists Competition with its prize of \$1000.

Registration over, a large pack of information was given to me including a very comprehensive Convention programme, and I headed for the first event, the Young Artist Competition, Semi-Finals. There were six soloists, the oldest of whom was 26. All seemed nervous. The team of Judges, five in all assembled at a table in mid-hall and we were off. All contestants played Handel, E Minor, 1st movement of the Hummel Sonata in D, either the La Montaine Sonata for solo flute or Brant's Mobiles for solo flute and the finale of the Ibert Concerto. Richard was the only one who had chosen Brant. Having heard La Montaine five times, I felt sure the Brant was the better piece. It's not easy to be objective when you are rooting for someone, but I felt that the judges had chosen the best three for the finals; Richard was amongst them! There were now two days to work up to the finals.

The players mostly produced smaller sounds than we are used to in the UK; one could say that the dynamic range was largely between P and mf with lots of choreography to help it along. The basic sound that the young American players made was very pretty and with a neat technique but to my taste not much in the way of presentation of the music. One young man played Handel very well but seemed less at home with the other composers.

Wandering around a supermarket at lunchtime, I couldn't find any prepared product that didn't contain sugar unless it was written large on the jar: Sugar Free. It reminded me of some of the young performers.

There was an orchestral audition competition of which I heard only a couple of contestants and so went to my room the nurse the jet-lag.

Later: a visit to the Exhibition Hall. There must have been around 60 exhibitors ranging from the Sweetheart Flute Co. through antique flute dealers - a BFS Committee member, Tony Bingham, was there - to publishers, music stores and, of course, flute makers from all over the world. The din was appalling. Many of the stands displayed flutes, mostly handmade, and we were hustled into trying them. I thought of all the com-



William Kincaid (1895 - 1967)

municable diseases I could catch, then thought what-the-hell and joined in.

Around 800-1000 flute players attended and it seemed as if they were all playing Tchaik. 4 on the piccolo at different pitches, so I gave up trying to hear myself in the end and went off to look at the bewildering array of flute headjoints in all shapes and forms. They all seemed to be better than mine. One Chinese lady was daubing the lip plates with antiseptic; a nice touch.

That over, a visit to the nearby Curtis Institute of Music was on my List at which a display of Stokowski and Kincaird memorabilia was on show. "This is the actual flute part used by Kincaid in his recording of L'Apres Midi was the markings in his *own* hand". I was more interested in the man, his music and his methods. The Director, John de Lancie, the distinguished oboist, arranged tours of the College and spoke about the courses. I had already met him at a private dinner the night before and he seemed to be braving his hangover better than I was. We saw Kincaid's platignum flute. A lovely building, old fashioned and gentle. A perfect place to study.

Back to the hotel and on to the Reception, up 19 floors, which really meant a bar with expensive drinks and a chance to meet lots of old friends.

On Friday, my hangover was still with me, so I gave the Opening Ceremonies a miss and had an excellent breakfast at a Diner around the corner; my eggs were served 'over easy'.

On to the master class given by Robert Willoughby, a respected soloist and orchestral solo flute. He feels strongly about some things – the mark of a good teacher – and wasn't afraid to say so. He was especially good at sorting out basic pitch and rhythm problems, and general organization of the piece, though the subject of the piece 'Pan' from Jouers de Flute wasn't mentioned. I've often 'got' that from players and teachers in the USA, that there is a grand obsession with 'getting it right': full-stop. Anyway, these sort of public classes – I did one in Detroit 2 years ago with 1000 in the audience – are really shows and not a representative example of a man's true worth. Robert was kindly, genial and good humoured and must be highly regarded by his students. The girl students wore very pretty dresses which complimented their tone. He gave a lot of good advice in an interesting class.

