



SOUNDBOARD

*Newsletter of the Friends of St Cecilia's Hall
and Museum*

NO. 34, WINTER 2017

Pamela Jackson, 1947–2017



Chairman of the Friends of St Cecilia's Hall, 2011–2017

✂ An appreciation of Pam appears on pages 10–13 ✂

THE FRIENDS OF ST CECILIA'S HALL AND MUSEUM

Chairman: Dr Eleanor Smith – chairman@stceciliastfriends.org.uk

Hon Treasurer: Andrew Mackie – treasurer@stceciliastfriends.org.uk

Hon Minutes Secretary: Paula Allison – secretary@stceciliastfriends.org.uk

Committee: Carola Bronte-Stewart; Gill French; Roger French; Willie Hendry;
Martin Hillman (deputy chairman); David Jenkins; John Kitchen; Graeme Lyall;
Nicola Macrae

Publications Officers: David Jenkins and Graeme Lyall – publications@stceciliastfriends.org.uk. **Orders to:** publications@stceciliastfriends.org.uk or postal address below

This edition of *Soundboard* edited by Martin Hillman

Designed and typeset by Erica Schwarz (www.schwarz-editorial.co.uk)

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Postal address: The Friends of St Cecilia's Hall, St Cecilia's Hall, Niddry Street,
Edinburgh EH1 1NQ

E-mail: friends@stceciliastfriends.org.uk

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New members

The Friends of St Cecilia's Hall are always happy to welcome new members. Please do encourage your friends, family members and colleagues to join us.

They will find a joining form on our website:

www.stceciliastfriends.org.uk.

Alternatively, anyone interested in joining the Friends can **write**, requesting the necessary forms, to: The Treasurer, The Friends of St Cecilia's Hall, St Cecilia's Hall, Niddry Street, Edinburgh EH1 1NQ.

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Report on the AGM

Martin Hillman, the Friends' deputy chairman, reports on the annual general meeting held in November in St Cecilia's Hall

EDUCATION PLEA TO UNIVERSITY

Education in organology should be developed in the university, the AGM declared.

Grant O'Brien, the former curator at the hall, proposed a motion to this effect that was overwhelmingly agreed.

He spoke from the floor to express his extreme disappointment that although a great deal of money had been spent on the hall by the university, none had been made available for the study of organology or research into the instruments in the collection at St Cecilia's.

Grant said that he would offer money to help fund a post in organology, such was his concern at the current low profile of the subject at the university.

In his motion, Grant said that the university should be "strongly encouraged to develop the teaching and research in organology based around the unique facilities provided by the university collections of musical instruments.

"This would mean engaging in a positive, funded, programme seeking tutors, students, scholarships and bursaries to further this study and should include the teaching of the physical sciences."

Grant, who was educated as a physicist, like his predecessor as curator, John Barnes, said that the work of younger researchers was often marred by ignorance of the basic science of musical instruments.

The motion came up as the Friends committee's concern at some aspects of changes at St Cecilia's Hall was being described. The AGM heard that with the departure of Darryl Martin, there would only be a single academic job at the hall, that of curator Jenny Nex. She would no longer be able to be lead supervisor for PhD students and she would not be allowed to do her own research.

The appointment of Ruthanne Baxter as museums manager had been welcomed by the committee, who had heard from Jeremy Upton, the university's

The smooth re-opening of St Cecilia's Hall earned praise at the AGM – it was compared with the image of a swan sailing majestically across a tranquil pond while its legs were going like fury beneath the water. The six-month-plus process culminated in the formal opening in November by the Chancellor of the university, HRH The Princess Royal (see page 8). The AGM heard from Jacky MacBeath, the university's head of museums, that since the May re-opening there had been 10,138 visitors to the museum and the concert hall – plus those attending the AGM.

director of library and university collections, about how the development of the hall as a full-time museum had made a re-balancing of the staffing necessary.

