

THE
Aldburgh
C O N N E C T I O N

ANCESTRAL VOICES



WALTER HALL
SUNDAY, APRIL 27, 2008, 2:30 p.m.

We wish to thank
Lorraine Kaake
for sponsoring Laura Albino,

Barbara and Iain Scott
for sponsoring Norine Burgess,

James and Connie MacDougall
for sponsoring Michael Barrett

We also thank James and Connie MacDougall
for the floral arrangement on the stage.



We are performing
on the Edith McConica Steinway

ANCESTRAL VOICES

LAURA ALBINO, soprano NORINE BURGESS, mezzo

MICHAEL BARRETT, tenor

STEPHEN RALLS and BRUCE UBUKATA, piano

This afternoon's concert was engendered by our feelings of gratitude at having known a wonderful and distinguished lady, mingled with sadness at her having left us in the midst of a vibrant and still developing friendship. The sudden passing of the Hon. Victoria Woods fifteen months ago, in her ninetieth year, was a great shock to a wide circle of acquaintances and friends. The fifth child of the fifth Lord Stanley of Alderley, she was born in Melbourne, Australia, where her father was the Governor of the State of Victoria. In 1919, the family moved back to England, where she lived until her marriage to the Canadian, J. D. Woods. With their young daughters, they moved in 1946 to Toronto, her home for the rest of her life. Jade, her husband, was president of the Festival Opera Company of Toronto, later the Canadian Opera Company, and both of the Woodses were staunch enthusiasts and supporters of music here, particularly in the vocal sphere, for the rest of their lives.



We knew her as Tordie - her political inclinations would never have allowed her to use the more customary diminutive, Tory. She wasn't 'pushy' about her family background, so it was not until after her death that we discovered many of the more astonishing aspects which combined to make her the fascinating lady whom we knew. The Stanleys of Alderley were a line of barons descended from a noble medieval family, but whose distinction and success was caused largely - and this is a crucial factor which will emerge repeatedly during our programme - by the women whom they married. We knew that our friend, through her mother, was a second cousin of the famous Mitford sisters - she 'came out' as a debutante with Jessica Mitford (who became a Communist), was friendly with the brilliant writer, Nancy Mitford, and, in her later years, would visit Deborah Mitford, who had become the Duchess of Devonshire. In the Toronto apartment, we had seen a print of the famous portrait of a young girl by Frederic Leighton (reproduced on the cover of our brochure and of today's programme). What we didn't know was that the girl who posed for Lord Leighton was May Sartoris, later Mrs Evans-Gordon and the mother of Tordie's mother. May, in her turn, was the daughter of Adelaide Kemble - and this brought in a sudden flood of connections and references.

The Kembles were one of the most famous English theatrical families in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Roger Kemble (1721-1802) was a comparatively undistinguished itinerant actor who attempted to claim descent from the Blessed John Kemble, a Catholic martyr. Roger's family, though, grew up to be of the greatest distinction. His eldest child, Sarah, became Mrs Siddons (1755-1831), the supreme tragedienne of her day, known to us now by portraits painted by Thomas Gainsborough and Joshua Reynolds. Roger's two sons were John Philip Kemble (1757-1823), also a successful actor, and Charles Kemble (1775-1854), whose career developed into that of an actor-manager and who ran the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, on and off for many years. Charles married a Frenchwoman, Marie Thérèse de Camp (1774-1838), whose family had emigrated to London where she achieved a certain success acting and singing on the stage - she was particularly renowned for her roles in revivals of *The Beggar's Opera*. In our trawling through old theatrical engravings in London shops, we had often seen the lively features of Miss de Camp, as well as likenesses of all these people, without suspecting that they were the ancestors of our Toronto friend.

Charles Kemble had four children of whom, again, it was the daughters who achieved most. Fanny (1809-93) was another supremely successful actress who, upon her marriage, emigrated to the United States. When she discovered that her husband's wealth came from cotton plantations, she set about the long process of divorcing him and became one of the most ardent supporters of the movement for the abolition of slavery. Her sister, Adelaide (1815-79), lived totally in the shadow of the brilliant Fanny until, in her late teens, it was discovered that she really could sing. Her father, ever one with an eye for a profitable undertaking, took her on what amounted to an audition tour of Europe. She studied with renowned teachers, including Giuditta Pasta, debuted in Venice in the role of Norma, and went on to perform successfully in Milan, Naples and other Italian houses. Returning to England, she was acclaimed at Covent Garden in many roles, including that of Norma. She was already being courted, however, by Edward Sartoris, and after her marriage (as was the general practice at that time) she retired from the stage, bearing with her the plaudits of the leading critics of the day. Adelaide Sartoris, née Kemble, was the great-grandmother of our friend.

