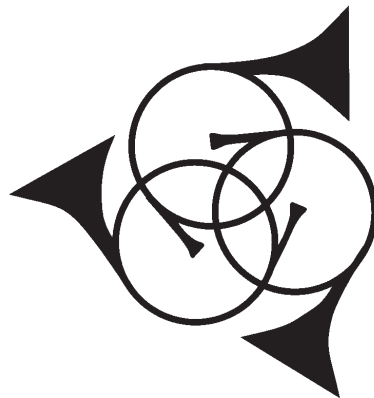


The Horn Call

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William Scharnberg, Editor

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Contact Elaine Braun if you
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Alfred Edwin Brain Jnr (1885-1966)

Prince of Horn Players

The Forgotten British Horn Virtuoso

Part III

by Leighton Jones

Alf the Family Man

Alf was very much a family man, as can be witnessed in his affection for Dennis. Throughout his life he remained close to his sisters and brothers, apart from Aubrey. He was exceptionally close to his brother Hugh (Hughie) and they spent a fair amount of time boating, under Hughie's guidance. Hughie was a merchant seaman during WW2, risking U-boat attacks.



Alf and Hughie boating



Hughie's Ship During WW2



l-r: Bob Wittenberg (daughter Olga's husband), Olga, Straussie, Alf



l-r: Olga, Alf, Olga's children Vickery and Judy



Gertrude and Olga

The love Alf had for his family can be seen in the guests he invited to a birthday party he held for Straussie, where his legendary cooking skills were used to the full. The following notice appeared in a Los Angeles newspaper:

In celebration of his wife's birthday Al Brain tossed a cocktail buffet in their beautiful San Fernando Family home. Also complimented were Captain and Mrs. Hugh Brain, Al's brother and sister in law, and niece Helen Van Tongerer of the Netherlands. Captain Brain is skipper of the SS Irving McDowell and he and his wife have just arrived from England.

Guests at the festive shindig included the Darrell Boroughs, the Roland Boswells, the Fred Zahns, the Jack Caves, the Bob Wittenberg's, Mesdames Stella Haggerty, Joe Mendelson, A.D. Willoughby (of Seattle) Ann Burgess, Leah Hayden Bonnie Martin, Maude Fitzpatrick, Lynch, Dot Jarvis

Although no date is given on the newspaper cutting, the event probably occurred following the Second World War, as the crossing from the UK to the States would have been far too dangerous during war time.

Alf's sister Helena Van Tongerer, the virtuoso on the long F trumpet, had married a Dutchman. During the Second World War, Helena and her husband had helped to smuggle Jews out of Holland, saving many lives. Stella Haggerty was Alf's wife's sister and the Bob Wittenbergs are Alf's daughter Olga and her husband, who worked for Twentieth Century Fox. Jack Cave was principal horn for many years at MGM studios and prior to that he was a colleague of Alf's in the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra (LAPO). Jack was in the horn scene in LA for forty-five years.

Alf's Instruments

I learned of the availability of Alf's horn while reading *The Horn Call*, Volume XXX111, No. 2, February 2002, where on page 18, there was the "Million Dollar Horn" advertised by Dr. Bruce Craig. It was reputed that Alf was the first horn player to earn a million dollars playing the horn. I got in touch with Dr. Craig and found that in the 20's he had played the horn with a number of community-based LA orchestras and had studied with Gene Sherry, Fred Fox, Wendell Hoss, and James Decker. It was through Hoss that he learned of the whereabouts of Alf's horn, which he subsequently purchased. A little later he got to know Straussie, Alf's widow, and through her came to learn a great deal about Alf, knowledge he subsequently shared with Stephen Pettit, the author *Dennis Brain: A Biography*.

A few weeks after I read *The Horn Call* article, I was having tea in the North London home of Mrs. Leonard Brain with her daughter Tina. Tina is the last remaining Brain playing pro-



fessionally, currently in Australia. Chatting away, Tina went upstairs and brought down a piston horn and said "would you like to blow this?" I did, and asked her whose it was, "Oh, it's my grandfather's." There in my hands was the Labbaye of Aubrey Brain.

It is difficult to explain to people the feeling of holding a part of "horn history." I asked Tina if she had any plans for the horn. She stated that on November 15th, 2002 Mrs. Yvonne Brain (Dennis' widow) was going to present the last horn Dennis played to the York Museum in the Royal Academy of Music in London – this was the horn that survived the car crash.

To receive and play Dennis's instrument for the first time in public since 1957 were the distinguished professors of the RAM and international soloists, Richard Watkins (who now holds the Dennis Brain Chair at the RAM) and Michael Thompson, (who now holds the Aubrey Brain Chair at the RAM). Dennis' horn would then be exhibited alongside that of Borsdorf. Tina was then going to present Aubrey's horn to the York Bowen Museum a little later on the same day. It was fitting that to receive it on behalf of the RAM was Derek Taylor. Derek was for many years the distinguished Principal Horn of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, a post he shared with Alan Civil, both of whom were taught by Aubrey Brain. Indeed Derek served at the RAM as a very highly regarded professor for many years, having several notable British principal orchestral players study with him.

During the conversation with Tina and Mrs. Brain, the idea struck me to "bring home" Alf's horn, for it to be proudly exhibited alongside those instruments of his tutor, Borsdorf, and those of his brother and nephew. I got in touch with Dr. Craig to see if he would donate Alf's horn to the York Gate Museum. He agreed with certain financial stipulations. I contacted Frances Palmer, the curator of the York Gate Museum, who was a fantastic help and, as the result of her efficiency, the financial and legal issues were solved, and eventually Dr. Craig agreed to send Alf's horn to me. I officially presented Alf's horn for safekeeping at the RAM to Frances Palmer and Michael Thompson on December 20, 2002. Any one visiting the York Gate Museum can see the four horns proudly displayed together.

Horns on Display at the York Gate Museum,
Royal Academy of Music, London



Upper Left-Lower Right: Friederich Adolf Borsdorf (teacher of Aubrey and Alfred Brain), Aubrey Brain, Alfred Brain, Dennis Brain



Note the patch Alf had inserted and the silver-plated bell.



When Alf arrived in the US, he was using an old two-valved Courtois horn in F, to which he added a third valve. This horn he found in a "junk shop" and paid next to nothing for it. In combination with his famed

small mouthpiece he, as stated earlier, produced a superb sound. But, on seeing what other horn players were using in the States, and the condition of the Courtois, he experimented with a series of different instruments. When he first arrived on the West Coast, he had with him a rotary valve F horn made by C. F. Schmidt. This horn has subsequently returned to England and is now owned by London horn player, Ted Chance.

Vince DeRosa recalled that Alf arrived in Los Angeles with a Clay double horn. From the layout of the valve slides in one photo, it looks like a compensating double horn. Despite contacting several players in the USA, no one seems to know the history of the Clay horn.

