



# Peter Gibbs, violin

Around the time of the BBC recording of Fauré's Piano Quartet No.1 in C minor (June 1970), violinist Peter Gibbs was leading the BBC Northern Ireland Orchestra. So far the precise dates are not known.

This PDF brings together a few facts about Peter Gibbs who led such a fascinating life. The information has been gleaned from various online sources, all of which are credited here.

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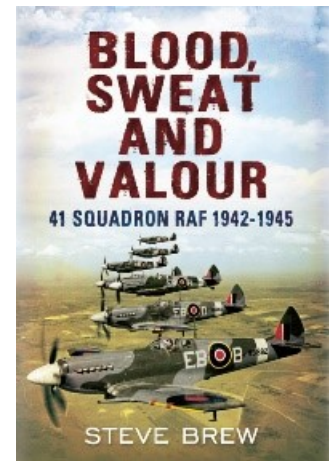
Norman Peter Gibbs was a fighter pilot in World War II with 41 Squadron RAF from January 1944 to March 1945. 'A generally unassuming character ... an active pilot and an avid musician' is how he's described in the *Wikipedia* article on the 41 Squadron (mostly written by Steve Brew). Peter Mountain remembered a man who was 'a daredevil, and a man who called a spade a spade'.



Photo of Peter Gibbs, © Jim Payne via Dan Johnson

Read more at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No.\\_41\\_Squadron\\_RAF](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No._41_Squadron_RAF) which quotes from this book:

Brew, Steve, *Blood, Sweat and Valour – 41 Squadron RAF, August 1942-May 1945: A Biographical History* London, Fonthill Media, 2012. p.671



After the War, Gibbs formed the Peter Gibbs Quartet. I am most grateful to Helen Waterhouse for sending me this photograph (May 2022), courtesy of Patrick Ireland, showing the Quartet in rehearsal.



Pic: The Gibbs Quartet – Peter Gibbs, Peter Carter, James Christie and Patrick Ireland.

Peter Gibbs was well remembered by violinist Peter Carter, first violin in the Allegri Quartet (1976-2005). This is from Peter Carter's online blog at <http://petercarter.net/musicians/von-karajan-and-peter-gibbs/>

‘... he formed a string quartet – the Peter Gibbs String Quartet. Being made up of very talented young musicians it was immediately successful but Peter being Peter demanded such high standards of his colleagues that it inevitably went the way of so many young quartets and disbanded. It wasn’t good enough for them to start a movement exactly together (always a point of much rehearsal in the early days of a group) Peter insisted that each member should sit in different corners of the room with their backs to each other and start by some sort of intuition! This and many other idealistic but crazy ideas proved too much for the others who all left and went their separate ways in the world of chamber music. Two of them ended up in the Allegri and were still in it when a quarter of a century later I joined.’

Those two were founding viola player Patrick Ireland and later arrival, cellist Bruno Schreker, who had replaced James Christie. The Allegri Quartet was formed in 1954 and its history has been explored in detail by Piers Burton-Page in an illustrated booklet to celebrate the Quartet’s 50th anniversary: *The Allegri at 50 – a Quartet in Five Movements*. See:  
<http://www.allegriquartet.org.uk/ALLEGRI%20HISTORY.pdf>

‘Patrick Ireland had already played in the Quartet led by Peter Gibbs for five years, and was on the point of abandoning music as his livelihood ...’

‘The arrival of [cellist] Bruno Schreker [in 1967] in succession to [William] Pleeth proved to be another Red Letter Day for the Allegri. Bruno knew his way round the quartet world, as a member of the aforementioned Gibbs Quartet. Music was in his bloodstream: his father and that fine Austrian composer Franz Schreker had been first cousins.’

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Four concert programmes relating to the Peter Gibbs Quartet are in the collection of the Arts and Humanities Research Council. See  
<http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/4205> (for the first one below).