We have been greatly helped in our researches by the daughters of Victoria Woods, Virginia Grant and Teresa Snelgrove. You may like to know about some readable published sources, including *Fanny and Adelaide*, by Ann Blainey, and [a biography of the two sisters] *People in Glass Houses*, a memoir of her early life, mostly in Australia, by

Adelaide Lubbock, our friend's eldest sister. Tantalisingly, a monograph on the Leighton portrait of May Sartoris is about to be published (through Yale University Press) by the Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas, where the picture resides. It will undoubtedly provide more specific information relating to today's subject, the family history of a great and sorely-missed friend: a brilliant conversationalist, an elegant and consummate hostess (whether in the President's Council Lounge of the COC or in her own dining room) and a kind and true humanitarian, Tordie Woods.

A HISTORY BEGINS



Gavotte (*Henry Newbolt*)
(mezzo)

Herbert Howells (1892-1983)

One of Howells's earliest published songs sets a poem by Sir Henry Newbolt, the great mentor and friend of Walter de la Mare, who shared with him an almost mystical sense of English history, evoked by the houses through which it had passed.

Blow thi horne hunter (*Thomas Wyatt*)
(mezzo/tenor/bass)

William Cornysh (d.1523)

Cornysh was a composer much favoured by the early Tudor court. He devised pageants, with associated music, for the wedding festivities of Arthur, Prince of Wales, and Catherine of Aragon (1501) and was a leading light in the plays and other entertainments that enlivened court life under Henry VIII.

VENETIA

Have you seen but a whyte Lillie grow?
(soprano) (*Ben Jonson*)

attrib. Robert Johnson
(c1583-1633)

This song was heard in Ben Jonson's play *The Devil is an Ass* (1616). It is an example of early seventeenth century English songs which were much influenced by Italian monody. Never losing its popularity, it was published in this version by Arnold Dolmetsch in the early twentieth century.

SARAH

She never told her love (*William Shakespeare*)
(tenor)

Joseph Haydn
(1732-1809)

Haydn's only setting of Shakespeare (from *Twelfth Night*) was published in the second volume of his *Original Canzonettas* in 1795, when Sarah Siddons was at the height of her prowess as a tragedienne.

MARIE THÉRÈSE

Thus, when a good huswife sees a Rat (*The Beggar's Opera*) anon.
(mezzo) (John Gay)

In the second act, Lucy Lockit berates Macheath, whom she had believed to be her promised husband. *The Beggar's Opera* opened in 1728 and was revived in London every season for the rest of the century, up until the performances in which Miss de Camp had success in the role of Lucy (very appropriate for her, a much-wronged wife). This tune, like most of those in the opera, comes from an anonymous ballad source and would have been performed in a quite simple version.

FANNY and ADELAIDE

The Mermaids' Song (*Oberon*) Carl Maria von Weber
(James Robinson Planché) (1786-1826)
(mezzo/soprano)

In 1824, Charles Kemble commissioned an English opera, *Oberon*, from the most famous German composer of the day. The production at Covent Garden in April 1826 was a triumph with the audience, but its extravagant staging pushed Kemble into ruinous debt. Weber, already at an advanced stage of consumption, died two months later. This song is introduced by Oberon's magic horn; mermaids appear in the sea and (as Clive Brown writes) sing irrelevantly, but beautifully, of their joy. Adelaide Kemble loved this song – there is a story of her singing it for the elderly Rossini in her Parisian drawing-room in the 1850s.

Rondo from Sonata (or Divertissement) Johann Nepomuk Hummel
in E flat, Op.51 (1778-1837)
(piano duet)

Beginning as a child prodigy, Hummel had a busy and varied career as pianist and composer in many European cities, including London; this sonata was published in Vienna in 1815. His last years were spent as grand-ducal Kapellmeister in Weimar, where he renewed acquaintance with the Kembles on their European tour.

Adelaide (*Friedrich von Matthisson*), Op.46 Ludwig van Beethoven
(tenor) (1770-1827)

With its distinctly operatic style, Beethoven's song was a favourite in nineteenth century salons. It would, undoubtedly, have featured in the repertoire of Adelaide Kemble's tenor friends: the professionals,

Adolphe Nourrit and Mario, and the amateur, Frederic Leighton.