Jenny Nex told the AGM that new cross-disciplinary ways of enhancing the music school's offering were being explored, so that in future it might be possible to do courses combining history, Scottish studies or other disciplines with music.

The committee's comments on academic changes arose from a draft letter discussed at the October committee meeting which was intended to express its concerns to the top levels of the university administration. A meeting is planned between the committee and Elaine Kelly, the head of music, to look at the issues raised.

The committee's January meeting will consider to whom Grant O'Brien's motion and its own comments should be passed on.

Further points from the AGM

- A warm tribute was paid to Pam Jackson, our late chairman, who we are very sad to report died on 2 November 2017 after a short illness. Paula Allison remembers Pam and looks back on her life on pages 10–11.
- It is hoped that there will be Festival Fringe concerts on 4, 8, 11, 15 and 22 August but the dates, and the number of concerts, are tentative. Intervals in the concerts with refreshments on sale are complicated now that the whole building is used as a museum and the 2018 concerts will last an hour, with no interval, starting at 2.30pm. Watch the website, www.stceciliashall.org.uk.



One of the earliest events in the re-opened St Cecilia's Hall was set up by Edinburgh World Heritage to celebrate the musical differences between the Old Town and the New Town. David Gerrard, harpsichord, and Jenny Nex, violin, are pictured with friends during the concert

- Box-office takings at the Festival Fringe concerts go back to the musicians, topped up if necessary if the audience is small. As interval refreshments are the only way the Friends make any income from the concerts, it is likely that the whole question of how they are funded and by whom will need to be looked at.
- The treasurer, Andrew Mackie, was unable to be at the AGM but he has said that membership fees (£100 for life members, £10 a year for standard members and £5 a year for students) will have to be looked at.
- The membership list has become less than reliable. Andrew Mackie is striving to get it back into shape, but if those on the list know of anyone who should be but is not, please ask them to get in touch.

A new Friends chairman and other committee news

Eleanor Smith was elected chairman of the Friends – she introduces herself on page 6. Andrew Mackie, treasurer, and Paula Allison, secretary, were re-elected.

The AGM agreed to increase the number of committee members to nine, plus office bearers, for the coming year. The committee for 2018 is:

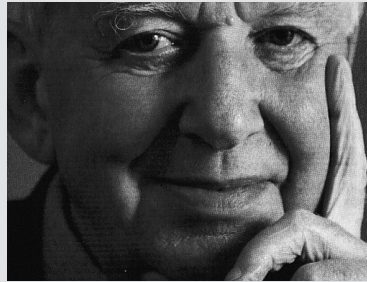
Carola Bronte-Stewart, Gill French, Roger French, Willie Hendry, Martin Hillman (deputy chairman), David Jenkins, John Kitchen, Graeme Lyall and Nicola Macrae.

It is intended to update the constitution at next year's Friends AGM to take into account various changes since it was last revised, in 2006, including the name change to St Cecilia's Hall Concert Room and Music Museum. The number of committee members will also have to be looked at.

The next AGM will be on 24 November 2018.

REMEMBERING THE FRIENDS' FOUNDER

There is to be a memorial concert for Peter Williams, the former professor of music at the university who was instrumental in setting up the Friends. He died in 2016 (see tribute in *Soundboard* 31 and report of memorial evensong in *Soundboard* 32).



John Butt, Leon Coates, John Kitchen, David Ponsford, Jenny Nex, and possibly others will perform items by J.S. Bach, Scarlatti and Handel. It is hoped to use Peter Williams's 1609 harpsichord by Andreas Ruckers the Elder. There will be a reception, probably in the interval of the concert, which is on Friday 13 April, 7.30pm, at St Cecilia's Hall, free and unticketed.

