

ALKAN SOCIETY

BULLETIN - 1 January 1979

Report of Meeting at Chelsea Old Church - 1 November 1978 at 7.30.

There were about twenty-four people present - fifteen members with a few visitors.

Martin Ball first summarized the various Alkan compositions for pedaler or organ Op 54, 64, 66, 69, 72, "Bombardo-Carillon" and No. 3 of the Petits Preludes sur les 8 gammes du plain-chant pour orgue. He was unable to give any illustrations from Op 72 (Onze pieces dans le style religieux) because he had been unable to obtain a copy. Most of these works in the Costallat (Billaudot) edition were now out of print, but there was a vague hope of reprint for some of them. Martin Ball then played most interesting examples, some on the organ and some on the pianoforte. The organ pieces were particularly attractive and Martin's registration was delightful. Where, on the pianoforte, he needed more hands these were provided by a pupil - a brilliant young pianist named Justin Brown. The extra feet needed for "Bombardo-Carillon" were those of the Hon Secretary.

Jean Bartholomew charmingly thanked Martin Ball for his splendid efforts and achievement and also those who had assisted him. She also expressed the gratitude of the Society to the Vicar for allowing the church, pianoforte and organ to be used for the Meeting. The programme finished about 10 pm.

Charitable Status

The Alkan Society is now a Registered Charity - No. 276199.

The Honorary Secretary wishes to express the grateful thanks of the Society to the Officers of the Charity Commission who gave such able help in such matters as the correct legal wording of the Constitution etc.

Alkan Reference Library

The Honorary Secretary is delighted in being able to report that the Senior Librarian of the Guildhall School of Music has found a few vacant shelves to accommodate the Alkan Reference Library which we hope to build into a comprehensive collection of Alkan works and matters relating. The Guildhall School is now in new premises (next door to the Shakespeare Theatre now under construction) with all modern library facilities. It is possible to play or listen without disturbance to others using the Library.

As the Society has very little spare cash at the moment, contributions (ear-marked for this special purpose) will be warmly welcomed by the Hon Treasurer. Gifts of sheet music or other relevant papers will be equally acceptable, but it would be wise to consult the Hon Secretary in order to avoid duplication.

We already have made a very encouraging start. Mrs Tompkins of Hereford, one of our earliest members, has sent good copies of Sonatine Op 61 and Esquisses (4 books) Op 63. United Music Publishers have kindly presented a copy of George Beck's "Oeuvres Choiesies". Purchase and other gifts have added Le Preux Op 17, the Preludes Op 31, Studies in Major Keys (2 books) Op 35 and Studies in Minor Keys (2 books) Op 39 and Raymond Lewenthal's selection of Alkan's Piano Music. Morris Kahn has been pleased to contribute a copy of the revised reprint of Ronald Smith's book on Alkan Vol I.

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The Basis of our Collection will be Richard Shaw's excellent Bibliography and Charles Hailstone's comprehensive Discography. The discs we have so far are:-

Alkan Concerto	Ronald Smith	EMI HQS 1204
Piano Music of Alkan	" "	" " 1247
Grande Sonate Op 33	" "	" " 1326
Alkan on 19th century pianos	" "	Oryx 1803
Etudes Op 39 complete set	" "	EMI SLS 5100
Alkan Concerto	John Ogdon	RCA LSB 4078

The Society owes the Senior Librarian, Mr Paul Holden, a great debt of gratitude for his kindness and help in making the arrangements. At his invitation members of our Executive Committee were able to meet him and be shown the excellent facilities that the Library offers. It must be emphasized, however, that our Section is for reference only and items may not be borrowed. A member wishing to consult anything available at the Library would do well to telephone the Senior Librarian first. The number is 01-628 2571. The official address is:-

Guildhall School of Music and Drama
Barbican
LONDON EC2Y 8DT.

The School is at the East end of Barbican at the end of Silk Street. The nearest underground station is Moorgate from which it is only two or three minutes walk.

News Items

Members will be very pleased to learn that Kaikhosru Sorabji has kindly agreed to become a Vice-President. In its President and Vice-Presidents the Society seeks to honour those who did so much for Alkan before our Society came into being.

The Society has recently recruited a member from Singapore.

Ronald Smith is to give a Chopin/Alkan Recital to the Chopin Society at the Polish Institute, 20 Princes Gate, SW7 on Sunday March 18 1979, at 3.30. Admission 75p.

Frank Lioni sends from the Netherlands New Year Greetings to all members. He notes certain Alkan stirrings on the Continent and has been listening to Alkan programmes on both French and Dutch radio. He writes:-

"We must be careful that France does not take the initiative when she suddenly remembers that Alkan was French."

Programme of Meetings 1979

16 January - Tuesday at 7.30. At the Thomas Coram Foundation, our President will talk about Alkan as a miniaturist and, hopefully, introduce a new selection of short pieces which he has edited and which is shortly to be published by Billaudot.

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The House of the Coram Foundation is situated at the NE corner of Brunswick Square. It is three minutes walk from Russell Square Underground Station (Piccadilly line - turn right when leaving the station). Parking space. Coffee and biscuits available during the interval.

15 March - Thursday at 7.30: a Members' Evening also at the Coram Foundation. Contributing to the programme will be two lady pupils (from Australia) of our President - who hopes to be present himself; Jean Bartholomew (presenting Benedictus Op 54) and Peter Grove (from Salisbury) who will be playing some lesser-known short pieces.

17 May - Thursday at 7.30: at the British Institute of Recorded Sound, 29 Exhibition Road, SW7, Charles Hailstone, assisted by Dick Edwards and Norman Tyrrell. Charles will talk about the Alkan Discography and then will follow excerpts from interesting Alkan recordings.

The Institute is on the northern corner where Prince Consort Road runs into Exhibition Road. Light refreshments are available from 7 onwards and during the interval.

18 July - Wednesday at 7.30. Annual General Meeting

This will take place, as last year, in the Music Room (ground floor) at the Abbey Community Association, 29 Marsham Street, SW1. The ACA is at the lower end of Marsham Street, not far from St John's, Smith Square. A cafeteria is available but it closes at 8 pm.

J H WHITE
Hon Secretary