

Musicians from The North East of Scotland Music School

Turriff & District Rotary Club Concert

Buckley's at Deveron Country House, Turriff
Tuesday 27th May 2014

Report by John Smith

In what is becoming a really pleasant tradition for the Rotary Club of Turriff and District, young students from the North East Scotland School of Music (NESMS) came and provided entertainment at one of our regular weekly meetings. On Tuesday 27th May, at Buckley's, three young people played and sang in what was a real treat.

Mind you it almost never happened and this because of the dreadful Haudagain Roundabout and other traffic black-spots on leaving Aberdeen. The students left Aberdeen at 4.30pm in the vain hope they would make it to Turriff by the back of six. It was much nearer to seven before they arrived but fortunately the meal was a buffet-style one, so equilibrium was established before the concert commenced.

It was fourteen year old Sanjay Vijayan playing Handel's Sonata in A Minor who took the floor first. The recorder is not everyone's favourite instrument, but Sanjay's playing could easily convert many to consider it so. He was smooth and very confident. He followed up with the Ennio Morriconi's Academy Award nomination - the theme to the Mission. Instantly recognisable, Sanjay brought out the haunting theme brilliantly. He concluded with a foot tapping Italian Dance which was cheery, very melodious and finished with a joke which had us all smiling.

We have all witnessed on TV and in Concert Halls piano players who sit down without a scrap of musical notation in front of them and play faultlessly. One sort of expects it with seasoned artistes. But when a teenager takes on such different music greats as Mendelssohn, Paderewski and Chopin and appears totally nerveless, and then treats the keys with utter confidence it really does make you sit up in awe.

Amy Birse, a school pupil from Aberdeen made us so react this evening. The Venetian Gondolier's Song, the Minuet in G and the Prelude in E Minor were all quite different pieces and demanded that the pianist caress the keys with tenderness (Mendelssohn), with vigour and not a little passion (Paderewski) and sublime control in the case of Chopin. It was simply beautiful.

Concluding the performances was Kirsten Lobban, currently of Tarves. Soprano Kirsten, like the others had been practicing her art since nursery days. She started with Susanna's aria from the Marriage of Figaro - *Ridente la calma* (where the heroine asks her lover to be patient!) and moved to *der Herrlichste von allen*, by Schumann. This time switching from Italian to German. One of the Rotary members insisted later that Kirsten's German pronunciation was flawless. This time the girl was proclaiming that her lover was the best of all.

Conscious of her audience Kirsten then concluded with Bright Is the Ring of Words by Ralph Vaughan Williams, a song in English. This contains the lines

"Fair the fall of songs

When the singer sings them".

Words so true when they are sung as Kirsten did this evening. Vaughan Williams was a great supporter of Haddo Choral Society at Tarves.

The trio was supported with skill by Tanya Brechin on the keyboard and all four performers introduced by Grainne Cullen the new administrator at NESMS. NESMS will be celebrating its fortieth anniversary next year 2015.

It fell to Tom McAllion, who happened to be the liaison with NESMS, to propose a well earned vote of thanks.