

# DON'T LOSE THE THREAD

No 40

The Newsletter of The Cobweb Orchestra  
April 2008

## **Anno Cobwebi**

**By Howard Rocke - Chair of Trustees**

As we light a candle on the birthday cake to celebrate year one of The Cobweb Orchestra as a charitable company it seems a good moment to reflect on what has been achieved.

This time last year many questions were being asked -

- Was independence the right move?
- Could we survive without North Music Trust?
- Would it be possible to maintain a broad range of musical activities?
- Can open access be continued?
- Would such a venture be financially viable?

Well, with full confidence the answer can now be given to all these questions, YES.

An increased number of people have taken part in an increased number of activities over an ever increasing geographical area. The Leader Training Group has produced some wonderful new leaders who are now playing an active part in the developing the Cobwebs movement. Regular groups have doubled to six with more under discussion.

A system of sub-committees feed into quarterly trustee meetings providing new ideas and a system of co-operative participation which helps support Andy and Liz's expert running of the organisation. A strong membership base has been formed, overseen by our team of membership secretaries. This will continue to be central to our continued financial success. Next year we will no longer benefit from transition funding and may also have to wrestle with the possibility of registering for VAT but we are confident we can continue to balance the books.

The coming year has loads of exciting events already arranged from Durham to Dachau. If you don't already know about these then check out our brand new website and all will be revealed. This also includes a forum which it is hoped will encourage discussion on all matters concerning Cobwebs. A solid foundation has been successfully laid and the intention is to continue to offer a wide variety of enjoyable and rewarding musical experiences for all.

Finally, do come to our first AGM which will be held at Dipton Community Centre on Saturday 17th May 2008, 1-3PM. It's your chance to have your say about The Cobweb Orchestra and why not combine it with some music making (there's a Beginners Group before and Baroque Group after).

## **And next year**

**By Andy Jackson – Creative Director**

To start with, reserve the weekend before Easter 2009 (April 3-5) in your diaries for next year's Spring Residential Weekend in Sedbergh. Those of us who have only just recovered from this year's fun can thoroughly recommend it as an excellent way to get to know lots of people, eat, drink and play the most extraordinary range of music.

I know a year might seem a long time away, but it really does help Liz and I if people let us know if they are coming to events as soon as the enrolment forms go out. With ever greater numbers of people turning up to Cobwebs, getting in early is the best way of ensuring a place at those few events for which the number of players has to be limited.

Howard has already hinted at some of the things our hugely expanded programme will include in the coming year, but here are a few I'd like to highlight:

Self-promotion: We'll be performing concerts at Ashington and Appleby and in the Summer months which are our own promotions. This means that we need to sell lots of tickets to make them financially viable, so please tell everyone you know about these events to ensure we get an audience.

Franck's D minor symphony: Popular opinion has it that our performance of this beautiful and profound work at the Sage last November was Cobwebs at its best and there has been lobbying for us to do it again, hence the Appleby concert in July. Here is a chance to play the work if you missed it first time round or to revisit it if you did take part in last year's show.

National Maritime Festival in Hartlepool: We have been asked to conclude the festivities with a short prom-like programme of rousing water-related music. I know these outdoor performances are not to everyone's liking (wind, rain, can't hear or be heard properly, etc.) but they do give us the chance to let lots of people know what we do, so please sign up if you're free.

Continuing relationship with Sage: Once every three months, starting on the first Saturday of August, we will be moving into the MEC and Northern Rock Hall to present a menu of Cobwebby activities and see who comes to join us. There will be Beginners' sessions, workshops on different styles of music, a chance to join chamber groups, and much more besides.

Travelling to events: Because the geographical area we now cover is huge, can I make a plea for car-sharing? It is cheaper than travelling on your own and journeys pass more quickly when you have someone to chat to. That trip from York to Middlesbrough or Dalston to Newbiggin may not be quite as arduous as you think and it would be great to see people from distant places without feeling too guilty about the carbon emissions.

## **By popular demand – A course for beginners**

**By Clare Barker (French Horn and Cobwebs Leader)**

Hello there! The first time I came across the Cobweb orchestra was when the Harelaw group (I think) were doing a concert at my younger sister's school, and I was invited to play French horn. I had a great time and found the group members very friendly and welcoming. After finishing my degree and completing a year of professional training in 2003, I returned home to find that I was missing the orchestras and music groups in which I had been involved whilst still at school. I remembered Cobwebs, gave it a try and, finding good company, satisfying music and lots of fun, decided to stick around!