Alone your friend wanders in the spring garden, gently encircled by magic light that quivers through swaying, blossoming boughs, Adelaide! In the mirroring stream, in the snow of the Alps, in the dying day's golden clouds, in the fields of stars, your image shines, Adelaide! Evening breezes whisper in the tender leaves, silver bells of May chime in the grass, waves murmur and nightingales pipe: Adelaide! One day, O wonder! from my grave will sprout a flower from the ashes of my heart; and clearly on every purple petal will gleam: Adelaide!

Wilt thou be gone, love? (anon.)
(soprano/tenor)

Stephen Foster (1826-64)

With words adapted from *Romeo and Juliet*, this duet, published in New York in 1851, neatly encapsulates the Shakespearean career of a newly-married exile in America: Fanny Kemble, who had debuted as Juliet in London at the age of nineteen.

Voi che sapete (*Le nozze di Figaro*)
(mezzo) (Lorenzo da Ponte)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-91)

Adelaide Kemble had great success as Mozart's Susanna at Covent Garden in 1842. As was the current practice, she adopted Cherubino's favourite aria as her own.

You ladies who know love, see if I have it in my heart! I'll tell you what I'm going through, it's new to me; I can't understand it. I feel a liking full of desire that now is pleasure, now is agony. I freeze, and then feel my soul burning, and in another moment go back to freezing. I look for a good outside myself, I don't know who has it, I don't know what it is. I sigh and groan without wanting to, I quiver and tremble without knowing it, I find no peace night or day, and yet I like suffering this way!

Schilflied (Nikolaus Lenau), Op.71/4
(soprano)

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy
(1809-47)

Composed in 1842, when Adelaide was triumphing at Covent Garden, this is one of two songs written for her by Mendelssohn.

Song of the Reeds. On the motionless pond rests the moon's lovely gleam, weaving its pale roses into a green garland of reeds. Deer wander there on the hill, gazing up through the night; often, winged things stir dreamily in the tall reeds. Weeping, I must lower my gaze; through the depths of my soul pass sweet thoughts of you, like a quiet night prayer.

THE LADIES OF ALDERLEY

What are the wild waves saying? (*anon.*) Stephen Glover (1813-70)
(soprano/mezzo)

In a concert in the great house of Alderley, on 5 January, 1862, this very typical Victorian ballad was performed by two daughters of Lord Stanley (and therefore the great-aunts of Victoria Woods): Rosalind, later Countess of Carlisle, and Blanche, ~~later~~ Countess of Airlie and great-grandmother of the Mitford sisters.

Je veux vivre (*Roméo et Juliette*) Charles Gounod
(*Jules Barbier & Michel Carré*) (1818-93)
(soprano)

Gounod's opera, premiered in 1867, was a favourite of Dame Nellie Melba. The diva's farewell performance at Covent Garden in 1926 was under the aegis of the chairman, Lord Stanley, Victoria Woods's father.

I want to live in this dream which intoxicates me this day. Sweet flame, I keep you in my soul like a treasure! This intoxication of youth lasts, alas, only for one day! Then comes the hour when one weeps. Far from the morose winter let me slumber before plucking its petals. Ah! Sweet flame! Stay in my soul like a sweet treasure for a long time still.

Lisa Lân (*Welsh folksong*) anon.
(tenor)

This song comes from Anglesey, the Welsh county in which was situated the Stanleys' idyllic summer residence of Penrhos.

Lisa mine: I've loved you fondly and long, with tender, deep love. I've kissed your lips, fair Lisa, they're sweeter than mead or wine. When I walk out at eve and hear the minstrels, my heavy heart frets and pines with longing for my sweet Lisa. O Lisa, will you stay by me in death's dark hour? Travel with me, true friend and best, to my lonely resting place.

The Birds (*Hilaire Belloc*) Peter Warlock (1894-1930)
(soprano)

The poet, Hilaire Belloc, was a great friend of Victoria Stanley's father since their days at Balliol College, Oxford. For a while, they jointly owned a large and cumbersome sailboat, the *Nona*.

My own country (*Belloc*) Warlock
(mezzo)

Brightly dawns our wedding day: Madrigal
(*The Mikado*) (W.S. Gilbert)
(soprano/mezzo/tenor/bass)

Arthur Sullivan
(1842-1900)

Perhaps the finest of the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, *The Mikado* premiered in 1885. In the second act, Nanki-Poo (tenor) and Yum-Yum (soprano) have been given permission to marry, provided the groom consents to be beheaded in return.

