

The Dvořák Society

For Czech and Slovak Music

Founded 1974

Newsletter No. 152, November 2025



A dramatic moment in Dvořák's *Svatební košile* (*The Spectre's Bride*). From left to right Kateřina Kněžíková, Jakub Hrůša, Nicky Spence and Pavol Kubáň. See page 9 for the detailed review. Photo: ©2025 Tristram Kenton.

PRESIDENT: Jakub Hrůša

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The Dvořák Society Newsletter is published quarterly. The Editor welcomes articles, letters, and photographs on all aspects of Czech and Slovak music, but reserves the usual editorial prerogatives. Views expressed in individual articles do not necessarily reflect the views of the Society.

Authors are encouraged to submit material to the editor electronically but articles may also be submitted as a manuscript. The newsletter is published in February, May, August and November. The deadlines are 1st January, April, July and October, respectively. **Editor: Tomy Duby, tel.: +44 7878 190 244, e-mail: newsletter@dvorak-society.org.**

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Between The Deadlines

Notes from your Chairman

We have made significant progress in setting up a digital library of our publications. The early issues of the Journal have been scanned and posted to the DS website. The Journals for which we did not have PDFs are currently with the company contracted to digitise them, and these will be available to view or purchase a download from the website. Scans of our Newsletters from 1988 have been completed and are available for members to view on the website. Copies have also been made available to RILM in New York.

The highlight of my recent trip to Czechia was attending two events in Nelahozeves. For pictures, see page 24. On Sunday, 7th September, the usual official birthday celebrations for Dvořák were observed at the birthplace, curated by Eleonore Kinsky of the Lobkowicz Foundation. The ceremony opened around the statue of the composer, and a local choir sang music by Bendl and Dvořák, concluding with the laying of floral wreaths by William and Sandra Lobkowicz, the Director of the Czech Museum of Music (National Museum) and Markéta Hallová and Jitka Suková from our sister organisation in Prague, together with a representative from Dvořák Museum in Zlonice. This was followed by a concert in the birthplace given by the Kukal String Quartet, whom some of you will remember from the Leamington Festival 2024. They gave excellent accounts of Mozart's *Prussian Quartet*, K. 575 and Dvořák's *Slavonic Quartet*, Op. 51. (Hanslick heard the latter in 1880 and wrote favourable comments!) The day continued with a colloquium on the influential Prague-born music critic Eduard Hanslick (I did not attend, but our Vice-President David Beveridge was present).

This was also an opportunity to take some refreshments at the Station café or the newly refurbished restaurant opposite the castle.

A new guide of the birthplace has been published, and I also noticed that a new book entitled *Antonín*

Dvořák's Summer Retreat has been written by Ondřej Šupka, who was the compiler of the excellent website on [Dvořák](http://Dvorak.org). The book is available in Czech, and an abridged English version is also for sale.

In the afternoon, there was an open-air concert in the castle courtyard of music by Koželuh, Liehmann (Dvořák's music teacher in Zlonice) and Dvořák.

The following day, Monday, 8th September, Terry Heard, David Beveridge, and I attended the Grand Opening of the birth house. There were speeches by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and also by William Lobkowicz, followed by the traditional cutting of a ribbon. Small groups were then invited to tour the birth house, whilst others partook of a buffet lunch laid out in the castle rooms.

The composer himself would have approved of our means of travel. We took the train from Prague to Kralupy nad Vltavou. From there, we walked the Dvořák trail alongside the river Vltava to Nelahozeves (about 40 minutes).

In the afternoon, Kieszka and Gilles Parentau gave an open-air concert in an extraordinary rendering of a medley of famous tunes by Dvořák played on multiple keyboards and featuring very nifty footwork on the pedal board. This was followed by the Symphony Orchestra of the Prague Conservatoire playing Dvořák's *9th Symphony*, Op. 95.