A new chairman for the Friends

Eleanor Smith, our new chairman, introduces herself

My first experience of St Cecilia's (not counting the annual Freshers' party!) was in my first year of undergraduate studies at the university in 2003, through one of our projects which concentrated on the music of the court of Louis XIV. This was held in the Laigh Room, with the Goermans Taskin harpsichord brought downstairs as a teaching aid. It was then that I first heard the infamous line that playing this particular instrument was like "lounging on a bed of red velvet" – which was followed by the comment that Dr Kitchen had sadly never had the opportunity to accomplish said lounging! This was something I eventually remedied, by making John a velvet bedspread as a joint "thanks for letting me graduate" and birthday present in 2007.



© The University of Edinburgh

The Goermans Taskin

Over the following years my involvement with the collections grew exponentially: as well as helping out in the hall with concerts (both for the Friends and for the university), I spent several years organising the washing-up rota for the Georgian Concert Society, and gave guided tours on public opening afternoons and for private visitors, amongst many other duties.

I will be eternally grateful to all the staff at St Cecilia's for their time and patience over the years – but especially to John Raymond who taught me all I know about tuning (if only he could have taught me everything he knows!).

My involvement in the Friends has also been long-standing – from selling CDs to visitors, helping Dianne and Sheila put out biscuits at concerts (and working the old dishwasher), to putting together the programmes for the Festival concerts and indeed editing *Soundboard* for a number of years.

After finishing my BMus, I embarked on first an MMus in keyboard instrument research and eventually PhD studies. At this time Martin as publicity officer was very kind in allowing me use of the old Friends' office down in what is now the Wolfson Gallery. Indeed it was only after finishing my PhD in 2013 that Martin finally got his office back to himself – when I moved on to do some history, harmony, and counterpoint teaching at Edinburgh Napier whilst searching for a more permanent job.

In November 2015, I started working in Gent, Belgium for the Orpheus Instituut on a project studying Beethoven's foreign instruments, and more particularly the piano that was sent to Vienna in 1803 by the premier piano builders of the time, Erard Frères & Co – which still survives in the Castle Museum in Linz, Austria. For this project I was part of a team of researchers led by Professor Tom Beghin of McGill University, Canada and in collaboration with Chris Maene of Belgian piano company Piano's Maene. Those of you who have heard Daniel Barenboim's "On my New Piano" CD may be familiar with the name, as Chris was the builder behind the straight-strung grand piano for Steinway.

With the project in Belgium coming to a close, I returned to the UK at the beginning of July 2017 – just in time to volunteer for the season of Festival concerts. I'm so glad that I had that opportunity to see Pam for one last time in her element at the head of a highly organised event, and to watch her enjoy John Kitchen and David Gerrard's recital on the two French doubles. I am just sad that she was not able to make the official re-opening of the hall with the University Chancellor, HRH The Princess Royal, and take her much-deserved place as one of the supporters of the redevelopment project.

I hope as the new chair of the Friends I can carry on Pam's legacy by supporting the work of the staff at the museum, and by continuing to support research and performance using all the fine instrument collections that are now brought together under one roof in St Cecilia's Hall Concert Room and Music Museum.



Sound the trumpets! St Cecilia's Hall formally opened

A trumpet fanfare greeted HRH The Princess Royal, the Chancellor of the University of Edinburgh, as she formally opened the refurbished St Cecilia's Hall on 29 November. At the high point of a series of events since May, she spoke of the importance of the collection and unveiled a plaque which is to go into the hall foyer.



Left, top: The Chancellor chats with David Gerrard, who played the virginals at the opening (left), and with Peter Franks (centre) and Brian McGinley who performed recent graduate Andrew Blair's specially composed trumpet fanfare.

Left, bottom: Jenny Nex, the curator, musical instrument museums, describing the 1620 anonymous Italian harpsichord to the Chancellor. Immediately behind the Chancellor is Jacky MacBeath, head of museums, and right of her, the Principal, Sir Timothy O'Shea.

Below, top: Sarah Deters, learning and engagement curator, shows the Chancellor round the Wolfson Gallery.

