

June 2026 Newsletter of the



Management Office Bearers

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www.orpheusstrings.org

Orpheus Concerts are held at Wentworth Falls School of Arts, corner Great Western Highway and Adele Street, Wentworth Falls.

Admission at the door is \$20 full, \$15 pensioners (does not apply to Seniors Card holders), children free with supervising adult. All concerts commence at 3:00pm. Admission price includes afternoon tea.



SUNDAY 21st June at 3:00pm

Program

Four Divertimenti for the Winter Solstice

The term, *divertimento*, is literally Italian for *diversion*, coming from *divertive*, meaning to amuse. The typical divertimento was designed to bring joy and entertainment for both listeners and performers. The form was popularised by Haydn, Boccherini and Mozart. It is intended that this program will offer a diversion from the winter chills of the solstice on the 21st of June. The usual winter warmer beverage will be on offer at afternoon tea.

W.A. MOZART (1756-1791): The three Divertimenti K136-7-8 were composed as string quartets in January 1772 after Mozart's return to Salzburg from a visit to Milan with his father. The quartets were performed as background music at social functions. The **Divertimento K136** is a small sinfonia in three movements: Allegro (featuring virtuoso violin parts), Andante (the most Italianate of the movements) and a Presto that reflects the work of Italian composer, Giovanni Martini (1706-1784) who had given Mozart lessons. The work displays the characteristics of a carefree 16-year-old Mozart who had already composed 135 catalogued works.

Béla BARTÓK (1881-1945): The three-movement **Divertimento in D for String Orchestra Sz.113 BB** was commissioned by the Basler Kammerorchester in 1939 and turned out to be the last of Bartok's major works to be written in his native Hungary. By 1939, he had already begun shipping his manuscripts to the USA in preparation for his migration. Orpheus will perform the third movement, **Allegro Assai**, in which each section leader has solos that are repeated by the full section. The movement includes variations in tempo but is characterised by constant driving quaver patterns, closing with a rapid flourish, typical of the finales in Bartók's string quartets.

Peter MARTIN (1956-2021): Peter Martin was a Yorkshire native who studied violin and viola before devoting his life to teaching and composing. He was also Head of Strings for the Manchester Orchestra. He composed many pieces for students with several being selected by the Royal School of Music examination board. Orpheus will perform his **Divertimento for Strings**. The divertimento is in three movements opening in neo-classical style, then a slow song-like movement, followed by a concluding skittish rondo. Peter Martin succumbed to an unexpected fatal illness at the age of 65, his final wish being that his music be free of performance and publication rights. After his death, his daughter created a short video with his students and peers paying homage to his extraordinary teaching and composing ability. It can be viewed on Youtube.

Gareth WALTERS (1928-2012): Born in Wales, Gareth Walters began composing as a school child and was encouraged by Benjamin Britten who was a regular visitor to the family home. After studying at various European academies, Walters finished his career as Producer of Music at the BBC. His **Divertimento for String Orchestra** was one of several compositions for string orchestra and was commissioned by the BBC Cardiff Orchestra. The commissioner stipulated that the piece contain flavours of Welsh folk music but rather than quote melodies directly, Walters cleverly used rhythms and melodic elements from well-known folk songs. This 5-movement piece was premiered in 1960 and since then has enjoyed world-wide performance and recordings.

Colin Semmler and Julie Cooney



VALE

David Coleby

David Coleby was a great supporter of Orpheus Strings from the time of his arrival in Leura in the early 1990s. He left his native England to work as an atomic scientist at the Lucas Heights atomic reactor, which



in those days was surrounded by many hectares of bush. His wandering through the bush in his spare time resulted in a love for his new country. This appreciation continued after his retirement to Leura. His tireless work in creating the Leura Sublime Point reserve is well documented and is his memorial. His other love was music. Over a thirty-year period, David and his partner Rae, rarely missed an Orpheus concert and when they did, he apologised for it. David appreciated all orchestral music genres, in particular the 21st century music and that of Australian composers that the orchestra performed. David felt honoured to be invited to present orchestra members and Friends with certificates at our 30th anniversary concert in 2023. The invitation was a small gesture of appreciation for his dedication. David also mentioned in recent times that he loved it on the occasions when Sam and Elizabeth displayed their talents with solos and duets, in particular the traditional Bach Double. The orchestra was represented at David's

memorial service at the Cultural Centre where he worked as a volunteer and where his 90th birthday was celebrated last year. Our thoughts are with Rae and we look forward to her continued support. Photo courtesy Gecko bush care online magazine.



2026 Concert Dates

June 21, September 20 (previously advertised as 13), December 6