Under the Scholarship scheme, two string players, Viktoriia Kovaka (viola) and Jan Petrov (cello) from Prague Conservatoire, attended the one-week Cadenza International Summer School held at the Purcell School from 19th – 25th July. I was fortunate to meet them both at Nelahozeves as they were playing in the orchestra, which performed in the castle courtyard as part of the grand opening ceremony. Jan, who was leading the cello section, is going on to study at the Musikhochschule in Leipzig. Viktoriia has a further two years of study at the Prague Conservatoire. From their accounts and also the reports received from the tutors, both scholars performed excellently in their chamber music sessions.

I was able to attend only one concert as part of this year's Dvořák Prague Festival. It took place in St Agnes Convent and was given the rather imaginative but slightly inaccurate and odd title in English *The Moldau and the Seine Dialogue*, given by the Bennewitz String Quartet with Petr Ries (double-bass) and the familiar pianist Martin Kasík with soprano Kateřina Kněžíková (who has performed at Glyndbourne and also most recently at the Gala Concert at Covent Garden, see page 9). The music, mainly vocal with strings/piano, was by Fauré, Chausson, Dvořák, Jongen, Lekeu, Saint-Saëns and Massenet. Martinů's *French String Quartet No. 1*, H. 117, was the odd one out. It was a delightful programme of rarely heard music but marred by completely inadequate programme notes, lacking song titles and texts. A real pity.

Finally, it has come to our notice of a recent initiative called the Czech Music Events Ltd, which features chamber music in London and Manchester, on 30th and 31st October, given by Pavel Fischer and Petr Prause. A concert by Gabriela Demeterová (violin) and Harvey Davies (piano) took place at the end of September; John Beale has included its details on our [Facebook](#) page. I intend to go to the concert in Manchester and try to find out further information on this initiative.

M. David Roberts

This is your editor writing

This is my fourteenth Newsletter. Today I will be brief, as in this Newsletter you will find several contributions from me.

There is one topic that I will cover in more detail in the next Newsletter, but you can already have a preview: We, that is Dvořák Society, are going digital! In the [Members' Section](#) of our website, you have access to all the published Newsletters and to most of the Journals! As I write these lines, volumes 16–22 are currently being scanned; by the time you read these lines, they should be on the website.

In the meantime, please investigate the updated [Cumulative Index](#) of DS Journals. I think that it is a real treasure trove of information! The update is almost finished...

In the last moment, I am squeezing in some exciting news: Yesterday, I was at the Royal Opera in Covent Garden. I took part in an *Insight* programme on Janáček's *The Makropulos Case*, which will be premiered by the time you get this Newsletter (see Events, page 21). Our president, Jakub Hruška, Nigel Semione and some guests introduced this opera. Recording of this inside is on [YouTube](#).

The next Newsletter's submission deadline is 1 January 2026. Please send me your reviews, contributions and comments. Without them, the Newsletter would be shorter and duller. My details are on top of page 2.

Tomy Duby

Membership News

MEMBERSHIP

We welcome back as a member Mr John Taylor of Stockport, who rejoins after a short absence. There have been no other membership changes.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Another year has passed and it is again time to remind you that **subscriptions for 2026 are due on 1st January**. We do not send individual reminders, so this notice is a request to all members to see that their subscriptions are paid promptly.

Young member (under 25 on 1 Jan)	Free
Full-time student	Free
Individual members	£30
Joint members (two at one address)	£40
Corporate (non-profit-making)	£30
Corporate (profit-making)	£50
Overseas mail supplement (for all non-UK addresses)	£10

Payments can also include optional subscriptions to the International Martinů Circle (**£14** for email membership or **£21** for postal membership) and/or Czech Music (**£25**), a Prague-based magazine in English. Donations to our Scholarship Fund are also very welcome.

Payment methods, in order of preference (for processing time and cost to the Society):

1. By Banker's Order (for those with UK bank accounts). To set up a Banker's Order if you do not have one, please send the details to me, using the form which you can print from the Society's website, [Bankers-Order-Form.pdf](#), or obtain from me. If you already have a

Banker's Order, please check that it is for **the right amount**, and ask your bank to correct it if necessary.

2. By electronic bank transfer. The Society's banking details are in the table below. If possible, please add a note saying who the payment is from and send me an email to say that you have paid this way.