It was amusing for us to read the biographies – all printed in the programme – of the young contestants. They sometimes read like a Who's Who in music, a terrifying list of great players they have studied with and sometimes with a passing reference to biographies of their teachers' teacher, in an effort to back up their claim to fame; they *must* be good players because of their pedigree. Certainly, though, on the upper levels, the leading pros. ignore all that nonsense and are coldly factual about the whole business of the profession; that in the end, it is the performance by which one is judged. People sitting next to me commented on the different qualities of each performer with their use of different colours in the tone; to me it seemed there were only slight variations of the same colour and I began to wish that someone would make a really dirty sound occasionally. Throughout the convention, the pitch problems of the various performers – there were around 60 in all! – irritated. There are so many good flutes now which are either Cooper's Scale (otherwise known as equal temperament – or the equal-tampered scale) or variants upon it, that it seemed odd that they were unaware of flat right hand notes and horribly sharp C#s and Cb's. The traditional scale flute must really die a death and, the quicker the better for us all, performer and listener.

Lunch with Nancy Toff whose excellent Development Of The Modern Flute is a must for everyone, but is now out of print. Horror! Horror! What can the publishers – Taplinger – be about to let that one go, and, there are no plans to re-print. If you see one on the shelves buy now before it is too late!

On to the Grand Ballroom to hear tributes and records of the great Kincaid and very interesting they were, especially his early recordings c. 1921. His vibrato in those times was very fast. Quite different to the French School, but very charming.

And on, now, to a concert in the Rose Garden, the first of a series of concerts headed "The Flutist as Composer" Ann Briggs, Greer Ellison and Sandra Miller, performers. Solos, duos and trios on traversos with baroque cello and harpsichord. I was surprised. The Dutch and Belgians wouldn't have approved of all of it and it was occasionally easy to hear the Boehm flute origins of

some of the players. The first few pieces were rather dry but not entirely without charm. Greer Ellison's Hotterre Suite in G was delightful but Sandra Miller stole the show with a superb performance of Blavet's "La Vibray" sonata. In every respect it was faultless, but more important, she communicated.

Off to dinner, followed by a concert entitled "American Music for Flute" which proved to be disappointing. Not the music; that was very good but one had to listen hard *through* the player to get at the music. There was some incredibly sharp playing from the players. I musn't go on about it. We heard Morton Subotnick's Parallel Lines for piccolo and electronics which was lost on me. I got a fit of the giggles. Then a first performance of Rochberg's "Between two Worlds" for flute and piano. Sue Anne Kahn had hardly the kind of tone which carries in a large hall and consequently much of the detail was lost. An excess of vibrato – which often sounded like articulation – and mannerisms to match, didn't help. This may well have been a good piece; I had a shrewd idea it was, but the performer got in the way. Of course, all the players had to cope with the background hissing of the air conditioning, mandatory in that climate, as the outside temperature was in the nineties.

And so, off to hear a fine Jazz flutist, Leslie Burrs, who played until 11.30 p.m. each night and then to a room party – the hotel was full of them – and then to bed, only to be awakened by someone from the Muramatsu Suite next door playing Tchaik. 4 on the

Advertiser's

ANNOUNCEMENT

This space was reserved for a Takumi flute advertisement. Unfortunately, the advertiser was not able to supply copy in time for publishing. However, Rudall, Carte & Co. do apologise but point out that the Takumi flute is an extremely fine instrument and anyone wishing for further information should write to them at Deansbrook Road, Edgware, Middx. HA8 9BB.

piccolo at 1.30 a.m. I complained, pyjama clad, not of the noise, but because it was sharp. Fred promised to shut the door. Good old Fred. Goodnight Fred.

