

**Banbury Symphony Orchestra's final concert of the year's programme will be on Tuesday, June 24, and it will be held in Stanbridge Hall.**

For that last fact alone, we breathe a sigh of relief, for The Buttery, cosy as it is, falls well short of being a decent venue.

The recent concert at The Buttery, boasted a splendid programme but for most of the audience, the orchestra might have been in a pit. While that might be ideal for a stage production, in such a delightful pieces as Prokofiev's Peter and the Wolf it is a waste.

Some of the solo work was notable, but the players anonymous, and the outstanding narration came, we were told, from Banbury Cross Player Tony Neale, wherever he was.

The orchestra made

heavy weather of Mendelssohn's overture for A Midsummer Night's Dream but, after the interval, they took heart from some splendid interplay notably in the Andante of Mozart's Symphony No 40 in G Minor. The finale lacked nothing in gusto but was short on technique in places, and it was left to the final work of the evening, Finlandia, the stirring symphonic poem by Sibelius, to jolt the audience into appreciation.

The brass players enjoyed themselves and there was noteworthy timpani work which served to brighten us up.

Hopefully, the orchestra will be very much in evidence when they provide the backing for the Evening at the Opera to be staged at St Mary's church on March 22. — J.R.