Due to the heavy demands of modern music, and especially the fondness of film score composers to use "stopped" horn, Alf again changed to a five-valve Alexander Sansone Model in B^b horn with a stopping valve for both stopped horn and its ability to put the horn in A, eliminating some difficult fingerings. However, Alf said he missed the sound of the double horn and the availability of the full F side. He was sitting next to DeRosa one day and commented how much he liked the sound that Vince was producing on his Conn. Alf told him that if he was starting again, he would invest in a Conn 8D.

Here I should explain that Lorenzo (Larry) Sansone was a New York City horn maker and Principal Horn of the New York Symphony. In the early 1920s, in order to reduce the weight of the double horn, he came up with the idea of making a horn in B^b, with a stopping valve, plus a built-in F extension to the stopping valve, which could be added by a valve placed under the little finger. This five-valve instrument became very popular and was copied or suitably developed by other horn makers. The last model that Alf played (of which he had two) was his favorite – an Alexander five-valve B^b Sansone style horn. There is no serial number on the horn, for Alexander did not place serial numbers on their pre-war horns. DeRosa told me that Alf gave Dennis both a copy of his mouthpiece and his second Alexander, so that Dennis could begin to become



accustomed to the B^b horn. Both men knew that the change in instruments for Dennis was inevitable – it only was a matter of time.

Alf's horn is made of yellow brass, with the inside of the bell silver-plated. He had developed a very neat "duck's foot," which rested against his left hand, and which gave him stability. The little finger valve slide – the F extension – has a very long "pull out" which enabled Alf to have accurate intonation throughout the range of the horn.

When I took charge of the horn, it came with three mouthpipes: No. 1 was the original Alexander one, which Alf did not like. No. 2 was a Conn mouthpipe that he had attached to the horn. He tried this for a while, but did not like it, and eventually discarded it. No. 3, and now attached to the horn, was the one he had personally designed and developed. This he stuck with the rest of his playing career.

The internal taper of his mouthpipe gave Alf both the feel and sound he required of his instrument. The mouthpipe also has a water key attachment. Due to Alf's mouthpipe, the instrument has a beautifully warm sound, is very responsive throughout the entire range, and especially free in the upper register. It is interesting to note that, due to the extensive use Alf made of the horn, and his reluctance to change it, there is a patch on the bell, which covers the hole that Alf's thumb had worn in the bell. Another patch appears at the point where the horn rests on the hand, between thumb and first finger.

Alf's mouthpiece had changed a little from the "Busby" style mouthpiece he had in England and subsequently took with him to the States. He still had a deep cup, but the mouthpiece came with a detachable rim. This rim was the biggest change. It was slightly thicker than the narrow rim on which he originally played, and this, I believe, was due to the trouble he was having with his teeth. The thicker rim made it both more secure and more comfortable due to the dentures. The throat on the mouthpiece looks to be close to an American No. 4.

The sound produced by a horn player was all-important to Alf, and he worked hard at getting the equipment which gave him the sound that he wanted. He achieved this by his combination of mouthpiece and instrument. Alf, at his peak, produced a sound that floated in and was stirring to hear. When I asked Vince DeRosa if there was anyone who had a similar sound to Alf's, without hesitation he said Alan Civil – but Alf's sound was mellower and smoother.

One of Alf's colleagues, Wendell Hoss (born 1892), gave the following account in an undated letter to Stephen Pettitt of Alfred's career in Los Angeles and the horns he played:

I saw a partial photo of the horn he had when he first came to LA (in a gilded picture) after a season with Damrosch in the New York Symphony. It was a French model, but what make I would not know – still different from the one I saw in a photograph of him while in England. Sometime, I think early in his stay here, he got a Sansone model Alexander (five-valve B^b) and continued on that model...Alfred did play for the films from the time he came here – along with the Philharmonic as well. He played two seasons on first horn in Cleveland with Rodzinski: 1934-5 and 1935-6. Then he went back to the L.A. Philharmonic for one season

(1936-37) and then went on to Fox Studios until 1952. Though he did occasional playing after that, you might almost put that as his retirement year...all of the above was as a hornist and he always played first. The only managing he did was for the season 1934 at the Hollywood Bowl, after Mr. Clarke, the orchestra's angel, had died, when the association sort of threw up its hands in despair and the orchestra members took over and ran the season themselves. Brain was the manager.

He did very little teaching – just occasional private lessons; though his influence was stamped on several of our leading players around here – through his example as well as through his precepts.



Concerts, Broadcasts, and Recordings in America

Horn colleagues of Alfred Brain remember him fondly for his very fine orchestral performances, and as a notable soloist in chamber works, horn concerti, plus the huge contribution he made to horn playing in the film studios of Hollywood.

Newspaper reviews of his solo or chamber music appearances are comparatively rare but some have survived. He had mastered the dynamics and interpretive skills he needed for the Brahms Trio (as I mentioned previously in a quote from Jimmy Decker). There arrived an invitation from The Library of Congress, Division of Music, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation to play the Brahms Trio.

This concert was a great success and on December 6, 1940 he was asked to play it again.

Alf's reply was sent in his normal courteous way, and in a "correct English" style that was typical of him.

With his eye always on the money paid for public performances, he clearly states that his absence from



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
DIVISION OF MUSIC

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20540

Mr. Alfred Brain
Box 1000, 1940
Los Angeles, California

Dear Mr. Brain:

The Coolidge Foundation will present the Brahms Trio (Horn, Piano, and Violoncello) at the Library of Congress on December 6, 1940. It is hoped that you will be able to play at this concert. We would like to have you play at this concert. We would like to have you play at this concert. We would like to have you play at this concert.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge
President, Coolidge Foundation



Rec. 11th 1940
 Mr. Spivacke
 Library of Congress -
 Washington - D.C.
 Division of Music -
 Washington - D.C.
 Dear Sir -

I will be delighted to play the
 Brahms Trio at Stanford University
 on the 28th of July, or the 1st of
 which ever you decide upon -
 As this will necessitate my
 absence from Los Angeles approximately
 three days - we will have to come
 to some arrangements re - my
 expense -
 I am looking forward to playing
 this composition with your quartet
 and am sure it will be
 successful -

I remain yours
 Sincerely,
 Alfred Brain

January 20th 1941
 Mr. H. Spivacke
 Library of Congress -
 Washington D.C.
 Dear Mr. Spivacke
 I am in receipt of your
 letter and the terms are
 quite satisfactory to me.
 Sincerely yours
 Alfred Brain

June 10, 1941

Dear Mr. Brain:

I want to extend to you again my sincere appreciation for your fine contribution to the concerts of the Brahms Series last month. The concerts were truly the high-point in our musical season, and were a great inspiration to all of us. It was a great pleasure also to learn to know you personally, and I hope that we may be able to welcome you back to the campus in the not too distant future.