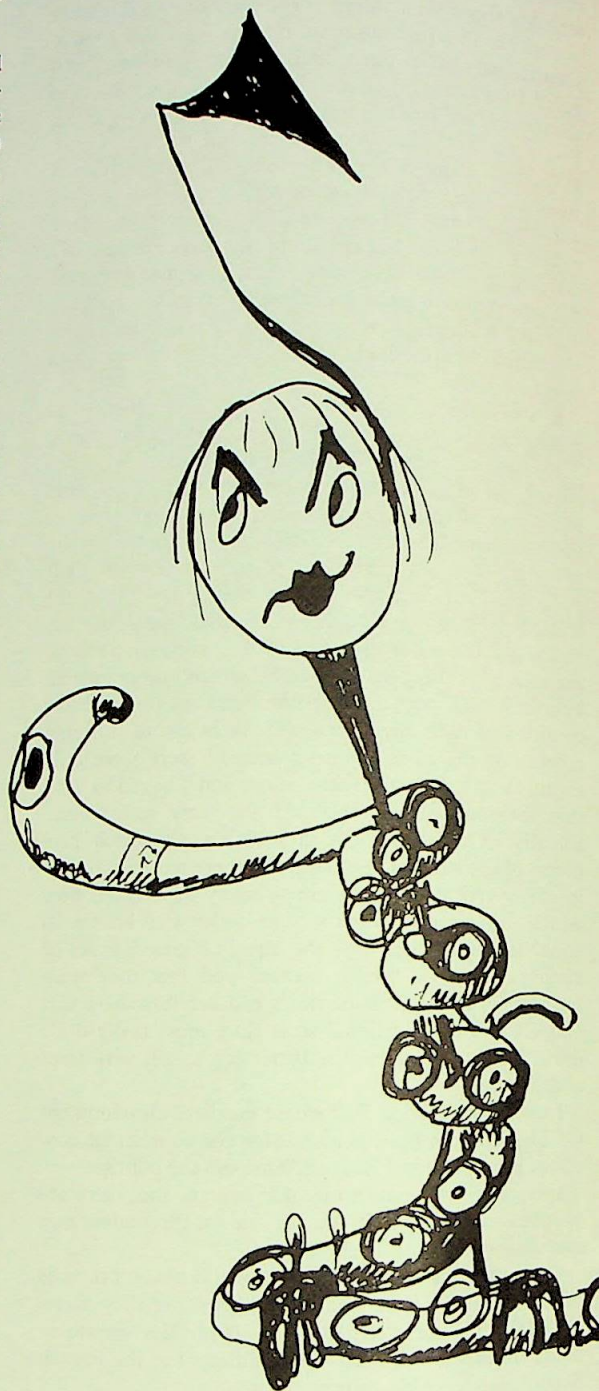
Saturday with a 9 a.m. masterclass given by Donald Peck, another very practical flute teacher. It started a little nervously but soon got going on that great USA piece the Griffes' Poem. "You must play the music", she was told, "and not simply give a presentation of the notes". A very good class, very informative with bags of advice.

I decided to give the Newly Published Music Concert a miss as I wanted to hear Richard Davis (remember him?) rehearse, which I did for a short time before visiting the exhibits again. I saw and overheard two salesmen arguing about my Practise Books; one hadn't brought enough and so bought some from the other one, who then also sold out. I covered my name tag and crept, delighted, away.

After a delicious Mexican lunch with the lovely Mary (you don't know her, but don't worry about it - just come to Wildacres in N. Carolina - you'll met her) it was on to a Panel Discussion on "The Kincaid Pedagogy" - teaching to you and I. The distinguished panel, John Krell, Harold (I'll-homogenise-your-flute) Bennett, Robert Cole, Kenton Terry and Albert Tipton all remembered him with great warmth and affection. They spoke of his enormous influence on the North American style and of his teaching methods. Kincaid studied with Georges Barrère. His lessons were largely based on Taffanel and Gaubert's Daily Exercises (these were pre-Practise Book days!) and all the Anderson Studies and the French School flute solos. He taught how to play music; the flute was a medium through which one expressed oneself. He was concerned with rhythmic accent and melodic accent. He never changed anyone's embouchure unless there was a great problem. Very anecdotal, it was nonetheless a window through which we could get to understand Kincaid.

This panel was pre. The Young Artist finals and my pulse rate was beginning to creep up. If Richard (you do remember him?) wasn't playing such a hair raising programme, I would rather have played than listened. Some of you will know what I mean.

