



Yatton Music Society

Charity No : 1024758

Newsletter : 1 May 2026



Dear YMS Member,



Welcome to the Members' Newsletter for May. This month I will cover the final concert of our Annual Programme for 2025/26 which is a **Piano and Clarinet duo on 16 May given by Megan Davies and Catherine Millege**. Although we normally hold our concerts towards the end of the month, this last concert is a little earlier, as we wished to avoid the May Bank Holiday dates when many of you may be away, or wishing to attend other family events. I would also like to draw your attention to the exciting first concert of our 2026/27 Annual Programme, to be given by **'The Mandolinquents' on 4 July**, the same day as our Annual General Meeting (AGM), more details at the end of this newsletter. To remind you, our: Annual Programme year, Membership year, Financial year, and our Charity Commission reporting year are all aligned, and run from 1 June one year to 31 May the next year.

16 May 2026 7.30pm - Catherine Millege (piano) and Meg Davies (clarinet)



This programme features music written for clarinet and piano by French composers (with the obvious exception of one piece by Mozart), featuring big names such as: Debussy, Ravel and Saint-Saëns, but also some lesser-known composers such as: Aubin, Boulanger and Cahuzac. Audiences will hear soothing melodies interwoven with dramatic climaxes in this varied, and virtuosic programme. The compositions include a significant, and refreshing number, of female composers. There is also a world premiere arrangement of Nadia Boulanger's *Trois Pièces* no.1 in Eb Minor for cello and piano; an arrangement by a pianist friend of Meg's called Chloe Clayton. Meg is a recent Masters graduate from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama where Catherine is also a professor at the RWCMD.

Catherine and Meg have sub-titled their concert tonight (**sous les étoiles** – an evening under the stars) so we thought that we would go with this theme and add a few additional French accoutrements of our own during the interval. We plan some *crémant* (French sparkling wine that cannot be called champagne, is made in the same way, but not necessarily with the same grapes) to drink, and with macaroons to have with tea or coffee.

Programme

Louis Cahuzac- Cantilène

Francine Aubin- Deux pièces en forme du jazz

Francis Poulenc- Sonata for clarinet and piano

Germaine Tailleferre- Arabesque

Nadia Boulanger arr. Chloe Clayton- Trois pièces for cello & piano

Claude Debussy - Petit Piece



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— Interval —

Maurice Ravel- Pièce en forme de Habenera

Camille Saint-Saëns - Sonata in E-flat Major

Claude Debussy - Première Rhapsodie

W A Mozart—Adagio from Clarinet Concerto in A Maj

Darius Milhaud- Scaramouche mvts II and III

Jacques Offenbach arr. Meg Davies – Galop Infernal

Louis Cahuzac's (1880-1960) Cantilène is a lyrical, virtuosic miniature inspired by the light, open landscapes of his native southern France. It combines a singing melodic line with flashes of bravura writing, reflecting Cahuzac's dual identity as a great clarinet soloist and a composer deeply rooted in Occitan musical colour. His compositions are almost all inspired by Languedoc and the rural south of France; Cantilène reflects this pastoral influence. A recital favourite for its charm and regional colour.

Francine Aubin (1938-2016) Deux Pièces en Forme de Jazz are two short, characterful works that blend classical craft with the colours and rhythmic inflections of early 20th-century French jazz. Though written within a classical framework, they draw on the lightness, syncopation, and harmonic flavour associated with the Parisian jazz scene of the 1920s and 30s.

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963) Sonata for Clarinet and Piano (1962) is one of Poulenc's final completed works, and a major contribution to the clarinet repertoire. It was written for the legendary clarinetist Benny Goodman and dedicated to the memory of Poulenc's friend and fellow member of Les Six, Arthur Honegger. One of the most frequently performed clarinet sonatas of the 20th century. It quickly entered the international repertoire and remains a standard in competitions, recitals, and conservatoire syllabuses.

Germaine Tailleferre (1892-1983) Arabesque (1973) is a concise, lyrical work in ternary (ABA) form, notable for its serene melodic character and subtle harmonic shifts. It draws thematic material from her opera La Petite Sirène, showcasing her affinity for melody and tonal warmth and reflects Tailleferre's collaboration with Ravel and her broader chamber music legacy. She was the only female member of 'Les Six', a group of French modernist composers, the other 5 being: Auric, Durey, Milhaud, Poulenc, and Honegger.

Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979) Trois pièces pour violoncelle et piano (1914) began life as works for solo organ before Nadia adapted them for cello and piano. This origin explains their unusual titles - simple numbers and keys rather than evocative names - reflecting organ repertoire conventions. Their expressive range, from quiet introspection to gentle melancholy and playful energy, reveals the influence of her teacher Gabriel Fauré and showcases Boulanger's refined, post-impressionist voice.