With all best wishes for a very pleasant and artistically satisfying season.

Sincerely yours,

Max Krone
 Max W. Krone, Assistant Director
 School of Music

the LAPO for around three days necessitated an agreement for expenses. They come back to him with a fee of \$75 which, in 2014, would be about \$1250 or £835.89.

Further correspondence comes from Mr. Spivacke, outlining the problems of getting monies from US government funds. Further communication is received by Alf, stating that the concert would now take place on the evening of August 7th.

January 30, 1941

Mr. Alfred Brain
 3244 Shelby Drive
 Palms Station
 Los Angeles, California

Dear Mr. Brain:

Since writing you last, we have heard from Stanford University that the hall will not be available on the date originally set for the concert. As a result, we were forced to recast the series. Under the present arrangements, the horn trio will be played on the evening of August 7. Will you please let me know by return air mail if the date will be convenient for you.

Sincerely yours,

Harold Spivacke
 Chief, Division of Music

As can be seen by the letter of Mr. Max Krone, Alf's concert was a success and a "great inspiration" to all who attended.

Early on, probably from 1923, Alfred became a member of the Los Angeles Chamber Music Society, giving concerts at the Gamut Club with other

musicians drawn from the Los Angeles Philharmonic. The following is an advertisement for a forthcoming concert:

Two new members of the personnel of the Los Angeles Chamber Music Society, which gives its first concert of the second season at the Gamut Club Theatre the 26th instant, are Alfred Brain, French horn, and Frederick Moritz, bassoon. Both of those artists will be heard in the first program.

Rehearsals have proven to be something in the nature of a reunion, especially to Mr. Brain, Henri de Busscher, oboist with the organization, and Emile Ferir, violist, these men having played together many years ago in London.

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
 SCHOOL OF MUSIC
 and the
 ELIZABETH SPRAGUE COOLIDGE FOUNDATION
 present

The Complete Chamber Music of Brahms

By the
 Coolidge String Quartet
 WILLIAM BRADY, Violin I, JAMES PETER, Violin II, EDWARD SCHWARTZ, Violoncello, ALFRED BRAIN, Viola

The University Trio
 ALFRED BRAIN, French Horn, EDWARD SCHWARTZ, Bassoon, JAMES PETER, Clarinet

Directed by ALFRED BRAIN, French Horn

MAY 7 Violin Quartet in C Minor Viola Quartet in C Minor String Quartet in B Minor Violin Quartet in B Minor	MAY 11 Violin Quartet in F Major Viola Quartet in F Major String Quartet in B Minor Violin Quartet in B Minor	MAY 15 Violin Quartet in F Major Viola Quartet in F Major String Quartet in B Minor Violin Quartet in B Minor	MAY 19 Violin Quartet in F Major Viola Quartet in F Major String Quartet in B Minor Violin Quartet in B Minor
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ALL SEATS RESERVED
 Season Tickets (8 Concerts) \$100
 Single Admission Tickets (available May 1) - \$15
 Seats may be secured by calling RJ 4-1111, Room 219

Special rates to students and faculty at colleges and high schools. Student faculty tickets must be purchased in person at the University of Southern California Ticket Office, Student Union Building.

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 STANFORD UNIVERSITY
 PRESENTS
 THE CHAMBER MUSIC OF JOHANNES BRAHMS
 By
 THE PRO ARTE QUARTET
 of the University of Wisconsin

ANTONIO BRAGA, First Violin
 LAURENT HALLUUX, Second Violin
 GERMAIN PRÉVOST, Viola
 C. WARWICK EVANS, Violoncello

WITH
 GUNNAK JOHANSEN, Piano
 RUDOLPH SCHMIDT, Clarinet
 FERENC MOLNAR, Viola
 WILLIAM DREH, Violoncello
 ALFRED BRAIN, Horn

June 30, July 7, 21, August 4, at 4:15 o'clock
 and
 July 3, 10, 24, August 7 at 8:00 o'clock
 1941

Budapest Quartet
 Josef Reisman (First Violin) Edgar Otenberg (Second Violin)
 Boris Kopy (Viola) Micha Schneider (Violoncello)

conducted by
 Germain Prevost (Second Viola)

I.
 FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN
 Quartet in D minor, Opus 76, Number 1
 Allegro - Andante - Moderato - Adagio - Fugue - Andante

II.
 WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART
 Quartet in G minor, Koechel Number 516
 Allegro - Moderato - Andante - Adagio - Andante

III.
 LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
 Quartet in B flat, Opus 130, with the
 "Great Fugue" Opus 133
 Allegro - Moderato - Andante - Adagio - Andante - Fugue - Andante

Budapest Quartet
 Josef Reisman (First Violin) Edgar Otenberg (Second Violin)
 Boris Kopy (Viola) Micha Schneider (Violoncello)

conducted by
 Germain Prevost (Second Viola)

I.
 WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART
 Quartet in D minor, Koechel Number 421
 Allegro - Andante - Moderato - Adagio - Andante

II.
 LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
 Quartet in C minor, Opus 18, Number 4
 Allegro - Moderato - Andante - Adagio - Andante

III.
 FRANZ SCHUBERT
 Octet in F major, for Clarinet, Horn, Bassoon and
 String Quartet, Opus 166
 Allegro - Moderato - Andante - Adagio - Andante

The collection of players grouped together to perform the Schubert Octet in F, Opus 166 coupled with the Beethoven Septet in E, Opus 20 in several concerts. Notices have survived of them appearing at the Los Angeles Music Guild Tuesday October 4 concert 1947, and at the Music Society of Santa Barbara at the Lobero Theatre on Sunday June 12, 1949. The Budapest String Quartet was featured in the 1947 concert and the LAPO members in the 1949 concert.

MUSIC SOCIETY OF SANTA BARBARA
 presents
 A CONCERT OF CHAMBER MUSIC
 LOBERO THEATRE
 Sunday afternoon, June 12, 1949, at 3:30

I. BEETHOVEN SEPTET IN E FLAT - OPUS 20
 Allegro - Moderato - Andante - Adagio - Andante

II. SCHUBERT OCTET IN F - OPUS 166
 Allegro - Moderato - Andante - Adagio - Andante

Patricia Shinkle, First Violin
 Paul Stone, Second Violin
 Fred Baker, Viola
 Kurt Baker, Cello

Arno Truett, Double Bass
 Michael Lurie, Clarinet
 Don Christlieb, Saxophone
 Alfred Brain, French Horn