Having 'dabbled' in a bit of Cobwebs conducting over the past couple of years with the ever-tolerant and supportive Guinea Pig Orchestra (thanks!) and at occasional Harelaw group rehearsals, I joined the Leaders' Group and was delighted to be given the opportunity to run the Beginners' Course.

Everyone is welcome at these sessions, whether an absolute beginner, an instrumentalist requiring a refresher course or a more experienced player.

The plan is to give a gentle introduction to orchestral playing, featuring both new and more well-known themes and works. It will be an opportunity to learn at a steady pace and, of course, have fun! Players are welcome to come to one, some or all of the sessions, but for those who'd like to attend the full course, it will be progressive. It will run every Saturday in May, 10.30am-12.30pm. On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>, we'll be meeting at Dipton Community Centre. On May 10<sup>th</sup>, with a slightly different flavour, we'll meet at 10.00am Middlesbrough Town Hall, nicely 'sandwiched' inside the Community Music Day.

Hope to see you at some or all of the sessions!

### **Cobwebs to Dachau**

**By Andrew Forsyth – Trustee in charge of foreign trips**

In case you hadn't already heard it on the grapevine (probably Gewürztraminer), we are taking the Cobwebs to foreign pastures once more, this time for a long weekend into darkest Bavaria, just north of Munich to Dachau.

To understand the fun of these trips, it may help if you've been on a residential to Sedbergh, Kielder or Ridley Hall before. There is the obvious pleasure of some seriously concentrated music making with the blend of socialising with what we have all now come to regard as a very friendly bunch of really quite interesting people and the additional pleasure that travel to foreign parts brings.

We aim to also work with some of the local musicians in this interesting town that is home to a very musical family who have already tasted the Cobweb ways and formed a significant voice in the string section in Tuscany last summer. We can't wait to meet up with them again and enjoy their significant musical contribution once more and hope that you might come and join us in mid September.

More details are available in the attached booking form and this trip is open to absolutely anyone who wants to come. So check your diaries, check your passports and come with us.

### **Be a Member and get...**

**By Liz Carlile – Cobwebs Administrator**

Middlesbrough Town Hall are offering Members of The Cobweb Orchestra concessions for the Middlesbrough classical concerts. Just say the magic word 'Cobwebs' to the booking office, and you can buy your tickets at the lowest concession price for that particular type of ticket. (I'm told it works out at about a 10% discount.) Both the remaining concerts this season are given by Northern Sinfonia (one of Bach, Mendelssohn and Stravinsky, and the other of Palestrina, Taverner and Vivaldi) – so come to Middlesbrough and see familiar faces in a slightly unfamiliar, but intriguing, setting.

## CONTACTS

[www.cobweborchestra.org.uk](http://www.cobweborchestra.org.uk) For information and access to the e-mail group.

General enquiries to:

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Specific enquiries about regional events to:

**Andy Jackson**, 13 West Road, Bishop Auckland DL14 7PP.

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Other useful contacts:

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**Ian Potts** (Tebay Co-ordinator) 01768 351934 [musicianpotts@aol.com](mailto:musicianpotts@aol.com)

**Rebecca Pedlow** (Middlesbrough Co-ordinator) [Rebecca.pedlow@gmail.com](mailto:Rebecca.pedlow@gmail.com)

**Catherine Holbrook** (York Co-ordinator) 07811 772 332 [catherineholbrook@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:catherineholbrook@yahoo.co.uk)

**Peter Wood** (Dalston Co-ordinator) 07720783225 [peter@peterwood01.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:peter@peterwood01.wanadoo.co.uk)

**Lee Fairlie** (Cobfriends Chair) 0191 3847464 [Leefairlie@aol.com](mailto:Leefairlie@aol.com)

**Howard Roche** (Chair of the Trustees) 01207 570003 [roche@beeb.net](mailto:roche@beeb.net)

## Trustees

If you have ideas or concerns about The Orchestra, please contact one of the Trustees, whose main areas of interest are listed below.

