



Newsletter Issue 21 **April 2016**

Word from Terry Luddington, CEO

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Well what can I say, since 2013 we have had no staff changes at Festivals House and then three come along all at once.

In March we bade farewell to Sarah Bronnert our Office Assistant since August 2014. Sarah has left to pursue her teaching and performing career and we wish her well.



At the same time we welcomed Michelle Surtees-Myers as our new Office Assistant taking over Sarah's responsibilities.

In April we also wished Gill Smithers every success for her future as she decided to leave the Federation and return to the private sector to further her career. Gill had been our Office Manager since October 2012 and we thanked her for the significant contribution she made to improving the procedures and operations of the Federation over the last three years.

As a result of these recent staff changes the Board decided to review the staffing needs of the Federation going forward. Part of this review included my own notice of resignation from the post of Chief Executive Officer due to an increased workload in my own personal business commitments this year.

Over the next few months there will be further staff changes starting with the appointment of Claire Lloyd to the newly created position of General Manager. Claire will start work full-time at Festivals House from Monday 20th June. During the transition I will continue to manage the delivery of services to our members with a planned handover to Claire by the end of June. I am sure that you will join with me in giving Claire our support as she takes on this new role for the Federation.

Further details of the new organisational structure will be provided by the Board in the next newsletter.

Volunteering Award



Blanche Woollin was recently nominated for a local volunteering award for her services to Wharfedale Festival of Performing Arts.

Pictured is Blanche receiving her award from Keighley & Ilkley Voluntary and Community Action (KIVCA) - also pictured are Sylvia and Brian Mann, and the Lord Mayor of Bradford, Councillor Joanna Dodds. You can access more info at ilkleygazette.co.uk- article headed Volunteer 'stars and heroes' of Wharfedale celebrated.

New Members

New Music Adjudicator

Mr. Jonathan Rea Piano cabij



New Provisional Festival Members

The following Festivals have recently been granted provisional membership status for 2016:

Berkhamsted Festival of Music

Mrs. Rebecca Harte

Music

May annually

North Somerset Festival of Dance

Mrs. Lucy Ratnett

Dance

May/June annually

Windsor Piano Festival

Mr Guilio Potenza

Music

June annually

**If you are a member of the Federation
and require contact details please call
Festivals House.**

Flying the Safeguarding Flag

This month we are delighted to announce that the following Festivals have now completed their implementations of our new safeguarding approach and can fly the safeguarding flag:

Corby Festival of Dance

Croydon Performing Arts Festival

Godalming Music Festival

Gorleston St Andrew's Competitive Festival

Hampshire Festival of Dance

Herefordshire Performing Arts Festival

Hounslow Festival of Music, Speech and Dance

Northampton Festival of the Performing Arts

Torbay and South West of England Festival



Wallington Dance Festival

Wenlock Olympian Live Arts Festival

The Directory of Members (Year Book) Updates

Updates to the Festivals information published in the Year Book:

Leicester Festival of Music and Drama

Longwell Green Eisteddfod

Springboard—Brighton and Hove Performing Arts Festival

Tudor Rose Festival

Updates to the Adjudicators information published in the Year Book:

Ann Bauer Speech Adjudicator

Graham Fitch Music Adjudicator

Andrew Hansford Music Adjudicator

Christina Thomson Music Adjudicator

Colin Touchin Music Adjudicator

Kay Tucker Music Adjudicator

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The following Festivals have been awarded Full membership status in recent months:

Blackpool Winter Dance Festival
Gorleston St Andrew's Competitive Festival
Hampshire Festival of Dance
Wallington Dance Festival
Wenlock Olympian Live Arts Festival

Celebrating a Century of Festivals in Ballymena

It was one month after the 1916 Rising in Ireland and two months before the mass slaughter on the Somme – not a propitious time. But that's when Ballymena Festival was born, the brainchild of a Mrs Dinsmore from Cork. Convinced that the Great War should not interfere with the musical education of the young, she established a two-day 'Feis Ceoil' to foster piano and song among schoolchildren. In the decades since then the Festival has grown into a popular multi-disciplinary event lasting five weeks and encompassing instrumental and traditional music, singing, speech and drama, and Irish and modern dance.

An average year in recent times would see just over ten thousand entrants, and the Braid Arts Centre staff estimate that the footfall each year is around twenty thousand.

To celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the Festival the Committee, volunteers one and all organised a Centenary concert, devised an exhibition of memorabilia, and published a history reflecting the Festival's growth. Funding was critical. Speech and Drama secretary, Hazel Bonar, 'volunteered' to write the book. A Heritage Lottery Fund grant was sufficient to cover the cost of publication, to employ an archivist/researcher, and to stage the commemorative exhibition. Funding from the Enkalon Foundation made possible an art competition for local schools.

As well as detailing the history of the Festival, the book records the experiences over the decades of performers, teachers and adjudicators. Among the latter, Sir Tyrone Guthrie, the theatre director, and poet, Laurence Binyon.