Haydn Horn Concerto No. 2 in D major

The record reviews for Alf Brain's recording of the Haydn Horn Concerto No. 2 (the attribution to Haydn is doubted) are full of praise. It is a fine performance of a very difficult concerto, marred only slightly by the introduction of some dubbed low notes that perhaps he could have managed well enough himself without the aid (on this occasion) of a colleague. The recording has been admired and collected by generations of horn-players since it was issued in 1950. The late Ifor James mentioned it enthusiastically to his horn professor, Aubrey Brain, in about 1951. Aubrey said, ungratefully, "Ah yes! I'm glad he left the country!" It is worth pointing out here that Alf and Aubrey never really got on, and Alf would never speak of his brother. Lady Barbirolli said on several occasions that the personalities of Alf and Aubrey were completely different. Alf and Dennis though were very much alike in most ways. The following reviews speak of its warmer reception in America:

Haydn Horn Concerto in D major. Alfred Brain, French Horn, Janssen Symphony Orchestra. Werner Janssen conducting. Handel Concerto Grosso in B-flat Major. Double Concerto. Bert Gassman (oboe). George Meikrug and Kurt Reher, Janssen Symphony Orchestra, Werner Janssen conducting. Capitol P8173, 12 inch record LP. Haydn's Horn Concerto written before the invention of the modern valve horn is an interesting curiosity, and a fine example of how a master can make capital of its limitations. Alfred Brain plays the solo with splendid authority. (*Record Reviews A.G.*)

During the late 1940s Alf returned to orchestral playing with the "Janssen Symphony Orchestra." Janssen was an excellent composer and arranger – he had worked for Paramount Films, and composed the score for *The General Died at Dawn*. His orchestra was largely made up of members of the LAPO. Its quality is superb, its metal and discipline speak flatteringly of the musicianship of its founder and conductor. All this is evident in Janssen's recordings of Haydn's D Major Horn Concerto (Capitol 12-inch LP) of Hindemith's E-flat Symphony (Columbia 12-inch LP) and the dullish obvious *Genesis Suite*, a mosaic by Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Milhaud, Tansman, Tedesco, Toch, Shilkert (A Capitol 12 inch LP). Alfred Brain, the soloist of the Concerto, makes a virtuoso picnic of one of the most difficult (and most delightful) scores ever written for French Horn. On the reverse side are two of Handel's Concerti Grosso and the Hindemith Symphony is eminently satisfactory music with its keen intelligence, its structural four-squareness, its healthy humour. (June 1951, *United Press*, New York)

Haydn Horn Concerto No 2 in D major. Alfred Brain soloist. Handel Concerto Grosso in B-flat major. Bert Gassman, oboe soloist and Double Concerto in C Major, George Meikrug, and Kurt Reher (cello soloists), all members with the Janssen Symphony Orchestra, Werner Janssen conducting. One double-faced 12 inch Capitol disc 33 ½ rpm. Among the most famous of French Horn players is Alfred Brain, who has really

tamed that most treacherous of orchestral instruments. The Haydn Concerto is engaging music and when Brain plays it sounds easy though it actually bristles with difficulties....The Janssen Symphony takes good care of the orchestral assignment, the recording is first-rate. (*It's On Record* by Patterson Greene)

Regarding the section of "dubbed low notes" in the Haydn, it is worth here recalling what James Decker related. This was not the easiest concerto Alf could have chosen and it did not suit his embouchure at this stage in his life. He always had difficulty with the lower register and this difficulty would only be enhanced later in his career. Alf's friend, and low horn colleague, Richard Perissi, put in the low notes. Again Vince DeRosa said much the same, "the way that his teeth were and everything – he wasn't really in shape to play that. That's not Alfred Brain's real playing at all."

We will never know why Alf recorded this work, but when you hear the recording, even at this late period of his life, his technique, and ability to bring out the melodic line, especially in the slow movement, is really worth hearing. It just seems "natural Haydn."

Alf also received "fan mail" from people who had bought the recording and just simply loved the way Alf had played the concerto.

The Los Angeles Horn Club

In 1951 the Los Angeles Horn Club was founded by studio players. They were on contract, so they could not play for anyone else, and in order to keep their "chops" in shape whilst not on set, they met to play horn ensemble music. They invited Hollywood composers and arrangers to write works for them, and some of their members contributed works as well.

At their first concert, thirty-six of the most famous horns players in L.A. performed. They were conducted by Max Pot-tag and performed at the Musician's Union Concert Hall in Hollywood. The horn players unanimously elected the first President of the Club – Alf Brain – in honour of what he had done for the horn in L.A. Here are some quotes of the high regard in which Alf was held: "As the leading horn player in L.A. for many years, he had set an example by always encouraging

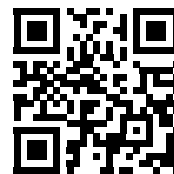
Janssen Symphony Orchestra Personnel

Philip Kahgan, Personnel Manager

<i>First Violins</i> EUDICE SHAPIRO, (Principal) ALEXANDER MURRAY HIRSHMAN WEINSTEIN LAURA GRUFFING ARKOLD JURASKEY ROACHEM CHASMAN MAURICE WARNER ELSA GROSSER NICOLE FISCHER HANS WIPPLER RAYMOND CREE JEANETTE FISCHER	<i>Oboe</i> ALEXANDER DEVOIR, (Principal) GORDON SCHONBERG <i>English Horn</i> CHARLES STRICKFADEN <i>Clarinet</i> JAMES COLLIS, (Principal) MANVILLE PACKER <i>Bass Clarinet</i> VINCENT DONATELLI <i>Bassoon</i> KENNETH LOWMAN, (Principal) MARK FUHRMAN <i>Horn</i> ALFRED BRAIN, (Principal) VINCENT DE ROSA GEORGE HOFFMAN LAWRENCE JANSOME <i>Trumpet</i> JOHN CLYMAN, (Principal) JOHN ESDLEY FRANK ZINZER <i>Trumpet</i> JOHN TRANCHITELLA (Principal) WILLIAM ATKINSON <i>Bass Trumpet</i> MARLO IMES <i>Tuba</i> J. J. CLIFFORD <i>Harp</i> MAY CAMBERN <i>Piano</i> NORMA DURY <i>Timpani</i> HARRY NIEDERMAN <i>Percussion</i> EMIL FARNLUND <i>Strings</i> BEN LASKY
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Many of the members of the Janssen Symphony Orchestra (one-third of its regular complement) are serving in the Armed Forces. We are happy to welcome back to the Orchestra two members just returned—Simon Carfagno and Vincent De Rosa.

Janssen Symphony Orchestra Roster



Use this QR code or
[www.hornsociety.org/
publications/horn-call/
extras/1063-october-2016](http://www.hornsociety.org/publications/horn-call/extras/1063-october-2016)
to hear Brain's recording
of this concerto.



those around him, as well as protecting the positions of those less talented than himself" (Howard Hillard)

"He always was an enormous influence to all of us: as a father, he always helped young people. Never, never would he put a young man down, Never! He was just a tremendous person, very hospitable." (Gale Robinson)

On Alf's retirement, Wendell Hoss became Chairman of the L.A. Horn Club. (Surprisingly, Sansone gives "about 1960" as Alfred's retirement date from horn playing. Other accounts give 1952. It could be that Sansone meant that this was the time that Alf finished playing in the studios.) Robinson states, "Together with Brain, Hoss set the tone of collegiality among L.A. hornists which lasted for many years, creating an unwritten gentleman's agreement: never speak ill of your colleagues."