Below, bottom: Arnold Myers, emeritus curator, Christine Lessels, a donor (centre), and the chairman of the Friends of St Cecilia's Hall, Eleanor Smith, talking with the Chancellor.



Photographs: Douglas Robertson

Pamela Jackson, 1947–2017

Paula Allison, the Friends' minutes secretary, who paid tribute to our late chairman at the AGM, remembers a lifelong friend

I first met Pam when we were 13 and she enrolled at Kirkcaldy High School after moving to Kirkcaldy from Dunfermline. She stayed for just two years before moving to Edinburgh and Mary Erskine's where she finished her secondary education, but in those two years she made life-long friends, of whom I am one, and threw herself into the life of the school, appearing in several drama productions, singing in the choir and joining the debating society.

We met up again as freshers at Edinburgh University in 1964 and stayed firm friends ever after. Pam enjoyed singing with the University Savoy Company but she also developed an abiding interest in early music through attending concerts organised by Peter Williams and Sidney Newman in St Cecilia's Hall.

Another connection between St Cecilia's and the young Pam was made when for several years she acted as assistant manager for programmes given in the hall by well-known actors such as Wendy Hiller, Robert Hardy, Flora Robson and Vivienne Merchant as part of the Edinburgh International Festival.

Pam spent her working life as an academic in Edge Hill University College in Ormskirk, Lancashire, joining as a lecturer in English and drama in 1974 and becoming a senior lecturer in English in 1982. Pam's specialist areas of teaching and scholarship included renaissance and restoration drama, 17th century poetry, the evolution of women's writing in the early modern period and being part of a team pioneering MA writing studies in creative, critical and reflective practice. Pam's interest in early music was enhanced by meeting instrument maker Bob Davies who was commissioned by her to make her virginals. This beautiful instrument was her pride and joy and she played it and cared for it lovingly for the rest of her life.

When she retired to Edinburgh in her late 50s, it seemed appropriate for Pam to once again offer her services to St Cecilia's and she joined the Friends committee at the request of Sheila Barnes and Dianne Fraser. Pam was appointed Hon. Secretary in 2008 and elected chairman at the AGM in 2011.

While in office, Pam increased audience numbers at Friends' Fringe concerts, tirelessly distributing flyers and enthusiastically cajoling anyone and everyone she came across in the month of August to attend at least one concert. She also established cordial relations with institutions such as the Keyboard Charitable Trust which enabled Edinburgh audiences at Festival time to hear exciting emerging young international artists.

Giving the eulogy at her funeral, the Reverend Dr Celia Kenny, another life-long friend from Kirkcaldy High School, pinpointed three qualities in Pam for which we can all be grateful: the first is constancy, which gave her the ability to form and retain close friends; the second is dedication to excellence, so obvious in all her activities as chairman of the Friends of St Cecilia's; the third is an unfailing memory for detail in all the things she held dear. Celia went on to say: "Nothing of importance to her dropped out of Pam's mind."

St Cecilia's was incredibly important to Pam in the last decade of her life and it will continue to benefit from her passionate interest for many years to come as she has left a substantial amount of money in her will to the continuing work of the Friends (see page 12).

We remember Pam with great fondness and gratitude for all she contributed to St Cecilia's and to our lives.



Pam with Dianne Fraser, retiring treasurer, at the 2016 AGM

Generous to the last

Pam Jackson's will includes a bequest, "To the Friends of St Cecilia's Hall ... a 50 per cent share [of the residue of her estate], declaring that it is my wish that this legacy will provide for the endowment of a post-graduate scholarship in early keyboard music performance and will enable the preservation and enhancement of the building's eighteenth century character."

This is likely to bring the Friends a fairly substantial sum, though we do not know yet how much. At this stage it is not clear how the Friends will be able to do very much about the "preservation and enhancement of the building's eighteenth century character", as the building belongs to the university which is unlikely to be doing anything to it soon. The provision about the scholarship, though, ties in very neatly with the concerns expressed in our report on the AGM (see page 2).