Howard Roche, Chair, [roche@beeb.net](mailto:roche@beeb.net) ; overall ethos and direction

Sue Baker, Vice-chair, [suebaker@ktdbroadband.com](mailto:suebaker@ktdbroadband.com) ; overall ethos and direction

Jean Ord, Treasurer, [ord.j@sky.com](mailto:ord.j@sky.com) ; finance

Lesley Wearmouth, Secretary, [lwearmouth@hotmail.com](mailto:lwearmouth@hotmail.com) ; membership

Anita Arris, [anita@arris.freemove.co.uk](mailto:anita@arris.freemove.co.uk) ; liaison with other bodies

Caroline Dunn, [caroline@carolinedunn.com](mailto:caroline@carolinedunn.com) ; fundraising

Andrew Forsyth, [andrew@weasdale.com](mailto:andrew@weasdale.com) ; overseas trips, overall ethos and direction

Peter Fuller, [peterfuller8@btinternet.com](mailto:peterfuller8@btinternet.com) ; finance, human resources, programming

Alison Kitson, [alison\\_kitson@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:alison_kitson@yahoo.co.uk) ; funding applications

Toby Lipman, [tobyipman@btinternet.com](mailto:tobyipman@btinternet.com) ; programming

Ruth Robson, [ruth.robson@thebowesmuseum.org.uk](mailto:ruth.robson@thebowesmuseum.org.uk) ; funding applications, promotion and publicity

David Wood, [dave@davewood.clara.co.uk](mailto:dave@davewood.clara.co.uk) ; marketing, concert promotion, archives

## **Cobfriends committee members are:**

**Northumberland** - Sandy Alden, Christine Oakes, Sheila Ryan

**Cumbria** – Sue Baker, Terry Mullett, Julie Ratcliffe, Ruth Wood

**Durham** – Pauline Holbrook, Lee Fairlie, Howard Roche

**Cleveland** – vacant

**Others** – Edinburgh, Alison Cairns

**THE COBWEB ORCHESTRA**  
**Diary April - November 2008**

**April**

- Sat 12 Stanhope, Church Hall  
10am-3pm Composers' and Arrangers' Group. £10.  
11.30am-3pm Guinea Pig Orchestra. Free.
- Sun 20 Dalston, Victory Hall  
11am-4pm Taking Mahler to pieces (and hopefully putting him back together again). Study day based on Mahler's 1<sup>st</sup> symphony. £16/12
- Sat 26 Tebay, Methodist Church Hall  
10.30am-4.30pm Leader Training Day. Free  
1.30pm-4.30pm Guinea Pig Orchestra. Free

**May**

- Sat 3 Dipton, Community Centre  
10.30am-12.30pm Beginners' Group with Clare Barker. £4/3  
Baroque Group 1.30-4.30pm. £4/3
- Tues 6 Bishop Auckland Town Hall  
& 7.00-9.30pm. Rehearsal for joint concert with Bishop Auckland Choral Society.  
Fri 9 7.30-9.30pm. Joint concert with Bishop Auckland Choral Society. Beethoven, Mozart and Borodin conducted by Venera Bojkova and Andy Jackson. Combined fee for both days £6/4.50 includes light supper (5.30-7.00pm) at Andy's house before the Friday concert.
- Sat 10 Middlesbrough Town Hall  
10am-5.30pm. Community Music Day. Something for everyone all day long:  
10am-12.00pm Beginners Session. £4/3  
12.30-1.30pm Lunchtime Symphony. Free  
2.00-3.45pm Concert rehearsal **AND** 2.00-3.30pm Instrument making workshop. £2  
4-5.30pm Family Concert. £4/3  
Fee for whole day: £6/4.50
- Sat 17 Dipton Community Centre  
10.30am-12.30pm Beginners' Group with Clare Barker. £4/3  
12.30-1.00pm. Shared lunch (bring a SMALL contribution)  
1-3pm Annual General Meeting – it is really important that as many people as possible come to this, our first AGM  
3-5pm Baroque Group. £4/3
- Sat 24 Dipton Community Centre  
10.30am-12.30pm Beginners' Group with Clare Barker. £4/3  
1.30-4.30pm Beethoven Violin Concerto workshop. £6/4.50
- Sat 31 Dipton Community Centre  
10.30am-12.30pm Beginners' Group with Clare Barker. £4/3  
1.30-4.30pm Haydn's "Clock" symphony workshop. £6/4.50