Richard came on first and put up a really great performance of Marteen Bon's "Whistle For a Friend" for solo flute. He started off-stage at the back of the hall and as soon as he began both to play and to walk to the front, his path was blocked by a waiter with a trolley of jugs and glasses. We swept the waiter aside, protesting. The next piece was the Demerseman 6th Solo de Concert, a tour de force for flute players which he brought off with ease. He ended his programme with a gentle tune, Scaramouche by Sibelius. A great show! Next was Karen Johnson a well organized and musical player; she began her programme with the Morceau de Concours of Faurè, a simple melody which she pulled around far too much, in my view. She went on to the Dutilleaux Sonatine, by far her best piece; she brought this off admirably. She had a lovely sound and her articulation was commendable, a by no means common attribute in the USA. She ended with some Bartok Dances and the excellent Burton Sonatine, a work rarely heard in the UK.



All keyed up

It was going to be close. Tal Perkes was the final Finalist who gave a neat performance of the E minor Bach Sonata. I was never moved by his playing but could see so much good in it. So, Richard whizzed around, moved me and communicated. Karen's tone was lovely, her performances were clean but over indulgent. Tal was neat but not very moving. I could see much in each performer and I felt the result would depend on the viewpoint of the Judges. For me Richard had got it but then I was biased . . . Indicently, I'm writing this at the time. I've no more idea than you of the outcome.

The result was to be announced tomorrow evening. Damn. Another day of waiting. Perhaps one of the judges would nod or wink to indicate something. But no. Not a word. Karen and her pianist had a Scotch with me afterwards. She was philosophical and felt that it went well.

A pre-dinner concert was next given by Leone Buyse, Eleanor Lawrence, Ervin Monroe and John Solum. Hotterre's Echoes was well played by John Solum on a traverso and Dohnanyi's Passacaglia – a good piece – was given a nervous performance by Eleanor Lawrence. Then Ervin Monroe played the Donjon 3 pieces with great charm. Good old Donjon, one felt, especially with such gentle, seductive playing. And good old Ervin.

Then Leone Buyse played Vivian Fine's "The Flicker" (1973) Wow! What a performance. What a player. A lot of notes and many cruel intervals played with such a consummate ease. I much enjoyed Leone's playing; it spoke. The concert ended with Babin's interesting Suite for two flutes.

Off to the commercial display to pick up more information; for headjoints buffs, its a paradise because the displays contain every conceivable type of blow 'ole; every shape and size and some rather cranky experimental ones too. It was astonishing to see the number of new flute makers this year. Some of the more established makers are hoping to come to Manchester to the Flute Extravaganza to display their wares. As I passed an elevator, Albert Cooper was seen fleetingly having his ears pounded on both sides by enthusiasts. "Well, yer see, its not all that simple" – he was saying, and the doors closed. Poor Albert!

After dinner, the Flutist As Composer – II. Judith Bentley, Bonita Boyd, David Bruskin, Robert Dick, Katherine Kitzman Glauser, and Edward Schultz, with pianists, for another concert. A lot of sitting. Perhaps the Convention, like American TV, was sponsored by a maker of suppositories. Anyway, we were away, off to the start. Bonnie Boyd playing Demmerseman's 6th solo Op. 82 performed on the very 150th anniversary of the composer's birth. I thought her lovely, sweet and gentle sound unsuited to the giant of flute composers. Moyses used to say that the music was like the man – big. That may seem a little tough on one of the USA's most admired flautists, but that's how it came across. It was interesting too, for an outsider to listen to players who have little dynamic variation. I was reminded of the advice Donald Peck gave to a young student that morning: "If you have little in the way of dynamic variation, then play tricks – move around so that it *looks* as if you are making a crescendo!" She did. *She* did too.