When the time comes, the Friends may need the help of a lawyer experienced in wills and the committee would be very grateful if anyone who would be willing to help could get in touch via the contact list on the inside cover of *Soundboard*.



The Friends committee followed a suggestion made at the AGM that we should sponsor a "candle" in Pam Jackson's memory in the Light Up a Life appeal by St Columba's Hospice, Edinburgh.

The event's Tree of Remembrance in Charlotte Square was lit in a ceremony on 11 December, a moving occasion at which the lives of Pam and others were remembered with love and appreciation.



*Pam with David Gerrard, after the 2016 AGM,
where he had played his virginals for members*



Musical memorial

The Friends committee plan to hold a memorial concert for Pam, probably in autumn 2018. The AGM suggested that Friends who had reminiscences of Pam should be invited to send them in for possible inclusion in the concert.

The question of a more permanent memorial will be looked at in detail when it becomes clear what Pam's will means to the Friends. It has been suggested that the prize money from *Soundboard's* BAFM newsletter prize (see page 19) should go towards whatever the Friends decide to do, and a member has already promised a £50 cheque in Pam's memory.



Mandolin repertoire research the modern way

Federico de Bord has been exploring manuscripts from across Europe thanks to his St Cecilia's bursary

The instrument that we know nowadays as the mandolin had been modified throughout the 17th and 18th centuries before becoming popular around the world. It is possible to find different construction models from various luthiers over the different Italian regions. Unfortunately the repertoire that would have been played on these mandolins had been almost forgotten, or at the very least modified for playing on the more common Neapolitan model. During my research, I found many manuscripts from the 18th century written for mandolin in various European libraries. Studying this music has allowed a greater understanding of how the early mandolin was tuned and played, and reconstruction of some of the repertoire for the instrument.



Federico de Bord plays a six-course "mandolino alla genovese"

As I am from Genoa, initially I was looking for music written for the “mandolino alla Genovese”, Genoese mandolin, being keen to reconstruct the history of this forgotten model. There are a few dozen of these instruments in museums and private collections across the world and many of them are hot-branded “C.N.”, referring to the Genoese luthier Christian Nonnemacher. Particularities of this mandolin are the five or six double courses of gut strings, the neck joint on the ninth fret, the canted soundboard, the string anchorage by endpins on the bottom, the parallelogram pickguard, the metal frets and the parchment rosette. Unfortunately, only a few pieces of music could be traced to this specific instrument, but it was during this research that I realised the wealth of manuscripts from the 18th century written for other mandolin models.

The Friends of St Cecilia’s Hall bursary has allowed me to request copies and digital copies of a large number of manuscripts from libraries and private collections. Through this I have had the opportunity to study the mandolin tablatures written by the famous lute and mandolin player Francesco Bartolomeo Conti, now stored in the Lobkowicz family private collection. This beautiful French tablature, written for a mandolin played with the fingers rather than a plectrum, provided me with useful information about Conti’s music.

This knowledge turned out to be very useful when I saw another manuscript, stored in Glasgow, called “Scola del Leutino, o sia Mandolino alla Genovese” (“[an instrument of] the small lute school, or Genoan mandolin”). This is the only existing record of the Genoese mandolin, and the library catalogue links it to Francesco Bartolomeo Conti, to the period between 1724 and 1735. At Folio 3, we have a beautiful watercolour of the Genoese mandolin; on the pegbox is written: “Francesco Conti”. However, by comparing it with other manuscripts handwritten by Conti, we can see that it is not his autograph and probably not related to him.

Copies of many other manuscripts from different European libraries are being studied in order to better understand the characteristics of 18th century mandolins. I would like to thank the Friends of St Cecilia’s Hall for supporting my research, giving me the opportunity to see sources that are not easily accessible in person. Such manuscripts are one example of the large number of information sources we can use to solve difficult puzzles about the history of musical instruments.