THE MITFORD SISTERS

Children of the Ritz words and music by Noel Coward
(soprano/mezzo) (1899-1973)

A musical, *The Mitford Girls*, played at London's Globe Theatre for three months in 1981-82. Some songs were newly written, but a significant number was raided from pre-existing shows. This one came originally from Coward's *Words and Music* (1932), which also included "Mad Dogs and Englishmen" and "Mad about the Boy". The Mitford show was distinctly disapproved of by the eponymous sisters.

VW

Come you not from Newcastle? arr. Benjamin Britten
(soprano) (*English folksong*) (1913-76)

Volume III of Britten's folksong arrangements, which includes this example, was dedicated to a great friend of Victoria Woods, the soprano, Joan Cross.

Oh! what pain it is to part! (*The Beggar's Opera*) arr. Frederic Austin
(soprano) (1872-1952)

After losing favour in the nineteenth century, *The Beggar's Opera* returned to enormous popularity in Austin's version, which opened at the Lyric, Hammersmith, in 1920. In this (and the next) number, Polly takes romantic leave of her beloved Macheath.

Were I laid on Greenland's coast (*The Beggar's Opera*) arr. Britten
(soprano/mezzo/tenor)

In Britten's realisation (1948), Polly becomes a mezzo - originally, Nancy Evans. (A great friend of Victoria Woods was Rose Hill, who in this version sang Lucy Lockett, the starring role of Tordie's great-great-grandmother, Miss de Camp.)

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We were very proud to receive the news of a Juno nomination for our cd, "Schubert among friends", featuring **Gillian Keith, Michael Schade, Colin Ainsworth** and **Gerald Finley**, with **Stephen Ralls** and **Bruce Ubukata**. Hot off the press, and now available for sale, is our latest cd, "Our own songs", a selection of some of the pieces we've commissioned over the years, with **Adrianne Pieczonka, Monica Whicher, Elizabeth Turnbull, Colin Ainsworth, Mark Pedrotti, Stephen Ralls** and **Bruce Ubukata**. Both discs have been doing very well in press notices and are available during today's intermission or through our website, www.aldeburghconnection.org.

Box office revenues cover only a portion of our operating budget; grants, corporate funding and individual donations are needed for the balance. Audience members are asked to consider joining one of our supporting categories: **Benefactor** (\$1,000 or more), **Champion** (\$500 or more), **Patron** (\$200 or more), **Supporter** (\$100 or more) and **Friend** (\$50 or more). Donations may be made by cheque or VISA, and may be made in instalments, if you prefer. You will receive information on our activities, and all donations will be acknowledged with a receipt for income tax purposes. Private donors may also act as sponsors for an entire concert, an artist, a special commission, or the intermission tea; however, other donations and suggestions for corporate sponsorship are also very welcome. Your support is vital in helping to ensure the continuation of these concerts.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the following in presenting today's concert:

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Aldeburgh is the small town on the east coast of England where Benjamin Britten, Peter Pears and Eric Crozier founded the Festival of Music which flourishes to this day. Artistic directors Stephen Ralls and Bruce Ubukata have visited and worked there for many summers, as has a large number of the singers appearing with The Aldeburgh Connection.

Laura Albino has quickly emerged as one of Canada's finest young lyric sopranos, and has recently been named a winner of the Ottawa Choral Society's New Discoveries Auditions. Ms Albino's operatic roles include Donna Anna in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, conducted by Richard Egar with the Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme in Aldeburgh, England; Mary Warren in Ward's *The Crucible* with the International Vocal Arts Institute in Tel Aviv; and the role of Bridey in Queen of Pudding Theatre's Production of *The Midnight Court* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Ms Albino received her Masters Degree in Operatic Studies at the University of Toronto, where her roles included Lauretta (*Gianni Schicchi*), Anna (*Merry Wives of Windsor*), the title roles in Handel's *Semele* and Holst's *Savitri*, and Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*. The Canadian Opera Volunteer Committee named Ms. Albino the Distinguished Graduate of 2006. On the concert stage, this gifted recitalist has appeared frequently with the Aldeburgh Connection, and made her debut with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in 2007 in Bach's *St. John Passion*. Ms Albino has performed at the Toronto International Bach Festival under Helmuth Rilling's direction for the past four seasons, and in July 2007 joined Maestro Rilling for performances of Bach Cantatas at the Oregon Bach Festival. Past performances include Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem* (Raffi Armenian, conductor), Mozart's Masses with Paul Nadler conducting the Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestra, *Messiah* with the Handel Society of Dartmouth College (Rilling) and in March 2008, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with Toronto's Amadeus Choir, under Lydia Adams' direction. A favourite guest artist with Kevin Mallon's Aradia baroque ensemble, Ms Albino will be featured on their upcoming recording of Purcell's music and a premiere of Samuel Arnold's opera *Polly*, for the Naxos label. She can also be heard on the Hänssler Classic label of Handel's *Saul* with the Bach Collegium, Stuttgart.