Although officially retired at the age of 60 from the LAPO. Alf continued to work in the Hollywood film studios. When he finished playing in Hollywood, he still played the horn well into his 70s, but, as can be seen, he devoted more of his time to his new venture – "The Horn Inn" where he entertained the horn players of the community of Los Angeles.



Alf – the organizing host at a Los Angeles Horn Club banquet

Alf and Straussie hosted one of the first meetings of the Los Angeles Horn Club at their house in January 1952. Wendell Hoss wrote the following letter to the Brains, dated January 6, 1952, thanking them for a successful first meeting, and for their kind hospitality:

Dear Friends – There is not enough that I can say to express our appreciation of your magnificent hospitality and the wonderful gesture you made to the new Horn Club. I am sure that the spirit of good will and friendliness which you created last night will hold the idea of the club to every body who was there. As to the work involved on your part – to say nothing of the expense – the realization is simply overwhelming. Every thing had been so carefully planned and thoughtfully worked out that the result was a complete triumph, and, needless to say, very enjoyable. My heartfelt thanks to you both for everything you have done; speaking for myself personally as well as for all the members of the Horn Club. I hope we can do something for you sometime. Sincerely Yours, Wendell Hoss
2535 S. Cherry Avenue
Glendale 6

Another letter dated January 10, 1952, from Max Pottag, a celebrated horn-player from the East coast of the United States, similarly thanks Alfred Brain (and Mrs. Brain) for their hospitality:

MAX P. POTTAG *Instructor in French Horn*
1518 HODD AVENUE - CHICAGO 26, ILL.
PHONE AMARADON 2-2426

W. A. REYNOLDS DOUBLE FRENCH HORN (POTTAG MODEL) EXCLUSIVELY

WESTERN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MUSIC
36-38-40-42-44-46-48-50-52-54-56-58-60-62-64-66-68-70-72-74-76-78-80-82-84-86-88-90-92-94-96-98-100
CHICAGO MUSICAL COLLEGE
AMERICAN CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC
CHICAGO CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC
MEMBER CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA - NATIVE

Jan. 10, 1952

Dear Alf:

Back in snow covered Chicago, I want to write to you first of all, to thank you for the wonderful evening spent at your home - I like to call it an estate.

To meet you, visit with you was my wish for many years, for to know the famous Brain hornists is a privilege and shall be an inspiration to my students.

If I should come your way again, I hope to have the pleasure to return a similar evening to you and your charming wife, really, this meeting of the horn club will never be forgotten.

Hoping that you may enjoy many more years with your good nature and wit and good will to your fellow men, I shall say "Auf Wiedersehen" to the man I admire.

With kindest regards, also to Mrs. Brain, I am,

Most sincerely,
Max Pottag

Los Angeles Horn Club

THE FIRST MEETING of "The Royal Order of Sons of I Will Not Bluff, I Hope Society," was held at the Noodell Restaurant the first of December, last month, Saturday evening.

At that time officers were elected as follows: Wendell Hoss, president; Alfred Brain, Vice-President and Art Frantz, Secretary-Treasurer.

The program for the evening started off with a humorous discourse recorded by Art Fleming on the history of the French Horn and pointers on how to make symphony tryouts, Art subtitled for Prof. Shmertz.

Horn sextettes arranged by Frederick Steiner included Mendelssohn's Funeral March and Scherzo and were two of the best "things" we've heard for multiple horns. A very clever quartette written especially for the occasion by George Byde, were on a "Bach Fugue." "Tea for Two" as well as various symphony excerpts. On the finale everyone who could find a horn and mouthpiece joined in Max Pottag's arrangement of Wagnerian themes for eight horns.

Everyone had a good time and a wonderful New York steak, in spite of the Funeral Marches.

Never to our knowledge have thirty-six horn players ever before been assembled at one time.

All horn players enlisted in the armed services are given Honorary Member-

ship Cards in the club. On this occasion, for example, those present at the meeting signed a letter and enclosed a card to Arthur Maier Jr., now serving Uncle Sam.

Local 47 horn players will be interested to learn that meetings of this club are held every first Saturday evening in the month. Meetings are "tag" with a possible "whing ding" every six months to include wives and friends.

If horn players in other cities plan to organize a club similar to ours in Los Angeles, we will gladly send program ideas, help build a library for horn combinations, help promote interest in the French Horn and assist in everyone having fun.

In particular, the Horn Club welcomes composers and arrangers. Contact Art Frantz at RUghy 6-1281 for reservations.



Alfred Brain, Vice-President

The second meeting of the Los Angeles Horn Club took place at Al Brain's home, January fifth.

Wendell Hoss conducted the "Toldi" for twelve horns, while Leon Dunfry made a tape recording for composer Julius Toldi. Those not behind horns gathered at the bar and gave Alf's liquor a beating.

At this meeting it was good to see Grover Cleveland, Walter Horning and Max Pottag who flew from Chicago to conduct the horn section of the Western



Art Frantz, Sec-Treas.

States Instrumental Music Clinic recently held at Local 47's headquarters.

The club played several numbers, including the Orey Quartette (only we used twenty musicians), the Bells, two Wagnerian numbers transcribed by Max Pottag, Frederick Steiner's arrangement of Mendelssohn's Scherzo for twelve horns and Julius Toldi's number written especially for the occasion. The concert was very successful, and created another FIRST for Los Angeles musicians. Max Pottag was very pleased and thanked everyone for making his trip here, from Chicago, so pleasant. Incidentally, he must have sold several "Reynolds Horns."

After a wonderful English dinner, as only Alf can give them—all from the goodness of his heart and pocketbook, not to overlook the hard work of his wife, "Straussie" and her sister, Wendell Hoss opened the business portion of the evening's meeting, after which more entertainment took place.

John Graas played his Stan Kenton records, recently recorded with Graas as soloist. Kenton's composer, Mr. Gettinger, was introduced to the group. The club then heard the Haydn concerto, recorded by Al Brain.

Although 36 musicians attended, the Club missed the Los Angeles Philharmonic horn section. They were playing in San Diego.



Wendell Hoss, President

OVERTURE

The Horn Club of Los Angeles extends to

Alfred Brain

a Life Membership

In gratitude for his inspirational leadership, his artistry and his friendship.

President
SR Lott

Secretary
Gene Sherry

At this time, when his work with the Los Angeles Horn Club was in full swing, he was awarded the following "Life Membership" in honour of all his work.