Aldeburgh Festival of Music and the Arts, Aldeburgh Parish Church, 16 June 1949  
Music for Strings – Peter Gibbs Quartet

Haydn	Quartet in C major. Op.33, No. 3
Mendelssohn	Octet
Tomkins	Fantasia for String Sextet
Bridge	Sextet in E Flat (two violins, two violas and two violoncellos)

Chelsea Music Club, Chelsea Town Hall, 22 April 1952 (.../GetRecord/8160)  
Peter Gibbs String Quartet

Wigmore Hall, London, 5 June 1952 (.../GetRecord/4632)  
Schoenberg Memorial Concert, presented by the Anglo-Austrian Music Society and given by the Peter Gibbs Quartet, the LSO Chamber Ensemble, Anne Woods (alto) and Peter Stadlen (piano)

Banbury and District Musical Society, 30 October 1952 (.../GetRecord/4251)  
Peter Gibbs String Quartet

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And there were broadcasts for the BBC Third Programme. Below left is a broadcast on Monday 12 March 1951. On Friday 16 March was one with Neville Marriner in the Martin String Quartet.

**8.0 p.m. BENJAMIN FRANKEL**

**Quartet No. 3**

played by the

**Peter Gibbs String Quartet:**

Peter Gibbs (violin)

Kelly Isaacs (violin)

Patrick Ireland (viola)

James Christie (cello)

**Quartet No. 2: March 30**

**8.0 p.m. EGON WELLESZ**

**Octet, Op. 67**

played by

**Frederick Thurston (clarinet)**

**Cecil James (bassoon)**

**Aubrey Thonger (horn)**

**Martin String Quartet:**

David Martin (violin)

Neville Marriner (violin)

Eileen Grainger (viola)

Bernard Richards (cello)

**Eugene Cruft (double-bass)**

(first broadcast performance  
in this country). (BBC recording)

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And there was more chamber music. In 1947 Peter Gibbs himself played at The Queen's College, Oxford, in a concert given by the Eglesfield Music Society. The concert programme survives in the collection of the Arts and Humanities Research Council. See

<http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/4548>

19 June 1947 – Peter Gibbs (violin), Geoffrey Bush (piano) and singers Alfred Deller, Eric Greene, Gordon Clinton, Anthea Guillaume and Mary Evers (with a list of the orchestral ensemble).

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In 1949, Neville Marriner 'became a member of the Jacobean Ensemble, formed with Thurston Dart and another orchestral player, Peter Gibbs. Driven by Dart's musicological interests, this group specialised in the music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and made several records for the L'Oiseau-Lyre label [c.1956-58].'

*Thurston Dart directing the Jacobean Ensemble in Jacobean consort music*

Neville Marriner and Peter Gibbs (violins), Desmond Dupré and Dennis Nesbitt

(bass viols), Thurston Dart (chamber organ and harpsichord)

London 1111 OL 50133 mono LP

This next from <http://www.scena.org/columns/lebrecht/040505-NL-marriner.html>

And also at <http://www.standard.co.uk/goingout/music/the-master-marriner-7226677.html>

'[Neville] Marriner formed a string trio with a former fighter pilot, Peter Gibbs, and [Thurston] Dart on harpsichord. At their second concert, an Australian heiress, Louise Dyer, offered them a record contract with her label, L'Oiseau Lyre.'

"Peter and I would go up in his Tiger Moth," chuckles Marriner, "we once bombed the LSO bus with flour bags." The 1950s were rumbustious times on the London orchestras; the LSO sacked its conductor, Joseph Krips, after he physically assaulted the manager, and

Karajan walked out on the Philharmonia after Gibbs stood up and berated him for arrogance.'

More of that Karajan story shortly.

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Peter Gibbs also recorded for the Vanguard label. Vanguard's *Bach Guild* created a sensation starting in the mid-1950s with its revelatory recordings of music by Henry Purcell, undertaken by the partnership of the label's enterprising founder Seymour Solomon and countertenor Alfred Deller.