## June

Sat 7 Ashington Trinity Church  
11am-4.00pm Rehearsal  
4.30pm – 6.30pm Teatime concert. Mozart's "Haffner" and Haydn's "Clock"  
Symphonies conducted by Catherine Holbrook and Peter Wood. £12/9

Sat 14 Weasdale Nurseries  
Trustees Fundraising Event  
3-5pm Folk music workshop. £4  
5-7pm Shared meal  
7-10pm Ceilidh. £8

Sat 28 Wylam Community Association Institute  
10.30am-4.30pm Leader Training. Free.  
1.30pm-4.30pm Guinea Pig Orchestra. Free.

## July

Sun 6 Hartlepool  
3.00pm Open-air concert to conclude the National Maritime Festival (rehearsal  
from 11.00am)

Sat 12 York. Venue TBA  
Handel's Water Music.

Sun 20 Appleby Public Hall  
Back by popular demand, another chance to play Franck's Symphony in D minor  
2.00-6.00pm Rehearsal, Franck Symphony in D minor  
7.30-10pm Concert. £12/£9

## August

Sat 2 The Sage, Gateshead.  
1.30-8.00pm Cobweb Orchestra Summer Music Day

Fri 22 Durham Cathedral  
Concert. Our yearly shared event with Durham Childrens' Choir, The Scratchets

## September

Fri12-Sun14 Dachau, Bavaria  
Weekend trip with concert and study day.

## October

Sat 11 Appleby, Public Hall  
Tebay Group's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party. 3-8pm

## **November**

Sat 1            The Sage, Gateshead  
Cobweb Orchestra Autumn Music Day

Sun 2            Bishop Auckland Town Hall  
Family Concert.

Sat 22           Consett Empire  
"People's Choice" concert.

Sat29/Sun30    Ridley Hall  
DIY residential.

## **2009**

### **Stop Press April**

Friday3/Sun5   Sedbergh  
Residential weekend

**Get the date in your diary now. The residential is becoming more and more popular, so book your place as soon as the enrolment forms come out.**

**THE COBWEB ORCHESTRA**  
**Spring Term 2008 dates for the regular groups**

**Newbiggin, Northumberland**

Tuesdays at 7.30pm in Newbiggin Sports and Leisure Centre, (near Ashington)

First meeting April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2008

Half term May 27<sup>th</sup>

Last meeting July 1<sup>st</sup> 2008

**Harelaw, Co, Durham**

Thursdays at 7pm in Harelaw School, Annfield Plain near Durham

First meeting April 24<sup>th</sup> 2008

Half term May 29<sup>th</sup> 2008

Last meeting July 17<sup>th</sup> 2008

**Middlesbrough, Teesside**

Mondays at 7.30pm in the Crypt of Middlesbrough Town Hall

First meeting April 21<sup>st</sup> 2008

May day holiday May 5<sup>th</sup> 2008

Half term May 26<sup>th</sup> 2008

Last meeting July 14<sup>th</sup> 2008

**York, Yorkshire**

Thursdays at 7.30pm in Earswick Village Hall

First meeting April 10<sup>th</sup> 2008

Half term May 29<sup>th</sup> 2008

Last meeting July 17<sup>th</sup> 2008

**Dalston, Cumbria**

Usually 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays of the month at 7.30pm in Dalston Victory Hall, Dalston, Carlisle, Cumbria

March 31<sup>st</sup> 2008

April 14<sup>th</sup> 2008

April 28<sup>th</sup> 2008

May 12<sup>th</sup> 2008

May 19<sup>th</sup> 2008

June 9<sup>th</sup> 2008

June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2008

June 30<sup>th</sup> 2008

July 14<sup>th</sup> 2008 (8pm start)

*Please note;*

*rehearsal on May 19<sup>th</sup>, NOT May 26<sup>th</sup>*

*later start on July 14<sup>th</sup>*

**Tebay, Cumbria**

Tuesdays at 7.30pm in Tebay Methodist Church Hall

First meeting April 15<sup>th</sup> 2008

Half term May 27<sup>th</sup> 2008

Last meeting July 1<sup>st</sup> 2008