Later in the programme Bonnie played the Kuhlau Fantasie in D for solo flute. Here she was at home; her delicious tone and virtuoso technique were more suited to the music. She is certainly the master of the very soft sound with incredible control. She finished her appearance with Paul Taffanel's Andante Pastoral et Scherzettino though the Scherzettino has rather less to say than the sensitively played Andante.

John Heiss' Four Movement for 3 Flutes came next which was in the squeaky-gate category and passed me by without trouble save that it was difficult to sleep through. I'm sure it wasn't meant to be amusing though some of the audience found it difficult to be serious as players alternated between keys clicks and supersonic shrieks.

Robert Dick continued with an extraordinary arrangement – no doubt his own – of Caprice No. 15 by Paganini in which the theme was stated in simultaneous octaves and which used multiple-sound techniques. He is certainly the King of these new ways. Although not all he does is pleasant or pleasing, he is so compelling to listen to. A great experimenter in flute sounds. Yes, he plays squeaky-gate music but he is so direct in his performances. He demands attention. A wonderful experience. He continued with a bass flute solo, T-C¹⁰ which explored all the multiphonics and harmonic tones of the lowest notes and ended with his "Piece in Gamelan Style" and "Flames must not Encircle Sides". The Gamelan piece uses notes not normally found in conventional fingering charts. This piece was hypnotic to listen to. Whatever you may think about Robert, his music or his performances, you could never ignore him. This appearance was one of the highlights of the four days.

Judith Bentley competently concluded the proceedings with Harvey Solberger's Angel and Stone (1981). Oh Lord! I was so bored! Perhaps we should have had some programme notes on what we were listening to. Maybe the composer thought it unnecessary. Whatever; I, and many around me, were relieved when it was over.

That was Saturday. Sunday started with the High School Flute Choir. Partly because of my waning staying power, and partly because I wanted a respite from flutes, I gave this event only a cursory hearing. What I did hear sounded very good – including a jazz item to close the programme.

On to the 19th floor to hear lectures concerning two Bach works, the Allemande from the Solo Partita and an analysis of the 3rd movement of the A Major Sonata. Richard Trombley gave a bumbling but most interesting potted history of the work and an analysis of the Allemande. The 'wrong' notes were discussed and the movement broken down into 'time groups' and 'rhythm groups', shades of Kincaid. Recordings of John Wummer and Franz Bruggen were heard as extremes of tempo, comparing the tempo of the Allemande with the Allemande in Bach's 6th Cello Suite. A young artist semi-finalist played some convincing examples to illustrate the points. Very interesting. Then followed a brief analysis of the 3rd movt. of Bach's A Major Sonata by the Programme Chairman John Solum, at whose desk

the buck stops for all the organization of the '83 Convention.

And so to a pre-lunch concert of American music for Wind Quintet given by the *Soni Ventorum* Wind Quintet, which included Felix Skowronek pronounced *Skowronek* with a 'W'. Felix played his wooden flute, the clarinetist appeared to be playing a boxwood instrument but of modern design. Three works on the programme: Irving Fine, William O. Smith and John Harbison. The quintet had their intonation problems; which quintet doesn't? The Irving Fine work was easy on the ear.

These Conventions are bugged by the necessity of holding them in hotels which have suitably large ballrooms for concert use. Apart from the ever present air conditioning noise, the players have to cope with a heavily draped stage, this combination resulting in a stuffy small sound. Perhaps the NFA could invest in some portable hardboard panels to be used in these halls to reflect or deflect the sound toward the audience. In many concerts the impression one has is of listening to a concert through a keyhole. It certainly doesn't do the soloist any good, many of whom are players of national standing. They put their heads on the block when they play to 1000 flute players; the NFA could, for a small outlay, make it much more comfortable for them.

The quintet concluded with the Harbison Quintet which uses some contemporary techniques in all parts. It is well written and an interesting addition to the repertoire.