Purcell Fantasia upon a Ground in D major, Z 731

Peter Gibbs, Granville Jones and Neville Marriner (violins), Desmond Dupré (viola da gamba), George Malcolm (harpsichord)

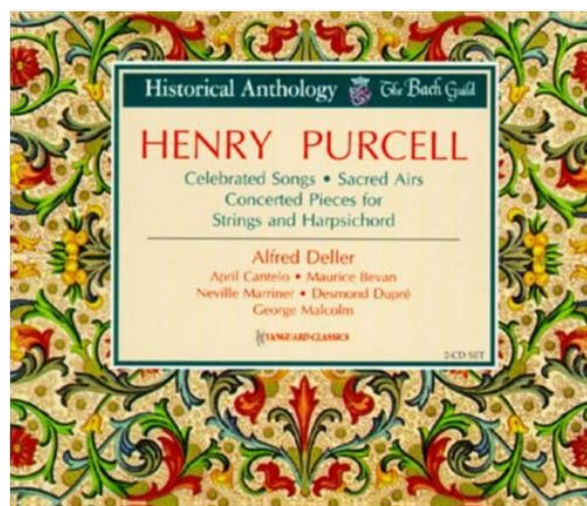
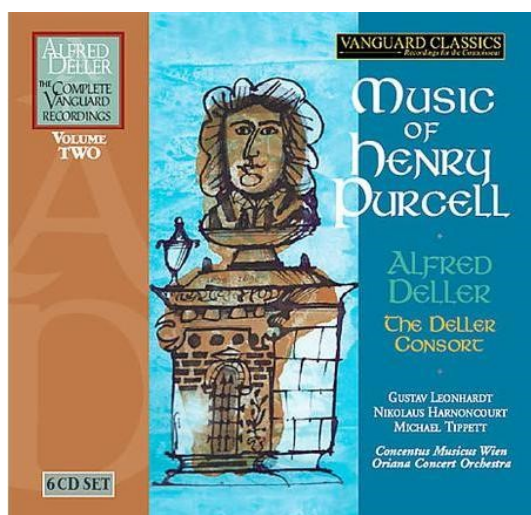
Purcell Sonatas (10) in 4 parts: No.9 in F major, Z 810 *Golden Sonata*

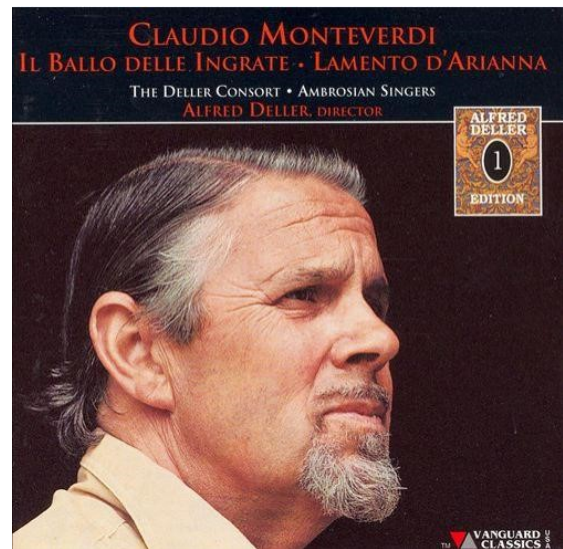
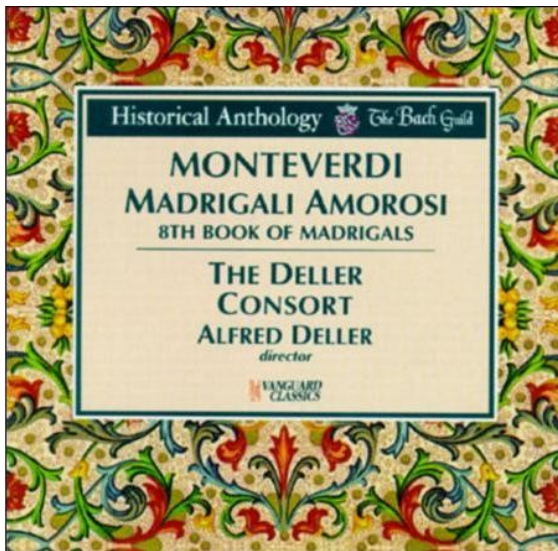
Peter Gibbs and Granville Jones (violins), Desmond Dupré (viola da gamba), George Malcolm (harpsichord),

Purcell 12 Sonatas of III Parts.

