



Forthcoming Events

- **Sat 3 Oct 09**
10th Anniversary Concert
Ely Cathedral 7.30pm
Mozart Requiem,
Beethoven 5th Symphony
Adam Pounds special
commission:
The Martyrdom of Latimer
Prices: £25, £20, £15, £7
10% discount for Friends
FES Password:
'Trombone'
Apply Ely Cathedral box office
Tel: 01353 660349 from 5 Aug
- **Sun 20 Sep 09**
*Hayward Theatre, The King's
School Ely. Afternoon.*
Friends' open rehearsal
Informal drop-in; meet
conductor and players.
- **Sun 1 Nov 09**
*Hayward Theatre, The King's
School, Ely 10.15am – 5.15pm*
Open workshop Grade 5+
Cost: £15
- **Sun 6 Dec 09**
Family Christmas Concert
including *A Christmas Carol*, a
new work by Jake Howarth
and *Ferdinand the Bull*.

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To join the Friends: contact
charlotte-dean@tiscali.co.uk

Suite success boosts orchestra's Friends

Raphael Wallfisch, ES Hon

President and international cellist, swelled the number of Friends in their inaugural year with his special Friends recital of the Bach Cello Suites 1-4 on April 28, 2009.

Ely Cathedral Lady Chapel was the perfect venue as evening sunlight gave way imperceptibly to dark shadows, accentuating the architecture and focussing attention on the musical journey being crafted by this supreme performer.

Spellbinding

Both hearts and minds were fully engaged in Raphael Wallfisch's intense and varied interpretation of these suites. Audience concentration was tangible, with a grand climax achieved by the placing of No. 3 at the end of this unforgettable performance.

For the new band of Friends to have

been at the receiving end of such a generous concert was indeed an honour, and we can only hope that Wallfisch may be able to provide a similar event on some future occasion.



Friend's reaction: "What a sublime evening... I was transported." (SN)

Make your views known!

The Friends Secretary will welcome your comments on our concerts. Future issues plan to print a representative collection of them.

Contact: charlotte-dean@tiscali.co.uk

Russia: Romance to Ruin

Ely Cathedral was the venue for our spring concert of Russian composers on March 7, 2009.

The popular *Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture* by Tchaikovsky (1870) opened the programme. Then, with a change of mood and style, came the Barshai arrangement for string orchestra of Shostakovich's *Quartet no 8* (1960). This work - calling for intense response in both players and audience - contained in its five contrasting movements a great sweep from sadness, through aggression and sardonic wit to

resignation, ending with a haunting melody (David MacLeish, cello) played at the highest reaches of the instrument.

Arabian Enchantment

After the interval the full orchestra, - joined by the talented young harpist **Daniel de-Fry** and with solo violin played by leader **Christina Everson** - restored calm and a mood of delightful fantasy with **Scheherazade**. Their beautiful solo playing added magic to the orchestral colours so skilfully created by Rimsky-Korsakov.

Conductor: Steve Bingham

Spotlight on ... Steve Bingham

From the very outset as Artistic Director in Jan 2008, Steve Bingham has commanded both respect and affection from the orchestra. His sense of humour masks the absolute commitment and professional preparation that he brings to every rehearsal, and as with all good teachers, he uses it as a tool to educate and raise standards while respecting the sensibilities of those less proficient than himself.

Early promise

Like everyone else at his primary school, the 6 year-old Steve started on the recorder. But there the similarities ended. Having taken up the violin aged seven because his best friend did, Gareth soon gave up, but Steve had found his true interest. He still possesses his earliest LP: the Mendelssohn and Beethoven violin concertos. Although not instrumentalists themselves, his parents encouraged his playing and the household at Banbury in Oxfordshire enjoyed listening to classical music.

Royal Academy of Music

As a teenager, Steve played with local amateur groups, experience which proved helpful when it came to applying to the Royal Academy in 1981. When there, most of his energies were directed to quartet playing, although he did also lead two of the orchestras.

Having been previously immersed in classical and romantic music, the student world opened up the 20th century scene to him: he listened to 70s progressive rock and joined groups playing avant-garde, 'squeaky gate' serial music.

Family matters

Steve met his wife Brenda on what was the first day at the Academy for them both, and she has played viola in his Bingham Quartet since 1982! A professional player, Brenda has recently been ordained as a deacon in the Church of England, but is keen to keep up her viola playing. They married in 1985 and have two children. Chris, 19, is now at Lincoln University studying film and media production; Jenny, 16, has her sights set on a career in musical theatre. The pair of them include playing drums, piano and ukulele and singing amongst their accomplishments.

Performance

Steve is a natural teacher. He has always done a little individual tuition and enjoys chamber music coaching. However, performing is his great love. His range is impressively wide, from mainstream classical to electronic violin, both solo and in a variety of groups. His technique is amazing and it is accompanied by impressive modesty. Conducting is a relatively recent interest, and the improvement in the orchestra since he arrived bears witness to his ability in this

area as well.