Upcoming engagements include *Messiah* in Sardinia, Italy, and Mozart's *Mass in C Minor* with the Ottawa Choral Society. In August, 2008, Ms Albino becomes a member of the prestigious Canadian Opera Company Ensemble Studio.

Canadian mezzo-soprano **Norine Burgess'** 2007-2008 season sees her return to the Edmonton Opera as Meg Page in *Falstaff* and to Calgary Opera for one of her major roles, Maddalena, in *Rigoletto*. Last year she reprised one of her signature roles, Prince Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus*, before returning to Toronto to sing in Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*. In February 2007 Ms Burgess returned to the

Aldeburgh Connection for The Anniversary Waltz: Silver Jubilee Gala and in May, appeared in "Tyger Tyger", a concert featuring the texts of William Blake with the Talisker Players.

The previous season featured her return to Vienna to reprise the role of Miss Mary Lloyd in *Die Herzogin von Chicago* and Second Lady in *Die Zauberflöte*, both for the Volksoper, appearances in Opera Ontario's production of *Roméo et Juliette*, at the Vancouver Opera as Siebel in *Faust* and in concert with The Aldeburgh Connection. Summer 2006 took her to Waterside for a duo recital with baritone Russell Braun and pianist Carolyn Maule.

Ms Burgess' 2004-2005 season was dominated by her extended appearance as Miss Mary Lloyd with the Vienna Volksoper in its production of *Die Herzogin von Chicago*. Other season highlights include performances of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with the Columbus Symphony Orchestra, Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* with the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir and a concert of songs by English composers for the Aldeburgh Connection.

A graduate of the University of Calgary and the University of Toronto's Opera School, Ms Burgess received additional training as a member of the Canadian Opera Company Ensemble, where she appeared in *Elektra*, *Suor Angelica*, *Lulu* and *Der Rosenkavalier*. Ms. Burgess also performed *Le nozze di Figaro* (Cherubino), *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Dryad), *La traviata* (Flora) and *Die Zauberflöte* (Second Lady) with the COC.

Notable concert engagements have included the Mozart *Requiem* under Manfred Honeck in Leipzig and Halle, *Peer Gynt* with the Toronto Symphony, Handel's *Messiah* with the Edmonton Symphony, and an Opera Gala with tenor Richard Margison for the Edmonton Opera, and Brahms *Liebesliederwalzer* and Britten *Canticles* at the Internationale Bachakademie in Stuttgart. She has also performed Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the Edmonton Symphony, Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with the Winnipeg Symphony, Bach's *Cantata No. 147* with the National Arts Centre Orchestra (Ottawa) and the Monteverdi *Vespers* conducted by Helmuth Rilling with the Oregon Bach Festival.

Ms Burgess' recordings include a CD of Christmas Carols for the Canadian Musical Heritage Society and Mozart's *C minor Mass* for Naxos with the Budapest Philharmonic, conducted by Michael Halasz and Mendelssohn's *Symphony No. 2*, "Lobgesang", conducted by Helmuth Rilling, with the Internationale Bachakademie.

Canadian tenor **Michael Barrett** has just returned to Toronto from a Maritime tour with his brother, baritone Peter Barrett and pianist, Peter Tiefenbach. He recently appeared as the Young Convict in the COC's production of *From the House of the Dead*. Last season he sang the Coachman in *Luisa Miller* and the Peasant in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. A graduate of the Opera Division at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music, Mr. Barrett regularly appears with the Aldeburgh Connection. His repertoire includes Handel's *Messiah*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Puccini's *Messa di Gloria*, and the roles of Male Chorus in *The Rape of Lucretia*, Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*, Rodolfo in *La bohème*, Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and Jupiter in *Semele*. He has also performed leading roles in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Nicolai's *Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor*, Gustav Holst's *Savitri*, and *The Pirates of Penzance*. In 2004, Mr. Barrett performed in the world premiere of *Maria Chapdelaine* with Opera Barrie, singing the part of François Paradis. In the Fall of 2007, Mr. Barrett appeared as Nemorino in the University of Toronto's production of *L'elisir d'amore*. He will join the COC Ensemble Studio in August 2008.

Next season's Sunday Series will take place in Walter Hall on the following dates: October 26, November 30, February 1, March 15 and April 26. Full details will be published in June in our season's brochure.

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