

Lennox Berkeley Society Newsletter

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It's been a rather mixed summer, as far as the local weather is concerned, but one reliable summer joy is always our Annual General Meeting. Once again we returned to the beautiful Razumovsky Academy, and the hospitality of Oleg – whose Razumovsky Trust is now an institutional member of our Society.



Members of the Society and their guests at the AGM, 13th May 2026

As the Society advances through its 26th year, the passage of time makes some changes inevitable, so this AGM saw, with great regret, two stalwart members of our Committee step into retirement.

Tony Sheppard became a Trustee of the Society in 2014, and has served as our Hon. Treasurer and Membership Secretary with great diligence. His steady hand on our financial spigots has enabled us to promote Berkeley's works to great effect over many years, always without over-stretching the Society's resources or risking our future. Whenever a member paid their subscription, or the Committee decided to fund a project, it fell to Tony to update the records and write the cheques, tasks he carried out quietly and faithfully in the background to keep our Society running. Tony helped to keep us in the black, so we remain in *his* debt.

Sidney Buckland also became a Trustee in 2014, bringing warmth and passion along with scholarship. Petroc writes: *"You have been a brilliant and dedicated committee member, a great organiser of events, and made us all think much more about Lennox's connections to his French contemporaries, Poulenc in particular. We have been blessed to have one of Europe's leading Poulenc scholars as part of 'Team Berkeley'."*

Sidney's contributions to the Society include this insightful article for our Journal, about Berkeley & Poulenc: <https://www.lennoxberkeley.org.uk/articles/berkeley-and-poulenc>

Meanwhile Sidney's protégé, guitarist **Emmanuel Sowicz**, who performed Berkeley's *Quatre Pièces* at our 2025 AGM and subsequently joined the Society, has kindly joined the Committee to carry on her work.



Petroc (centre) addresses the AGM



*Kaspars Mikužis (piano) performed Berkeley's *Paysage de France* 'in honour of a redeemed France', and three of the *Six Preludes*, along with works by Ravel, Brahms and Beethoven*



*Michael Berkeley spoke of Tony Scotland's book, *Lennox & Freda**

At the AGM, the conversation turned to other ways in which Berkeley's work might be promoted. It is now 16 years since the publication of Tony Scotland's book, *Lennox & Freda*, and copies have become scarce.

Aside from being a uniquely insightful and intimate portrait of its subjects, it also presents a glimpse into the culture (not to mention the mores) of a departed age, fascinating in its own right to a 21st century reader.

The suggestion at the AGM was that this work could be republished. Print-on-demand services, or even an e-book edition, might help it appeal to today's audiences – and a new edition would allow Tony to correct a spelling error that has come to his attention! If this initiative proceeds, we'll be sure to let you know in future Newsletters.



Global Berkeley performances

We were delighted to learn of Berkeley performances in countries that could hardly be more remote:

In April, Paul Galbraith (guitar) performed Berkeley's *Quatre Pièces* in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, Massachusetts. The programme included works by such diverse composers as Dowland, Bach, Haydn, Albéniz and Ravel.

In May, the Theophilus Chamber Orchestra performed the *Divertimento in B♭* in the Hikifune Cultural Center in Tokyo. It feels like the new orchestral parts, co-produced by the Society, are making this delightful work accessible to the world's orchestras as never before.

As though America and Japan weren't remote enough, Bridget Douglas, principal flautist of the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, recently performed Berkeley's orchestration of Poulenc's *Flute Sonata* in Dunedin, New Zealand!

Rather closer to home, John Wilson and the Sinfonia of London will perform Berkeley's *Serenade for Strings* at the Proms, on 6th September, in a morning concert of English music by composers of the Britten circle.



I hope you have enjoyed the AGM photos. As I noted in my address at the meeting, the more pictures I include, the less I have to write!

Ash Bridges (Editor)