After a hurried lunch there was *The Flutist as Composer - III* which started with the Doppler Bros. Hungarian Phantasy, played dryly and without much humour though it smiled towards the end. The programme included an interesting work for flute, narrator and prepared tape by Ervin Monroe who also played the solo part which he did most beautifully. Quite a player, is Erwin. His piece, "The Nightingale and the Rose" is based on the work by Oscar Wilde. 'A neat piece', a someone near me remarked. There were some less well played works by Barrere and Hasmer.

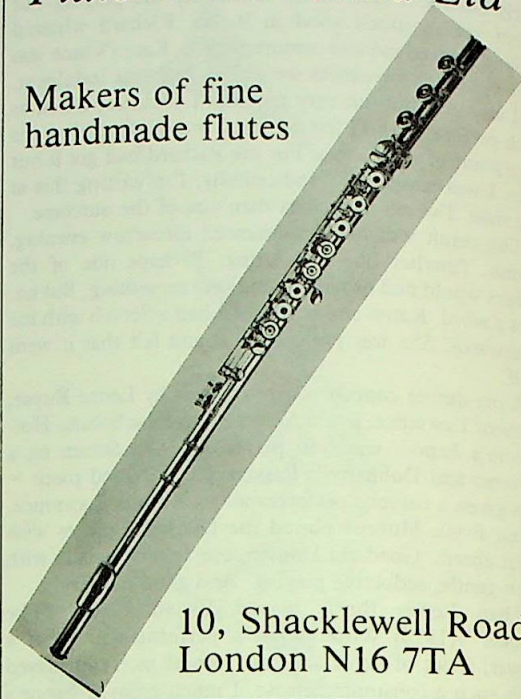
At 3.30 Dr. Carlton Sprague Smith proposed to answer the riddle 'Who was Dejean', the Dutchman who commissioned most of Mozart's flute works. Well, we were told he was born in Bonn in 1731 and in 1758 went to what is now Indonesia as a surgeon general. In 1768 he returned to Holland and died in 1797 in Wien. So now we know all about the mysterious Ferdinand Dejean - (one word, not two). The inventory after his death mentions a flauto traverso and some 'miscellaneous pieces of music' amongst which could have been the original manuscript of the concertos and quartets. An excellent, teasing lecture given by an expert.

The time was approaching when the announcement would be made of the winner of the Competition. I feel sure Richard has won but there's many a slip . . .

Now to a concert of Mozart flute Quartets played by Jacob Berg, Robert Cole, Eric Hoover and Kyril Magg, the latter being this year's President. A respectable reading of K285a, the G major was given by Eric Hoover followed by a rather nervous performance of the

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C Major played by Robert Cole, a well respected teacher and performer.

When four different players each play a quartet one inevitably makes comparisons. This is inappropriate at a Convention where an opportunity is given to as large a number of performers as possible to perform and be heard. This is, I think the weakness of the policy. It raises many problems for the performer as he appears for a short while in only one work. It doesn't really give him a chance to get going.

The most frequently heard criticism around me was 'how did they pick the performers'? There were well over 50 ranging from Master Class and competition performers to great soloists like Julius Baker. The soloists can't all be as good as Baker. but a more careful selection of soloists could have been exercised giving them more to play. Perhaps some of the selection was for political reasons. This big affair has, from the organizational point of view, been done so well, but fell down on the selection of performers.

The quartet concert continued with Kyril Magg's reading of the A Major played with sensitivity and style and much appreciated by the audience who by this time were sitting on the floor in the aisles, and standing at the back.

The elevator outside my room on the 3rd floor refused to stop at the 3rd floor when ascending; I had to go to the 19th by way of every stop between 4 and 19 and then back down to 3. I mention this because the Quartets

were frequently punctuated by the elevator bell, sometimes in amusing places. Some poor soul trying to reach the 3rd floor, no doubt.

One more quartet to go and the Competition results would be announced. The adrenaline was flowing in all us six British representatives. We would know in 30 minutes from now. The final D Major Quartet was allotted to Jacob Berg, Principal flute of the St. Louis S.O. who played with great assurance and lovely tone, though often sharp. It sounds as if I have a pitch obsession; no, I don't *really* care about it as long as its right. To conclude, Berg played in a most interesting style with unusual ideas which he put over very well.

