

Music scholar for BSO Silver Jubilee concert

Senior music scholar at Bloxham School, Michael Haynes, will be playing the A minor Piano Concerto by Schumann with Banbury Symphony Orchestra at their Queen's Jubilee Concert on Tuesday evening.

Michael, 17, is now in his final term at the school, where he has been an outstandingly successful music scholar since his arrival there nearly five years ago. He did not, however, have to travel far

to attend the school since he was originally a Bloxham resident anyway.

His late father, who served as organist at Bloxham Parish Church for many years, was the village baker and Michael is well-known to many people in the area. His mother now lives at Bodicote.

Michael was an outstanding candidate when he presented himself for entry to the school, and won a full music scholarship there and then. He would probably be the first to acknowledge the fact that much of his success has been achieved as a result of being a piano

pupil, since the age of seven, of Mrs Fiori — the remarkable piano teacher who has lived in Bloxham for many years and who has served Bloxham School pupils (and also many private ones) with her enviable skill and almost unequalled experience.

He has the relatively rare distinction of having achieved Grade 8 distinctions in two instruments, piano and flute, of the Associated Board of the Royals Schools of Music. And throughout his time at Bloxham he has taken a leading part in the school's music soloist on both instruments, as orchestral player, in smaller wind ensembles, in the chapel choir, the choral society and in the Bloxham Consort.

Michael will be going up to Jesus College, Cambridge in October to begin his course leading to a music degree.

NOT THE FIRST

The Schumann concerto performance with the BSO under conductor Donald Simpson will not be Michael's first experience of that sort. When he was scarcely four terms into his sixth form course at Bloxham he played Beethoven's third piano concerto in a public concert at the school.

A fine and well-known piece, the Schumann concerto is technically very demanding, and it is certain that a lot of music lovers will want to attend the concert at Stanbridge Hall, Banbury School, which begins at 7.30 pm.

The concert will also contain works by Sullivan, Handel and Haydn and the tuneful London Suite, all too rarely heard nowadays, by Eric Coates.

Tickets are available from Haydn Heard, Church Lane, Banbury.

Re-living the old days of steam radio

It's always a pleasure to welcome back old favourites — the kind which have truly stood the test of time with admirable fortitude and commendable staying power.

Which was why it was good to see that the London Suite by Eric Coates had been included last week in Banbury Symphony Orchestra's Jubilee concert.

The light orchestral music of Eric Coates has over the years become increasingly well-known to music lovers everywhere, although, sadly, it is not always identified with the composer's name.

Many of his works have been played as introductory music for radio and TV programmes — By The Sleepy Lagoon, for example, which is the theme for Desert Island Discs — on which occasions the composer's name remains anonymous.

The tuneful London Suite makes for delightful listening but alas is all too rarely heard these days. It was grand to hear the famous Knightsbridge march again — it will always be associated with radio's (and later TV's) In Town Tonight programme — and one half expected to also hear the sounds of the capital (the lady selling her violets and the newspaper vendor) and John Ellison stepping forward to say, "Once again we stop the mighty roar of London's traffic."

Congratulations and thanks must go to conductor Donald Simpson and the ladies and gentlemen of his orchestra for reminding us musically of the golden age of radio.

Unquestionably the highlight of the evening however, was the A minor Piano Concerto by Schumann in which Michael Haynes, senior music scholar at Bloxham School, was the soloist.

A fine and well-known piece, the Schumann Concerto is technically very demanding, but Michael put his heart and soul into his playing and received the loudest and longest applause heard for many a month in Banbury. This was a quite outstanding performance.

The concert, which was presented in Stanbridge Hall, opened with a fine performance of Arthur Sullivan's overture to The Yeomen of the Guard. The well-known music, from the work generally reckoned to be Granville Bantock's Opera of all the Gilbert and Sullivan collaborations, set the tone admirably for the rest of the evening.

It seemed appropriate this Jubilee year to include Handel's Musick For The Royal Fireworks and the work, which closed the first half of the programme, was enthusiastically received.

A refreshing evening of good music was brought to a happy conclusion with a very satisfying performance of Haydn's London Symphony No 103.

We should be grateful that these hard-working local musicians remember — something many of us who are cloistered around our record albums in the winter months forget — what 'live' entertainment is all about. — E.H.