Grounds for gratitude

Eric Thomas says thank-you for the bursary that took him to a festival of improvisation within early music

This summer I was awarded a Friends of St Cecilia's bursary to attend the bi-annual Leipziger Improvisationsfestival for a weekend of workshops, concerts and lectures with artists who practise improvisation within early music. The location could not have been more apt – the Hochschule für Musik und Theater, a two-minute walk from the Thomaskirche where J.S. Bach would have improvised on the organ. The festival was held over three days, with workshops throughout the day for instruments tuned at 440Hz and 415Hz, and for keyboard players and singers. I brought my seven-course lute tuned at 440Hz.

The first workshop was run by Jostein Gundersen, a recorder player based in Bergen and Leipzig. We focused on how to improvise over grounds, learning five grounds for performance later at a jam session. We started with a traditional piece of music where the harmonic progression consisted of only two chords, Dm and C, and we improvised in turn over this progression, gaining confidence. We then moved on to the famous "Lamento" bass (from Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*) consisting of a descending four-note bass line. After we got to know each other and had played together for a while Gundersen presented more complex grounds, the *passamezzo moderno*, *spagnoletta* and grounds from Christopher Simpson's *The Division Viol*. We also discussed Simpson's advice for improvising over a ground, looking at how to develop melodic motifs over a chord progression.

After the workshops there was a lecture by Rudolf Lutz, professor in improvisation at the Schola Cantorum in Basel. In this entertaining lecture Lutz gave many demonstrations including an impromptu in the style of Brahms (based on the chord progression of a Beatles song), and a fugue in the style of Bach, where an audience member had to decide where the subject entries came in and in what voice by holding up different objects as a signal.

The first day concluded with a concert by harpsichordist Cornia Marti, lutenist Bor Zuljan and tenor Enea Sorini, playing Italian music from the



Eric Thomas practising in Leipzig with fellow student Amber McPherson

middle of the 16th century as well as improvisations of *ricercares* and dances. The venue was a renovated cinema from 1912, a spectacular setting for a concert. Then it was our turn. Participants in our workshop went on stage and jammed over the grounds we had learnt during the day, welcoming other participants to join us.

Cornia Marti gave the workshop on the second day where we focused on earlier forms of improvisation. To warm up we went over some grounds used during the Renaissance, such as the *passamezzo moderno* and *antico*, but we soon delved into the improvisation of *ricercares* and improvising over a cantus firmus. With a mixed group of instruments in the workshop we got a chance to explore *ricercares* for harpsichord, lute and recorder and how this form can be adapted for each instrument. We then took the tenor *la spagna* and worked together to create a note-by-note counterpoint in late 15th century style. Our task was to improvise divisions around the original note-by-note counterpoint but this was easier said than done.

The lecture was by scholar Jean-Yves Haymoz, who specialises in Renaissance vocal improvisation. He gave an overview of techniques used in “chant sur livre” or singing on the book, where singers would improvise over a plainchant cantus firmus using techniques such as fauxbourdon and canon to create an improvised polyphonic composition.

The evening concert was in the Museum der bildenden Künste, a modern art gallery. The spacious acoustic was perfect for the Vocalconsort Leipzig, joined by the cornettist Gregor Myer. We heard baroque and modern choral music, with an improvised cornetto filling the space. It was the turn of the 415Hz workshop for the jam session, this time in the far more relaxed setting of an Irish pub!

On the final day lutenist Bor Zuljan led a workshop maintaining our focus on Renaissance improvisation, but showing how ideas from vocal improvisation could be applied to instrumental music. We again used *la spagna* as our starting point, but looked at historical examples by Johannes Tinctoris. This was a challenge to all involved as the rhythms used looked more suited to contemporary music. We then did exercises where we played alternating consonant intervals over each note in *la spagna*. For example, we alternated between a fifth and a third over each changing note found in the tenor, producing a note-by-note line of counterpoint. We then improvised divisions around these consonant intervals, aiming for each consonant interval every time the tenor changed note. We also looked at how vocal models can be used to structure an improvisation when more than one person is playing.

