

# Tribute to Tim Reynish

Compiled by Carol Condliffe

*Our little notes have never been so cared for! Thanks for four years of constant inspiration and badgering*

Ruth  
an ex-student

1988 was an important year for Tim Reynish. He celebrated his 60th Birthday in March with a Concert and Party, and then in June he retired as Head of the School of Wind and Percussion at the Royal Northern College of Music after twenty-one years. This was excuse for another celebration of, and thanks for, Tim's contribution to the College, and to Wind music in particular. It was not always clear who was thanking whom; there was

obvious affection between the students and Tim, and vice-versa, and the standard of playing at the concerts reflected this respect.

The specially convened and rehearsed Dream Team Wind Orchestra of staff and former students bore witness to the respect that exists for Tim as they performed Guy Woolfenden's *Birthday (on this occasion Retirement) Treat* at a cracking pace.

*They sure broke the mould when they made Tim - he's larger than life in every way (physical presence, intellectual stature and that fog-horn voice!) I first met him in 1978 in my first week as principal bassoon with the Liverpool Phil. I was asked to go to the Philharmonic hall to take a wind and brass sectional with the Merseyside Youth Orchestra of which Tim was then Musical Director. There being a shortage of full scores on site, it was agreed that Tim (who was working with the strings) and I should swap scores at half time, but, as I completed my work on the symphony, there was still no sign of the concerto score (Dohnanyi Nursery Variations). I went into the main body of the hall where Tim was still in full cry with the work and I cautiously asked him if he was nearly finished with it. He turned round and bellowed "Oh don't you know it?" and then literally flung the yellow Eulenburg miniature across the hall at me, thereupon continuing to rehearse the strings from memory! I realised then that this was no ordinary mortal.*

Extract from a fulsome appreciation by Edward Warren, Assistant Head of Wind and Percussion

chance about the whole thing. If Frank Battisti and Bill Johnson had not visited Britain whilst planning an International Wind Conference, or had found a suitable venue in London, then maybe BASBWE might never have happened. But their search brought them to Manchester where the facilities at the RNCM fitted the bill. WASBE was born in 1981, and during that week, BASBWE was conceived and born;

*I joined the School for Wind and Percussion as a very raw nineteen year old and found an instant rapport with Tim, not only as a boss but more importantly as a friend. There are too many stories of lost briefcases, lost diaries, lost scores to recount - all items to be found in his room where he had of course searched before reporting the loss. Tim, it's been hard work but it's been great fun and I wouldn't change a thing. Thank you for enriching my life, for teaching me about Mahler, Opera, Wind Orchestra and everything else - you will be sorely missed.*

Suzu Stonefield - RNCM

*How does one describe the indescribable? How does one pay tribute to the unattributable (I cannot attribute Tim Reynish to anything other than a freak occurrence)? Tim has been a musical and humanitarian conscience of the RNCM. He has for the past 23 years, been a truly creative thinker, a manic memo-writer, a torrential typist, and excessive e-mailer, a creative irritant - and an inspiration. Bravo, Tim and many, many thanks.*

Chris Yates - Vice Principal at the RNCM paid this tribute in the programme for Tim's retirement Concert.

Fortunately Tim will still be highly active at the RNCM, as he will continue to conduct Wind Orchestra, Operas and Chamber Orchestra, and will be even more involved in the furthering of wind band music in Britain, and on the international scene as President of WASBE. Undoubtedly he will continue to commission works, to encourage, inspire teach and keep us moving forward with energy and vision.

Although Tim has fiercely resisted attempts to interview him for *Winds*, or to write about his work, he was persuaded to talk about one of his hobby horses, namely the Wind Band and more specifically the formation of BASBWE. Some of you know from first hand how it all came about, but I was not one of the fortunate ones so was fascinated to listen to Tim talking about it.

Like so many good things there was an element of

*Lyndon B Johnson had to do it after JFK; John Major had to do it after Thatcher, and now at the RNCM Reynish, an even tougher act to follow!*

James Gourlay, Acting Head of School of Wind and Percussion RNCM

an incredibly short gestation period. In the early years the numbers grew each year, led by a small committee of pioneers.

Tim was one of those early enthusiasts; he was instantly captivated by the sound of and the potential in the Wind Band. As an educator in a leading conservatoire he could appreciate the high level of musical training that the Wind Band gave to the players. He stopped at nothing to bring the medium to as many ears as possible and to discover and extend the repertoire of high quality music. Tim has always emphasised the importance of commissioning, often pouring his own funds into commissions rather than let the impetus go. Despite set-backs his infectious enthusiasm has never waned and he still retains his missionary zeal.

His colleagues were fulsome in their comments at Tim's retirement; some of these appear on this page, in full or in part.

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