The Centenary concert was held on Saturday 13 February. The evening began with a video message of good wishes from the actor, James Nesbitt, a regular at the Festival in his youth. The capacity audience were then royally entertained by some of those who first participated in Ballymena Festival as children, developed their performing skills through the years, and returned that Saturday to say thank you to the Festival organisation.

The performers included The Priests, Rachel Thompson and Allie Ford, all now established professionals, and Stephen Rankin and Eva Richards, both Northern Ireland Young Musicians of the Year. Current performers participated in the dance sections. Traditional music was provided by the McCloskey family who have had representatives in the Festival over many years.

The compère for the evening was the renowned adjudicator Marilynne Davies, and another Federation adjudicator, Donal McCriskin, was the accompanist for the evening.

Carolyn McCabe, Festivals Vice President, would like to congratulate all the volunteers at Ballymena Festival who helped make their Centenary Celebrations such an enormous success. As well as organising and running their busy festival, the additional amount of meticulous work involved in the celebrations was hugely impressive. Carolyn said, "I was delighted to have represented the Federation at their Centenary Concert and hope the enthusiasm and dedication of the current volunteers can be replicated in the next one hundred years."

In Memory of



It is with much sadness that we have to announce the death of our Speech Adjudicator colleague, Joyce Mitchell after a short battle with cancer. Joyce will be greatly missed by her friends in the festival community and our thoughts are with her family and friends at this time.

The David Clover Festival of Singing

The David Clover Festival of Singing has been taking place in Sheffield for the past 35 years and has grown from humble beginnings of only 2 classes to the 29 classes for all singers from the age of 9 years that we have today. This year, a new initiative, the Singers' Platform was created for singers aged between 19 and 28 years who are studying as undergraduates at Conservatoire, University, as post graduates or privately tutored advanced students. We had classes for Opera, French Song/Lied, English Words and Song and a Recital Class. Nearly £2,000 prize money was given anonymously, £1,000 of this going to the winner of the Recital Class.

We were extremely pleased with the support for this new initiative and had 24 entries in both the Recital and non-Recital classes. We had planned a day for the Singers' Platform but with 24 recitals of 20 minutes each plus 24 singers in the non-recital classes, it soon became evident we would have to expand the event. What the new event has also done is to attract more entries in the main Festival weekend classes for this year too.

The President of the David Clover Festival is Mark Wildman, Professor of Singing at the Royal Academy of Music and he has actively supported and encouraged the new initiative from the start. He was one of the 4 Adjudicators, the others being Julia Dewhurst, Coral Gould and Ralph Green who is conductor of the Sheffield Teachers' Choir who administer and organise the whole Festival.

As a Festival, we are immensely proud to be able to help young singers on the path to being professionals whether as solo singers or just as confident people able to present themselves well in any situation in their future lives. The David Clover Festival of Singing is a Festival that is going places and will continue to evolve and develop the funding, the singing opportunities and the support for all singers at all stages of their performing lives .

Adjudicator Council Elections

We would like to congratulate the following Adjudicator Members who have recently been elected to serve on the Adjudicators Council:

Dance Representative:

Janet Palmer (re-elected for a second term)

Dance Deputy Representative:

Janice Fullman (elected for a first term)

The Elena Cobb Star Prize

Last year the Federation announced the Elena Cobb Star Prize as an innovative opportunity designed to increase participation at our member Festivals. We are delighted to announce the first Elena Cobb Star Prize winners below:

Selston Music Festival

Beginners: Ruth Lilleyman
 Intermediate: Christian Anderson
 Advanced: Hannah Herlihy-Starr

Don Valley Festival - the Arts, Music and Drama

Beginners: Isla Barlow
 Intermediate: Roisin O'Neill
 Advanced: Kieran Smith

Perform in Perth

Beginners: Gabriella Cramb
 Elementary: Ellie Ridley

Gibraltar Festival for Young Musicians

Elementary: Lien Pocock
 Junior: Adrian Monge Aixela
 Intermediate: Johan Mahtain and Julian Gerada

Tunbridge Wells Arts Festival

Elementary: Ryan teStrake
 Intermediate: Amelia Ross



Elena Cobb (www.elenacobb.com) is working with the Federation to help provide direct financial support for up to 10 Festivals to include two or three new piano classes in their 2016/17 Syllabus. Each participating Festival will receive funding to cover the costs of:

- ◆ One three hour Adjudicator session to include the two or three Elena Cobb classes detailed above.
- ◆ A £50 cash prize for the winner of each Elena Cobb class.
- ◆ A high quality Elena Cobb Star Prize badge and certificate for the winner of each class

There is still funding available and if you would like to take up this opportunity then please contact Festivals House. More information can be found at <http://www.federationoffestivals.org.uk/elena-cobb-star-prize/>

Performance



The British and International **Federation of Festivals** for Music, Dance and Speech
 Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

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