The International Horn Society

It is worth noting here that end of the Los Angeles Horn Club may have been the beginning of the International Horn Society. James Decker recalled,

In 1969 Wendall Hoss had been talking to Philip Farkas and some other horn players about a big meeting. They decided to have an international horn event where once a year they would have a big meeting that would last for a week or so and we'd invite all the horn players to come to it. It started in 1969 and was held in Tallahassee with Bill Robinson as the host (he taught the horn in Tallahassee). James Decker was one of the clinicians in 1970, then followed James Chambers, Myron Bloom, and Ib-Lanski Otto from Sweden. Anyhow, it turned out to be quite a nice thing; I think that over 250 horn players showed up for that to hear the lectures and things like that. And it kept growing and growing and now there are close to four thousand members of the Horn Society. I just went to the one in Rochester, and there were over 500 horn players at that meeting and it had just terrific recitals and lectures. So it has grown into quite an operation, and I think that it actually all came from the beginning and the end of the Los Angeles Horn club. It just evolved into the International Horn Society. I'm not too sure whether too many people remember that, because most of those original people are dead now.

There was a meeting of horn players held at the "First Annual French Horn Workshop" at Florida State University in 1969. The players there were Arthur Berv, James Chambers, Philip Farkas, Carl Geyer, Anton Horner, Wendell Hoss, Max Pottag, and Barry Tuckwell (John Barrows arrived later in the week).

During the second symposium, the idea was suggested that a yearly meeting should be established as an international organization of horn players. An organizing committee was formed, and the elected first officers of the IHS: President-Barry Tuckwell, Vice-President – Wendall Hoss, Secretary-Treasurer – Norman Schweikert. Harold Meek was later appointed the first editor of the magazine of the Society: *The Horn Call*.

So in 1970 the International Horn Society was formed “an organization dedicated to performance, teaching, composition research, and the preservation and promotion of the horn as a musical instrument.”

After Retirement: Chatsworth Rotary Club and Youth Charitable Work

After he retired from horn playing, Alf devoted his final years to the PTA and Chatsworth Rotary Club. In this capacity, he continued his lifelong dedication to the encouragement of others. The Chatsworth Rotary Club celebrated Al's 80th birthday and gave the following account of him in their newspaper on October 20th 1965:

Al was born October 24, 1885 in London, England and married his better half, Straussie, in 1932. He is an accomplished musician (French Horn), having played in the London, New York and the Los Angeles

Symphonies. In 1934 he was the Manager of the Hollywood Bowl. Many of us will remember Al not only as a charter member of the Chatsworth Rotary Club but also as a Past President in 1958 and 1959.

That year was a memorable one in that Al Brain purchased and personally ran the then Horn Inn so that we would have a meeting place for lunch and that during his year our Rotary Club sponsored the Chatsworth Parade and Fiesta.

The Chatsworth Rotary Club wishes you a Very,
Very Happy Birthday Al, and many many more.

The same newsletter set out the aims and objectives of a rotary club:

Primarily, a Rotary Club is a group of representative businessmen who have accepted the Rotary philosophy of service and are seeking:

1. To study collectively the theory of service as the true basis of success and happiness in business and in life.
2. To give, collectively, practical demonstrations of it to themselves and their community.
3. Each as an individual, to translate its theory into practice in his business and in his everyday life.
4. Individually and collectively, by active precept and example, to stimulate its acceptance both in theory and practice by all non-Rotarians as well as by all Rotarians.



Alf kept the clipping below (right) from the Chatsworth News, June 29, 1958, where he had reached the high office of Rotary

Roster of Chatsworth Rotary Club

*Adams, Carl (Hazel)	Felton, Trish (Paul)	Kemp, Bob (Annette)	Semal Blog, Omer
9555 Vineyard Canyon	12122 Elmwood	21125 Deserville	21125 Deserville
*Amdur, Gail (Dorothy)	Judy Roper	*Armstrong, Hal (Dorothy)	Bellevue
10034 Santa Monica	Diamond 6-2711	21125 Deserville	
*Austin, Dan	Malibu 2-7351		
Beebe, Bill (Dorothy)	Additional Address	*Walters, Gail (Hazel)	Inverness District
2-7722 Deserville	Diamond 8-385	21125 Deserville	Diamond 8-385
*Beebe, Bill (Dorothy)	Caringo, Gail	*Wolfe, Gay (Patricia)	Days Road
9555 Vineyard Canyon	Diamond 0-4151	10034 Vineyard Canyon	Diamond 8-4247
*Bein, Al (Dorothy)	Variety Show	*Moore, Mary (Helen)	W.M.
21125 Deserville	Diamond 6-094	10034 Deserville Canyon	Diamond 6-1110
*Chambers, Lee (Bess)	Preserves	Murray, Dick (Sharon)	Malibu
21125 Deserville	Diamond 8-4114	10009 Combs	Diamond 8-6290
*Chambers, Lee (Bess)	Preserves	Nashford, Wes (Barry)	Costa Mesa
21125 Deserville	Diamond 8-7532	9222 Santa Monica	Diamond 8-6164
Clark, David (Linda)	Edly, Construction	*Parsons, Carl (Margaret)	Agoura Park, Agou
1648 Vineyard Canyon	Diamond 8-7532	10005 Combs Ave.	Diamond 8-4477
Deery, Warren (Violet)	Edly, Construction	*Ragalski, Mike (Gail)	Agou, Buena Vista
10034 Santa Monica	Diamond 8-6871	10034 Santa Monica	Diamond 8-1156
*Diamond, Bill (Dorothy)	Heard, Bob (Betty)	*Reynolds, James	Imported China Road
10034 Combs Ave.	Diamond 8-7676	21121 Deserville	Diamond 8-1156
6-30, Box 3	Diamond 0-940	21121 Deserville	
Dr. Harold (Kathleen)	Commercy Ship	Reynolds, David (W)	*Reynolds, David
1648 Vineyard Canyon	Diamond 6-1176	21121 Deserville	Diamond 8-1027
Hauschild, Hans (Gladys)	Quintanover	Treffzmann, Jan (Hazel)	Agou, Whittier
21115 Deserville	Diamond 8-4232	10414 Deserville	Diamond 8-4301
*Henderson, Jack (Dorothy)	Quintanover	*Treffzmann, David (Dorothy)	Agou, Whittier
21177 Deserville	Diamond 8-3849	21115 Deserville	Diamond 8-4304

*Home Phone
*Home Business
*Home Telephone
*Post Office



Governor of the Chatsworth Club.

The Chatsworth Community was very excited to have as one of their residents an "internationally known concert musician." In an interview, Alf outlines his "musical pedigree" and informs us all (much to my glee – *Leighton*) that he was born in Cardiff, Wales, then raised in London, England.



