

Rochdale's weekly Midday Music

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

A bumper variety month in this weekly music series [Nos 1,201 to 1,205]

September 02 Callum Bisson piano: this 20-year-old pianist and composer from Rochdale first played here in 2024 showing much promise then with Rachmaninoff. Chetham's encouraged his writing by allowing performance of his piano concerto and his playing with competitions etc. Continuing this at RNCM and today with Mozart, Beethoven Sonata op 31 'The Tempest', a Chopin nocturne and his own 'Shadow Rise'. He finished with moody Medtner then a cheeky encore of JS Bach prelude in C. Great to see him fulfilling his potential!



September 09 Anne Butterworth Stephen Taylor & Elaine Marsden:

These troubadours and strolling players have performed abundantly in the area for several years. Anne soprano and flute, Stephen baritone, sax and guitar accompanied by Elaine (with solos and recorder) with a plus one David Lawson page turning and playing bodhran. A varied programme of entertaining assortments from popular, local, multi-talented performers.

September 16 Jonathan Ellis piano: Jonathan is highly valued as a regular visiting musician, accompanying singers and instrumentalists; but today he played in his own right as a concert pianist ... on his very own! He certainly made the most of the heritage 1935 Challen Grand with Haydn, Granados and the Wanderer Fantasy by Schubert, plus an encore with a delectable Aeolian Etude No 25 by Chopin.



September 23 Sara Donnelly soprano and Tim Kennedy piano:

British Australian soprano Sara Donnelly holds a master's from the RNCM, and is also a double graduate of Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University (QCGU), where she won several awards. Tim is a professional singer, vocal coach and organist as well as a staff accompanist at the RNCM. Sara's songs by Quilter and Barber, Debussy and Mozart, and songs from the shows and Tim's piano solos by Debussy and Erroll Garner made for a sumptuous recital.



September 30 Students from Chetham's:

accompanied by Nick Oliver, assistant principal and chief accompanist. **15-year-old cellist Isla** with Lalo Concerto in D minor and Nick's stirring accompaniment. She contrasted this with Mark Summer's delightful, unaccompanied 'Julie – O' with vigour and panache. **14-year-old Amelia** sang Dvořák, De Luca and Quilter, beautifully and engagingly phrased with secure high notes and maturing tone, sensitively supported by the piano. Finally, **15-year-old clarinettist Shia** played Burgmüller, Horowitz and Kalliwoda ... here again was virtuoso playing par excellence from both players.

Representing the cream of their generation these three performed beyond their years and inspired much optimism for the future. Nick and his colleagues are doing a marvellous job building musical foundations of talent with their charges. They would grace any concert stage and delight their audience, as they certainly did here.

Dr Joe Dawson