The final concert was an imagining of the musical battle between J.S. Bach and Louis Marchand if they had ever met, with Rudolf Lutz taking the part of Bach and organist Daniel Beilschmidt playing Marchand. It really is impossible to describe the skill that these two showed – if you closed your eyes it really was conceivable that it could be J.S. Bach playing.

I would like to thank the Friends of St Cecilia's Hall for making this trip possible – it has been of invaluable assistance to my postgraduate research in improvisation techniques in early 16th century Italian lute music. There was even a small amount of time to be a tourist, with a visit to the Thomaskirche!



Soundboard success

We are delighted to announce that *Soundboard* won its category in this year's British Association of Friends of Museums (BAFM) newsletter competition. John Rosenfield, representing BAFM, is pictured with the winner's certificate in the section for organisations with fewer than 250 members. With him are Erica Schwarz, who designs the new-look *Soundboard*, and, from left, Martin Hillman, Roger French and David Jenkins. The certificate was accompanied by a £250 cheque which the committee plans to put towards a permanent memorial to our late chairman, Pam Jackson.



For further information on BAFM see their website at www.bafm.co.uk.



Holidaying in Hampshire: Russell revealed

I found myself in beautiful rural Hampshire during the summer this year (*writes Richard de Soldenhoff*). I was visiting friends near Romsey and they suggested a visit to the house and gardens of the nearby National Trust property, Mottisfont (pictured below). This had started life in 1201 as an Augustinian priory, become a Tudor mansion after the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII (but with many of the medieval church's stone arches preserved), then had further major changes in Georgian and Victorian times.

In 1934 the house was bought by Maud and Gilbert Russell and for the next 20 years it became a literary, artistic, musical and political hub. Two of the key attractions are the huge mural by Rex Whistler (self-portrait at one end with a fag in his hand!) and the two walled rose gardens near the house. While walking around the house, I noticed a rather attractive harpsichord in one of the rooms, and being a Friend of St Cecilia's Hall, went over to inspect the instrument and read the explanatory note beside it. Revelation!



The harpsichord commemorated the son of Gilbert and Maud, Raymond Russell, who was brought up in this house. Raymond Russell (1922–1964) was a talented musician and an avid collector who amassed an extraordinary collection of keyboard instruments, and decided to leave them to the University of Edinburgh, to be kept in St Cecilia’s Hall. The transfer was made after his death and the 21 instruments form the heart of the university’s keyboard collection, supplemented by the collection of Rodger Mirrey in 2005 and being part of the 5,500 items in the university’s fabulous musical instruments collection.

I have seen these instruments in St Cecilia’s Hall and at the Reid Hall for many years and have heard some of Raymond Russell’s instruments being played by stars such as Mahan Esfahani and Jean Rondeau. How wonderful to chance upon the house where the young Raymond started his splendid collection!

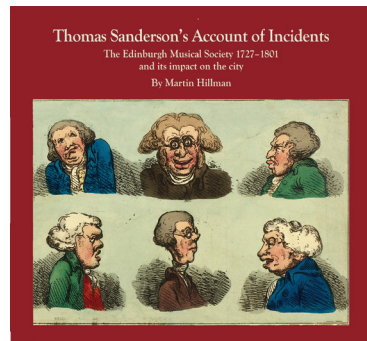
SYPERTS IN SUMMER

George and Joy Sybert are again sponsoring their early summer series of three concerts this year, on 3 and 30 June, plus one more date, still to be decided.

*Full details will appear in due course on the Friends’ website,
www.stceciliasfriends.org.uk.*

Book benefits

Thomas Sanderson’s Account of Incidents, Martin Hillman’s new book on the Edinburgh Musical Society, who built St Cecilia’s, is available post free to members – as are all books and CDs from the Friends. See our website: www.stceciliasfriends.org.uk.





BAfM

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