"My aims"

Conducting the Elgar concerto last October with Raphael Wallfisch as soloist has been 'the undoubted highlight' to date. Steve declares that he is thoroughly enjoying working with Ely Sinfonia and he feels that tremendous progress has been made. His aims are to give players a chance to learn, perform and enjoy a wide variety of repertoire, and to give local audiences a chance to hear high quality orchestral playing both in Ely Cathedral and in smaller local venues. When he also says he hopes to get ES recognised as an outstanding amateur orchestra, you can't help feeling that he is certainly the man to do it. ■



Robin Moore steps down as Chairman

After six incredibly busy years with Ely Sinfonia, Robin retired at Easter from his position as Chairman and Orchestral Manager.

In that time he oversaw the increasing professionalism of the orchestra, and it is proof of his dedicated commitment that at the end of its first decade the orchestra finds itself in a position of unprecedented energy and confidence.

Creative vision The appointment of Steve Bingham and the inauguration of the Friends took place under his aegis.



Robin giving notices at a rehearsal

In the weeks since April, the committee has found itself continuously discovering things that Robin had looked after single-handedly.

The new Chairman (yet to be appointed) will follow a unique character, and Ely Sinfonia is truly grateful to him for his unstinting hard work and vision.

Cathedral post

He is now to be found at the front Reception desk in the cathedral. so we have not lost completely so valued a personality.

Summer concert, Workshop day and Friends' open rehearsal news: turn to page 3.

A Feast of Music for a summer's evening

Mission objective

The ES outreach agenda ensures that we play at venues outside Ely, and the warm welcome from **St Andrews Church, Sutton-in-the-Isle** on Sunday 28 June encourages us look forward to playing there again at some future date.

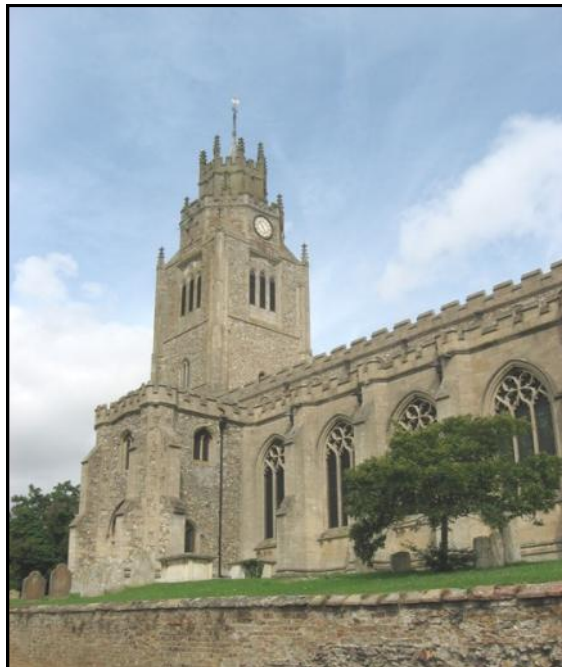
Family programme

In a lovely acoustic and a beautiful building, this was a concert to suit all ages and tastes.

The programme featured Beethoven's *Fidelio* Overture, Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* (showcasing the impressive strength of the wind section), and Mozart's double Concerto in which the soloists **Helen-Louise Baker, flute,** and **Daniel de-Fry, harp,** delighted and astonished the audience with their coruscating technique and their musicianship.

After the interval, Elgar's *Serenade for Strings* gave the limelight to the string section and Bach's *Violin*

Concerto in E (led from the violin by **Steve Bingham**) was enjoyably



energetic but with a beautifully tranquil and melodic contrasting slow movement. The addition of a harpsichord continuo provided extra colour and texture.

“Encore!”

Rossini's *The Thieving Magpie* Overture, with its sudden dramatic contrasts and tremendous crescendi, brought loud calls for an encore. If you missed this concert, you missed a delectable treat!

The orchestra was most grateful to the vicar, Fr Mark Amey, and other church members for their assistance in setting up and making us so welcome.

Friends' reactions:

“The whole concert was fantastic.” (RVW)

“Brilliant. Even the rain seemed to enhance it all.” (LH)

“We did so enjoy the concert. It was wonderful. How lucky we are to have ES and Steve Bingham

here on our doorstep!” (MF)
For a full review of this and other concerts, visit our website www.elysinfonia.co.uk

Workshops offer valuable experience for all ages



Our annual open workshop will take place on **Sun 1st November** in the Hayward Theatre, The King's School, Ely 10.15am -5.15pm, for players Grade 5 and above. Visitors are mentored by regular orchestral players. Bring a packed lunch.
Cost £15.

The works to be played are:
Bernstein's *Candide* Overture and
Brahms' *Academic Festival* Overture.

← 2007 workshop in the Hayward Theatre →



Open rehearsal for orchestra's Friends

Friends of Ely Sinfonia are warmly invited to come along and meet the conductor and players informally in the Hayward Theatre at The King's School, Ely, during the afternoon of Sunday 20th September. See a rehearsal in operation and chat with players during the tea-break. It's a chance to watch work in progress, and to be able to compare it with the 'finished article' on Saturday 3rd October.

!! STOP PRESS !!

TICKET SALES for October concert open **5th August**, Ely Cathedral Box Office tel: 01353 660349. Friends' codeword for their discount is “Trombone”.