

COULSDON AND PURLEY FESTIVAL 1944-2024

A TINY SNAPSHOT HISTORY



**MERSTHAM, COULSDON
AND PURLEY
MUSIC FESTIVAL**
MARCH 4th, 11th, 18th, 1944.

Competitions in Piano, Vocal Solos
and Ensembles. Strings, Wind,
School, Youth and Adult Choirs.

Founder: MRS. GARFIELD HOWE,
Shepherds Hill, Merstham.
Hon. Secretary: E. E. BLUETT, Esq.,
18, Green Lane, Purley.

Anna Garfield Howe (1886-1976)
FOUNDER OF COULSDON AND PURLEY FESTIVAL

1944

**MERSTHAM'S FIRST
MUSICAL FESTIVAL.**
**11-YEARS-OLD COMPETITOR WINS
FOUNDER'S PRIZE.**

Merstham had its first experience of a home-grown music festival on Saturday, when the Village Hall, the Village Club and the music rooms of two private houses—Old Tye Place (by the kindness of Miss Jarchow) and Bell House (by the kindness of Mrs. R. M. Weir)—accommodated the second instalment of the newly-established Coulsdon-Merstham-Purley Music Festival, founded and organised by Mrs. Garfield Howe, of Merstham. The first stage of the festival had been held the previous Saturday at Russell Hill School, Purley, and the concluding sessions are to take place tomorrow in the Methodist Church Hall, Coulsdon.

Sir George Dyson is the President of the Festival, with Mrs. Cecil Booth as Vice-President, Mr. Edgar E. Bluett as Hon. Secretary, and Mr. Clifford Ross both as Hon. Treasurer, and the Committee responsible for the Merstham classes comprised Mrs. Natalie James, Miss Jarchow, Mrs. Kitching, Mrs. Wigg and Mrs. Weir.

The session on Saturday was formally opened by Mrs. Howe, who welcomed competitors, public and helpers to their first village festival, introduced the hard-working Hon. Secretary, and expressed thanks to everyone who had helped, and particularly to Miss Jarchow and Mrs. Weir for placing their beautiful music rooms at the disposal of the festival.

press research and time spent

1985

The Advertiser 29.3.85

**Festival has
1,000 entries**

THE 41st Coulsdon and Purley Festival came to a triumphant conclusion on Saturday with its

Founders' Cup for Strings: Oliver Langford.
Kirby Piano Duet Awards: Suzanne and Elizabeth Kemp.
Sheila Kirk Cup for recorder playing and singing: Alexandra Williams.
Frances Knowles Concerto Cup: Geoffrey Cox.
Lansdell Woodwind Trophy: Geoffrey Cox.
Gwendoline Russell Singing Award: Jean Green.
Junior Singing Cup: Lisa Elkin.
Fabian Smith Award for British Song: Janet Collins.
Elizabeth Sutcliffe Junior Piano Cup: Ailsa Susuki.

SPEECH AND DRAMA
Buxton Memorial Cup: Sarah Walden.
Cameron Cup: Fiona Howard.
Cleverton Cup: Coulsdon Studio School.
Vera Mitchell Award: Sophie Hopkin.
Kathleen Rich Memorial Award: Charlotte Palmer.
Sanderstead Duologue Cup: Catherine Herbert and Cecile Jeffries.
Cicely Skinner Shakespeare Cup: Kathryn Hammond.



Jacqueline du Pré, the world famous cellist, competed at the Coulsdon and Purley Festival when she was 7 years old.

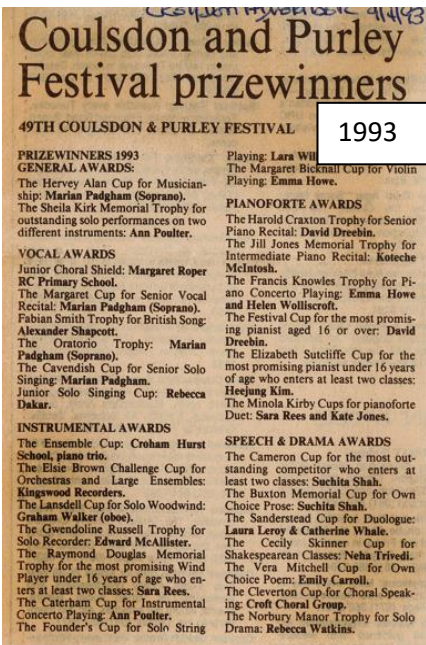
2nd May 1991

Dear Mrs. Whitehead,

Further to your Newsletter November 1990 and the paragraph 'Competitors Who Have Become Famous', I would draw your attention to the fact that Jacqueline du Pré competed in our Festival in 1953 when she was seven years old. This must have been one of her first competitive Festivals.

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finding out more about the history of the Coulsdon and Purley Festival and would like to read newspaper articles going back to 1945, please contact cpfest.office@gmail.com for copies of the files.



Whitgift School
1994
Coulsdon & Purley Festival Concert
Anne Slatford

BACK in 1944, when Britain was still at war, Mr E Bluett announced at a Purley Music Circle concert that a Music Festival was to be held the following May and that he was relying on lots of support from local teachers.

Now, 50 years later, the festival is still well and truly in existence. It has been aided in its continuing success by a wealth of dedicated helpers, a number of whom have put their own personal stamp on the festival, such as the expansion of the speech section by Miss Cecily Skinner in 1958.

Speech and drama were very much to the fore in the 50th Anniversary Concert of, as it is now known, the Coulsdon and Purley Festival, held at Whitgift School last Sunday.



Not even a world-wide pandemic would stop Coulsdon and Purley Festival from going ahead with 845 video submissions and live video feedback from the adjudicators. A great technological achievement!

The Presidents of Coulsdon and Purley Festival 1944-2024



Sir George Dyson
1944-1952



Dorothy Grinstead
1953-1974



Fabian Smith
1975- 1998

No image available



Marian Wey
1998-2006

Darrell Davison
2006-2023



Russell Keable
2023 -