Alf received the following letter dated March 8, 1960, from Edgar Hiestand, member of US Congress, House of Representatives (right):



The respect, love, gratitude and esteem that "The Chatsworth School" held Alf in can be clearly seen in the letter sent to him in 1963 from the school's principal Gjertude Smith (below):

Memo From: July 12, 1963
Dr. Gjertude Smith

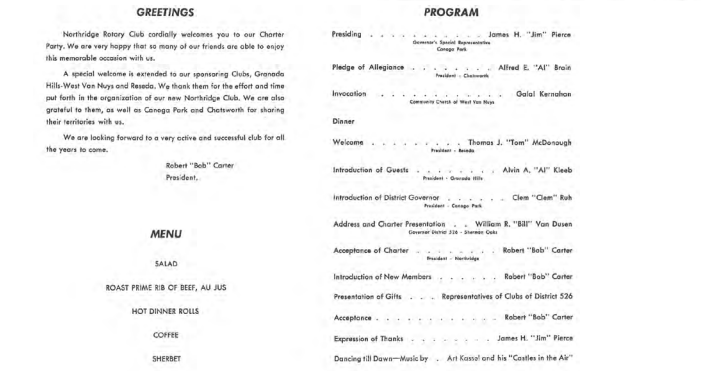
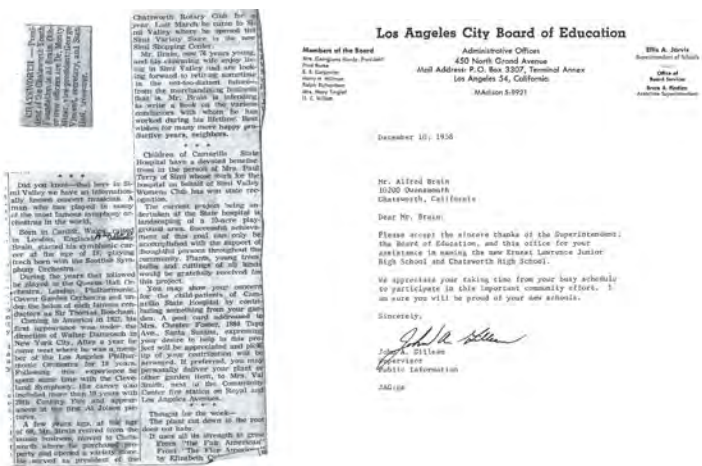
Dear Mr. Brain:
This is "First Memories", a book which commemorates the first semester of Chatsworth High School. Our students and faculty would like you to have one.

Cordially,

Gjertude Smith
Principal

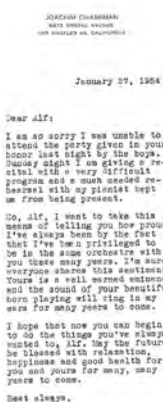
The mnemonic at the top of this "First Memories" book clearly demonstrates the high regard the pupils had for Alf. The words used to describe his care, devotion, and interest in the development of all the pupils is very touching, but always in the background, never seeking the limelight, always imparting his help, guidance with fun and comedy

Their respect is summed up in the last sentence: AL BRAIN your equal is not found every day!



More Accolades

On January 26, 1954 a dinner was given in Alf's honour. A letter from Joachim Chassman illustrates yet again the how much Alf was loved. Chassman was a Los Angeles violinist who had played for 20th Century Fox and Columbia Pictures, and, who with Oscar Wasserberger, performed the West Coast premiere of Prokofiev's "Sonata for Two Violins." Alf was given a Life Achievement Award by the American String Teachers Assn. and was a former president of Arts and Artists Inc.





Jack Cave recalls how Alf was solo horn in *The Adventures of Marco Polo*:

21

John W. Cave
1760 Avenida Del Mundo 1604
Coronado, CA 92118

"Hurricane" also "Hawman score" and "Captain from Castilla" "Hawman score" "Fantasia" for Disney studios, Leopold Stokowski. I played in the section on most of these and I can tell you - Brain was a power house. In his symphony engagements he never had an assistant player - he played every little passage himself and that makes the greatest pianissimo entrances, I ever heard. In 1937 Brain returned to Cleveland, I believe when he returned to LA to play with respect to his health in the Philharmonic for a few years - then signed a contract with 20th Century Fox where he remained till he retired.

As to his personal habits - he loved to give big parties - so to the guests. He was a great cook - he always cooked in the English Army in the W. I. A most generous host and will never be tippity a fine soft-baked himself. Loved Dewars White Label.

He always had a garden and chickens - when he wasn't at work he got his personal dressing & hand dryer still soaked with fragrance.

31

John W. Cave
1760 Avenida Del Mundo 1604
Coronado, CA 92118

Alf had a very important concert coming up - he might go back for a whole day before and just listen to ball games on radio or read.

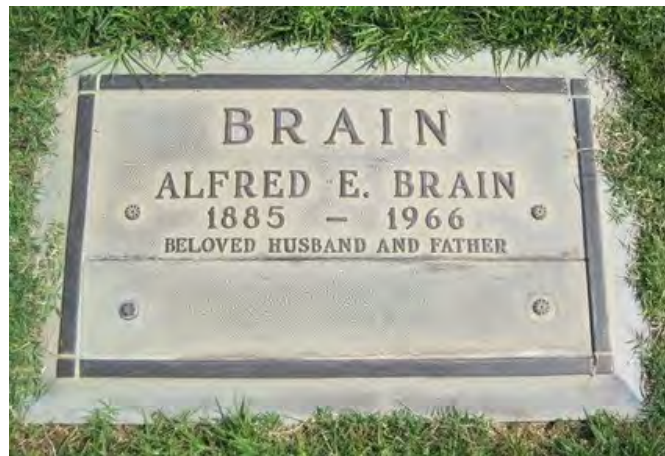
His mouthpiece was an old Schmidt German silver cast - very small diameter but extremely deep. All the time that I knew Brain he played a 5 valve Bb Alexander Samsom model.

Brain had a great sense of humor and could regale you with old English - bawdy stories and limericks for hours.

We never failed to help young players.

I have a recording of "Tel. Euboea" which is very old & worn, that Brain did in England. I also have many pictures of parties, family pictures, and one taken in a Beverly Hills restaurant with Brain & Brain, Howard Brain, his brother, Brain & Strauss & family, Mrs. Cave & myself.

As you can tell, I had an extremely high regard for Alfred Brain. Hope this helps, let me know. Frank Rogers, Jack Cave



Alf's grave at Little Church of the Flowers, Forest Lawn, Glendale, California

Funeral Services For Al Brain

Funeral services for Al Brain, 80, 10200 Owensmouth Ave., were held Friday afternoon in the Little Church of the Flowers, Forest Lawn Glendale.

Mr. Brain was born in London, England, and had lived at the Owensmouth address for 12 years. He was a retired musician who had been associated with 20th Century Fox. A member of Rotary, he was a past president of the organization.