Account:	Dvorak Society of Great Britain (NB: no 'The' and no diacriticals)
Sort code:	20-35-27
Account no:	80348554
IBAN:	GB14 BUKB 2035 2780 3485 54
SWIFTBIC:	BUKBGB22

3. By cheque in pounds sterling (not euros or other currencies) payable to The Dvořák Society and sent to the Membership Secretary.
4. For overseas members unable to use any of the above, payment may be made in pounds sterling by PayPal. You do not need to register with PayPal to do this, but you must have an email address. If you wish to use PayPal for the first time, please let me know, and I shall initiate a *request for payment*. I shall do this automatically in late December for all those who have paid in this way before. When you pay, please add a note saying that the payment is for a subscription. In special circumstances, payment by PayPal is available to UK members too; please consult me about this.

COMMUNICATION

Please remember to tell me if you change your postal address, telephone number or – especially – **email address**. This information will be used only for Society business in accordance with our published Privacy Notice. I prefer to use email for communications, as this is the quickest and cheapest way to make contact.

I am always happy to act as a go-between if you want to contact another member.

Terry Heard, Membership Secretary
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25 years ago

Dvořák Society Newsletter No. 53 appeared in October 2000 and was the seventh issue under my editorship.

The Newsletter started with congratulations to our President, Sir Charles Mackerras, on the occasion of his 75th birthday.

Vilém Tauský had celebrated his 90th birthday with a party at the Czech Embassy on 19th July, and this Newsletter included a photograph of Vilém together with Sir Charles and Lady Mackerras and our then Chairman Graham Melville-Mason. During the evening, the Ambassador, Pavel Seifter, had presented Vilém with the Jan Masaryk Gratias Agit award on behalf of the Czech State.

Several future concerts to celebrate Vilém Tauský's 90th birthday were planned for November.

Advance notice was given of a meeting at the Czech Embassy on 2nd November, when Petr Eben would be in conversation with Graham Melville-Mason.

And Richard Phillips gave notice of a special concert which would take place on Armistice Day, 11th November, in Draper's Hall in Coventry. The concert would be given in the presence of the Bishops of Coventry and of Dresden and the Lord Mayor of Coventry by the Martinů Quartet and baritone Nigel Cliffe. The programme would include Vilém Tauský's *Coventry: A Meditation for String Quartet*, George Butterworth's *Love blows as the wind blows*, Sylvie Bodorová's *Terezín Ghetto Requiem* and Beethoven's *String Quartet*, Op. 130.

Graham Melville-Mason reported that an honorary doctorate was to be conferred on our member composer Karel Husa by the Academy of Music in Prague (HAMU) on 20th October. Graham Melville-Mason would be present.

Richard Phillips gave advance notice of a long weekend of Czech Music in Leamington from 4th to 9th May 2001.

Graham Melville-Mason reviewed three recitals by the Duo Art Nouveau, which had taken place at the Czech Embassy during the summer months. The Duo was made up of two Dvořák Society members, Tomáš Tuláček and Geoffrey Chacaro. In the first recital, the Duo had brought together works by Josef Bohuslav Foerster, Karel Boleslav Jirák, František Drdla, and Vítězslav Novák, while the second recital, entitled 'Martinů and his contemporaries', had included works by Martinů, Janáček and Suchoň, while the third opened with Fibich's *Violin Sonatina in D minor*, followed by Petr Pokorný's *Music for the Celebration of Late Summer for solo violin*. Petr Pokorný had been present to introduce the British première of his *Franz Liszt is Sitting on the Veranda and Watching the Sky*, Op. 67, for piano. This was one of six pieces written by different Czech composers, being a reaction to a piece by Liszt suggested to them by their Moravian colleague, Pavel Novák. This was followed by a work by Novák himself: *Fantasia for violin and piano*. The second half of the concert featured Tomáš Svoboda's *Violin Sonata*, Op. 73, Miroslav Pudlák's *Encore for violin and piano* and concluded with Dvořák's *Sonatina in G*, Op. 100.

Greg Terian's Martinů Review was mainly concerned with giving notice of two main events: The