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Claude Debussy (1862 – 1918) Petit Piece (1910) was composed as a test piece (*morceau de concours*) for the Paris Conservatoire and was originally written for clarinet and piano.

--- Interval ---

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) – Pièce en forme de Habanera (1907–1909) began life as a Vocalise-étude for mezzo-soprano and piano, commissioned by the Paris Conservatoire professor Amédée-Louis Hettich and soon became one of his most beloved miniatures. It was later adapted by Ravel for various instruments and today is most often heard in versions for violin, cello, or clarinet with piano. Its languid melody, floating over the characteristic habanera rhythm, evokes an imagined Spain full of colour and sensuality.

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921) Clarinet Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 167 (1921) is a late Romantic gem, blending elegance, wit, and lyricism. Composed in the final year of his life and dedicated to Auguste Périer, clarinet professor at the Paris Conservatoire. It was part of **Saint-Saëns's** work to enrich the wind repertoire.

Claude Debussy (1862-1918) Première Rhapsodie (1909–1910) at the request of the Paris Conservatoire and was dedicated to Prosper Mimart a clarinet professor of the Conservatoire. Although Debussy was not especially drawn to wind instruments, he produced one of the most refined and atmospheric works in the clarinet repertoire, with its first performance given in 1910 with piano accompaniment, although Debussy later orchestrated it in 1911. Today it is widely regarded as one of the masterpieces for clarinet, an example of Debussy's late style, and a cornerstone of the repertoire.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) Clarinet Concerto in A major, K. 622 – Adagio Composed in the final months of Mozart's life, the Clarinet Concerto stands as one of his most luminous late works, written for his friend and fellow Freemason Anton Stadler. The central Adagio is the emotional heart of the piece: a serene, almost vocal meditation in which the clarinet unfolds long, unbroken lines over a gently pulsing accompaniment. Probably well known to most concert goers and one to savour.

Darius Milhaud (1892-1974) Scaramouche (Suite), Op. 165b (1937) is one of his most popular works—bright, witty, rhythmically alive, and infused with the cosmopolitan energy of 1930s Paris. Originally written for two pianos, it was later arranged for several instruments, including the well-known clarinet and piano version. Composed in 1937 at the request of pianist Marguerite Long for performance at the Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques in Paris.

Jacques Offenbach (1819-1880) Galop Infernal arr. Meg Davies This is the high-energy, whirlwind finale of Jacques Offenbach's operetta *Orphée aux enfers* (*Orpheus in the Underworld*), first performed in **1858**. It later became world-famous as the signature music of the **Parisian can-can**, especially at the Moulin Rouge, a wonderful way to end a concert.



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The first concert of the 2026/27 Annual Programme will be given by **'The Mandolinquents'** on 4 July, the same day as the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The AGM see: [General meetings – Yatton Music Society](#) will finalise a series of important changes to the Society. If you are available to come and support the AGM and vote, then great. However, whether you can attend the AGM or not, we really do hope you can come to the concert later in the evening. This will feature not only brilliant musicians but at the same time be amusing and fun. We have not seen the Mandolinquents at the YMS since 2003, so it will be wonderful to catch up with them. To that end, the trustees plan to entice your attendance with a 'one-off' membership deal that is only available if you come to the 4 July concert.

I will send out much more information in my June Newsletter about the Mandolinquents concert and, in a separate email, the arrangements and timings for the AGM itself, together with its agenda and the proposals to be addressed. AGMs are always important events in a charity's calendar, but our next AGM represents a considerable milestone in our history, as we will vote to change the structure of the charity to a legal entity called a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). Under our constitution the trustees are required to give society members a minimum notice period of 2 weeks of the AGM, together with a copy of the agenda. We plan to give members 4 weeks' notice before the 4 July to give members enough time to consider the AGM proposals.

In this and earlier Newsletters, I have alluded to an offer to members who renew their Annual YMS Membership on the 4 July if they attend the concert. This offer is available whether members attend the AGM or not, or whether they were members in the previous year. Annual Membership costs £10, and the trustees plan to retain this £10 fee into the next Annual Membership year of 2026/27 (which runs from 1 June 2026 to 31 May 2027). Membership, in addition to giving members voting rights, also allows them to pay only £10 for every concert ticket in that Annual Programme year. Additionally, members receive monthly newsletters straight to their inbox, which provide information about the society and the music in the next concert.

However, when individuals buy their ticket for the Mandolinquents concert on 4 July (whether they were members in 2025/26 or not) and renew their Annual Membership for 2026/27, they can get both for a total of £15. Annual Membership will remain at £10 before and after the 4 July concert. We would obviously also like to see members at the AGM, but it is not necessary to do so claim the reduced membership fee when you buy your concert ticket. Refreshments will be available after the AGM.

Best Wishes
Vince
YMS Chairman



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