Survivors are: his wife, Strausie; a daughter, Mrs. Olga Wittenberg of Northridge; a brother, Edward Brain of London, and three grandchildren.

Los Angeles Times announcement of Brain's funeral service. Note the reference to only Edward as a sibling. Aubrey had passed away in 1955.

When he passed away on March 29th 1966, his death saddened everyone who had known him. He was buried at Forest Lawn on April 1. Music from *Stabat Mater* by Palestrina and the "Funeral Music" from *Siegfried* were beautifully played by James Decker, Leon Donfrey, Sinclair Lott, George Hyde, Arthur Briegleb, John Cave, Alan Robinson, and Gale Robinson.

George Hyde had also composed a work for the occasion; the solo horn was Sinclair Lott. James Decker recalls that whilst Sinclair Lott was playing, tears were coming down his cheeks, for he had become very close to Alf.

Alf was survived by his wife Straussie, daughter Olga, and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Of the obituary notices that recorded Alf's passing, all covered the fact that he had been a virtuoso horn player who emigrated from the UK to the USA. At the left is one examples of what was written.

Although we're sure the passing of Al Brain has been noted already, we'd like to add a few of our (and of others) remembrances. Besides being a charter member and past president of Rotary, he was so devoted to its he brought a restaurant so Rotary could have a meeting place. Chatsworth Park PTA rewarded him with an honorary life membership for his interest in all youth. When the Brains owned the 5 & 10 and the Dry Goods store, there were many donations made by them to the PTA and 4-H for the Christmas baskets. He was one of the biggest boosters (and workers) for the first Chatsworth Fiesta, (forerunner to our Annual Parade) and organizer of the Chatsworth Youth Foundation. If we're not mistaken, this became the basis of our present Little League organization. His musical ability was renowned, and his French horn was heard at the Hollywood Bowl, and MGM, and many symphonic performances. Chatsworth has lost a beloved friend, and we wish to extend our sympathy to Straussie and the rest of the family.



1, REINGLASS ROAD, STANMORE, MIDDLESEX.
Telephone: GRENSTONE 8554.

24 May 66

Dear Straussie,

I was very sorry to hear of Uncle Alf's death and do apologise for taking so long to reply, the letter was delayed and I did not get it until mid May.

I enclose two clippings from the Daily Telegraph, and hope to have a piece in the R.A.M. Magazine this is half yearly and it will be a little while yet.

Basil Cameron the conductor who joined the Queen's Hall Orchestra on the same day as Alf sends

Copy of the letter sent by Leonard (Dennis's brother) to Alf's widow, Straussie, on learning of his uncle's death.

There is no better summation of Alf than that Irving Rosen-thal wrote of Alf in *Of Brass and Brain* (1953).

It has often been said that history was never made by historians which, is quite fortunate; it would surely been a dull affair if it had. ----- Therefore, it would be highly refreshing and stimulating to meet someone "who was there", so to speak, with a person who in his own right contributed to the Musical Mainstream of events and in so doing IS history. Of course, such persons are rather rare individuals but, such a man is Alfred Brain. ---- It is not, however the remarkable and extensive background of musical experience that that really impresses one as much as the man himself. The passing of the years has given the name of Brain somewhat of a legendary aura, but to call him "the grand old man of the horn" would not be a fitting title and even misleading somehow. There is very little about him that one could properly call "old" for his vigour is astonishingly youthful and shows no indication of abating in the least. The very gods might envy him his robustness of body and spirit. But, above all, it is his infectious love of life that profoundly endears him to all. His eyes, for example still retain a certain twinkling roguishness (and may well remind one of all the sights he must have seen and would still like to see). His smile is at once knowing and genial, reinforced by a warm wit, and indicating a treasure house of tales which are likely to drive away the present and bring his listeners back to the "golden era" of music

this sympathically as does Ernest Ivan and Frank Probyn and the horns of the R.P.O. (James Brown who joined up in 1963 when on tour in USA.) I was ill at this time with a coronary, now I am very well and working just as hard as ever.

I have four children, Jennie 17½ Roger 13½ Michael 9½ (he is in the choir at Westminster Abbey) and

Tina 5½, they keep me busy and hard up! Dennis had Tony 14 and Sally 10, Tony is leaving the Horn and organ as well.

Give my love to Olga and once again my sincere sympathy on your great loss. All my love Leonard.

for a brief few moments. And, all within an air of good breeding, solicitude, and rich humanity: in short he is a true gentleman. Alf Brain's renown on his horn has been matched by his renown as a host and is quite understandable in the light of our analysis. Having enjoyed a full and richly varied life, he is always anxious to share his good fortune with others and without the usual self-conscious affectations. No one has ever felt to be a stranger in his company for very long for it is impossible not to be swayed by the vastness of his personalityand herein lies the secret of any great artist. Men such as Alfred Brain are as much a part of humanity as they are distinct individuals and yet, it is this humanity that makes them GREAT

In a tribute in *Overture* magazine, the editor wrote the following:

It is with a deep feeling of loss that I note the passing of not only a friend, but a man truly deserving of the sometimes-clichéd phrase, "a legend in his own lifetime" His activities here were, of course almost too extensive to mention. However, some of the more important ones included fourteen years in the L.A. Philharmonic; several years as manager of the Hollywood Bowl Concerts, having rescued them from a position of near collapse; and under contract to Twentieth Century Fox from 1943 until he retired a few years ago.

I was privileged to work with Alf for many years at Fox, as well as on other engagements, and I will be the richer for the experience. He was always ready – even eager – to help younger musicians on any or all instruments, and as did so many of us here in L.A. I often took advantage of his wise counsel on matter both musical and personal.

One word often used carelessly, seems to have been invented especially to describe Alfred Brain. The word is "Gentleman!"

A gentleman he was in every true connotation of the word. Pleasant and gracious to everyone with whom he came into contact, he had a tremendous zest for living.

A gracious host and an excellent chef, his parties are amongst my finest memories. A raconteur – lover of Gilbert and Sullivan, and of limericks which he could recite by the hour – his eyes sparkled with a twinkle which lighted up every gathering at which he was present. Alf Brain is sorely missed – by me personally, and by all musicians everywhere.

To have known him was a privilege and an honour. Probably as fitting a farewell to him as words can express may be found in Shakespeare, whose writing Alf so dearly loved: *Good night sweet prince.*

In his youth Welshman Leighton Jones became solo horn of the National Youth Orchestra of Wales. At nineteen he began to play with the BBC Orchestra of Wales. He studied with Keith Whitmore and Alan Civil. Due to family commitments, he returned to West Wales and is a freelance hornist with chamber and orchestral groups, including The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, City of Birmingham Orchestra, The National Symphony Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, and The Orchestra of Welsh National Opera.