

Rochdale's weekly Midday Music

Toad Lane Concerts at St Mary in the Baum Church in August 2026

A bumper variety month in this weekly music series [Nos 1,197 to 1,200]

August 05 Luke Jones piano: born in Wrexham began playing at five, making his debut recital at ten. He is currently a Kawai Artist, but today's 1935 heritage Challen 8' Grand became his own! He studied at Chetham's, the Conservatorio Perosi Campobasso, and gained the RNCM's First-Class BMus, a master's with Distinction and its prized Gold Medal. Concerto soloist and international competition winner. An extremely powerful player able to skilfully switch to quick changes in tempo, character and dynamics in this sparkling box of delights, contrasted jewels and gems. A sensational Chopin feast of Ballade No 4 and the complete set of 24 Preludes, Op 28 magnificently played, all from memory. Encore of Debussy's Clair de Lune allowed us all to 'warm down'!



level of choral part singing. Pianist Brian Milligan provided fine accompaniments today. Something for every season and a tune for everyone. The ladies achieved their objectives through fun and fellowship and entertained us musically. Let us hope their sense of wellbeing increased as we all benefitted from a tuneful entertainment!

August 19 Daid Garvin-Daniels piano: Rochdale-born David Garvin-Daniels not only plays regularly and teaches at his wife's school of music but also tunes and repairs, all to a high level; he is steeped in everything to do with piano. Like a Formula 1 racing driver who also tunes the engine! Following musical training at Chetham's he became a Yamaha and Steinway technician serving top venues and artistes. He proved he could drive as well by playing Bach-Busoni, Beethoven, Chaminade, Debussy and Liszt superbly. The heritage Challen grand piano sounded terrific, freshly tuned and engineered by the player himself, a top champion class recital worthy of a Grand Prix.



August 26 Janke Dai bass clarinet & Chichi Li piano: Deep Reed Duo, founded in the UK in 2023, brings together these two wonderful virtuosos. Yanke is taking a PhD at Sheffield University following postgraduate studies at the RNCM. He has performed internationally, appearing at festivals and concert venues in the UK, China and the US. Chichi graduated with a masters with distinction from the RNCM where she now accompanies as well as at Sheffield. They are committed to bringing the lesser-known bass clarinet repertoire to wider audiences, while also developing new arrangements and cross-cultural programmes. They have performed at several UK and US venues and festivals. Repertoire from Mercadnte, Diethel, Schoeck, Hindemith, Bozza and Semler-Collery certainly raised the oft-unnoticed instrument's profile.

Dr Joe Dawson