At this point, without pause, the Final Ceremonies and announcements are about to take place. I was on the podium first having been most generously allocated five minutes to talk to the assembly about the British Flute Society. My voice, over the microphones sounded odd having heard so many American accents during the past four days. I spoke about the work of our own BFS and that I would review this Convention in 'PAN'. An amused cry of horror went up at this. The NFA Newsletter is never critical either of music, flutes, or performers. Later, the NFA newsletter Editor, Eleanor Lawrence was to question me about this. I explained our policy that we may be putting our necks out but we had to have an honest assessment of what goes on without fear or favour. Anyway, as a result of my brief talk, we enrolled around 50 members. My grateful thanks to John Solum, the genial, gentle and unflappable Chairman, or Chairperson as he is known as, for this opportunity.

Now for the Competition results: first the Orchestral Audition winner, the aptly named Linda Toote. Pulse rate about 120. The Young Artist Competition Results: third place Tal Perkes. Well Richard could only be second or first. We held our breath. Second place Karen Johnson! He'd done it! A great shout went up. Mostly from me. Richard, aged only just 20, had won.

Its a tradition to close the Convention with Bach's Air from the Suite in D played by the assembled company. With so many flutes, intonation problems disappear. A sad but lovely experience to hear so many flutes together. Its sums up the warmth we all felt at having met new friends, old friends and the privilege of hearing so much good music.

And so after a brief alcoholic celebratory supper in a nearby Szechuan restaurant it was back to the Ballroom for the final Gala Concerto Evening with the Concerto Soloists of Philadelphia conducted by William Smith. Donald Peck, solo flutist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra was the first soloist in Mozart's D Major Concerto. John Solum came on to tell us the concert was in memory of Elaine Schaffer, one of Kincaid's star pupils. Peck ended a decisive first movement with a delightful, but thoroughly un-Mozartian cadenza. His lyrical tone in the slow movement was appreciated. A purist wouldn't have liked this but we were all flute players enjoying a distinguished fellow flute player.

Next the flute and harp Concerto with Deborah Carter, flute, and Marilyn Costello, harp, as the soloists. They tuned sharp. O dear! Deborah Carter has a small tone well suited to this piece and which she used with

charm though with hysterical vibrato and cloying, over romantic phrasing. As she became involved, so the pitch rose. A limerick which I wrote years ago came to mind:

"A flutist called Marion Gray

felt inclined to play sharper each day,

The pitch reached a height where the Lady, one night played the Mozart G Major in A!"

The harpist remained uninvolved with all this romantic hoo-ha and trundled along as the harp were a sewing machine. It was an exhausting performance. There was no nearby bar to refresh and relax us.

During the interval, Julius Baker was wandering around, friendly as ever. In Madeira last year, I arrived at the Cathedral to hear him play to find only one seat available; directly in front of the soloist. There was no choice. Julie came on to play the C. P. E. Bach D minor concerto, adjusted his stand and music three feet in front of me, then saw me and said "Jesus, couldn't you sit any closer?" It was a live broadcast and must have puzzled the radio listeners. I told him I couldn't find a front seat tonight and he remarked "Good for you or I'd have spat in your eye".

After the interval the Godard Suite with orchestral accompaniment, soloist Albert Tipton. Tipton, aged, I believe, nearly seventy, is to many people an historic figure; it was to be an interesting experience to hear him. Just before the turn of the century, Albert Fransella played this version at one of the first Promenade Concerts, in fact it was the first flute solo to be played at a "Prom". The intro. was breathtaking; I could never hear the piano version again without remembering this experience. In the slow movement, the piano tunes are played on the oboe. It sounded gorgeous. Tipton played somewhat nervously but gave great pleasure. It was a privilege to have the opportunity to hear him.



Cartoon: P. J. Mills