Neville Marriner and Peter Gibbs (violins), Desmond Dupré, (bass viol), Thurston Dart (organ). Argo, Spoken Arts 209/210 (2 LPs)

LP covers –





And then there's the Karajan/Peter Gibbs story.

Let violinist Peter Mountain introduce it (from his 2007 autobiography *Scraping a Living: A Life of a Violinist*):

Peter [Gibbs] and I had more or less parallel careers. He was in the LSO and had his own quartet, while I was in the Philharmonia and doing chamber music. We never met, but I often heard about him from mutual friends. He was a little older than me, and had been a fighter pilot in the war. He had a reputation as a daredevil, and a man who called a spade a spade, and this was borne out by his playing when I heard him on the radio – forthright and direct, if slightly lacking in refinement. On my resignation from the Philharmonia in May 1955, he was offered my place and went with the orchestra that summer on their tour of the USA with Karajan. Towards the end of this trip something happened that sent shock waves through the musical universe.

Peter Mountain goes on to tell the story as he heard it from Manoug Parikian. His version is available online here (sorry for such a long four-line link – copy and paste!):

<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=g53ou9tRJIC&pg=PA220&lpg=PA220&dq=%22Peter+Gibbs%22+%2B+violin&source=bl&ots=4rajq-sxFp&sig=AgLR7p53KSswm4maWRH5UwH3syE&hl=en&sa=X&ei=tvQtU4zkM9D07Aas7YHIBg&ved=0CC8Q6AEwATgK#v=onepage&q=%22Peter%20Gibbs%22%20%2B%20violin&f=false>

The Karajan story also appears elsewhere and on several websites, always with slightly different remembrances – some stronger than others, though the general gist is the same.

Karajan story as told by double bassist Robert Meyer:

<https://robertmeyer.wordpress.com/tag/bbc-music-magazine/>

As told by Peter Carter:

<http://petercarter.net/musicians/von-karajan-and-peter-gibbs/>

Also info at:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No.\\_41\\_Squadron\\_RAF](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No._41_Squadron_RAF)

And as told by Richard Osborne in *Herbert von Karajan: A Life in Music*, Random House, 1999, pages 395, 396. Also online at:



[http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=ah1fILD7uGAC&pg=PA396&lpg=PA396&dq=%22Peter+Gibbs%22+violin&source=bl&ots=OA-jM6G\\_y3&sig=dfHvEMkL12TUg9GOYXUvvyCBe-s&hl=en&sa=X&ei=tHo9U4LEEaaw7AaarIDQCw&ved=0CDYQ6AEwAzgK#v=onepage&q=%22Peter%20Gibbs%22%20violin&f=false](http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=ah1fILD7uGAC&pg=PA396&lpg=PA396&dq=%22Peter+Gibbs%22+violin&source=bl&ots=OA-jM6G_y3&sig=dfHvEMkL12TUg9GOYXUvvyCBe-s&hl=en&sa=X&ei=tHo9U4LEEaaw7AaarIDQCw&ved=0CDYQ6AEwAzgK#v=onepage&q=%22Peter%20Gibbs%22%20violin&f=false)

The following version is told by John Honeyman, another double bassist. It's from *Sing Low My Sweet Chariot, Memories of a Musical Foot-Soldier, 1947 to 1987* and the volume can be read in full at <http://www.allerton.org/johnhoneyman/memoirs.pdf>

This excerpt is from Chapters 22 and 23 of John Honeyman's book:

On the last part of the tour [eastern seaboard of the USA, November 1955] prior to our final concert in Boston we [the Philharmonia] played in one or two lesser venues – a couple being in converted swimming pools or a Town Hall where the acoustic left much to be desired. Karajan seemed to feel that these places were beneath him and at the end of these concerts he gave a particularly ungracious and abrupt reception to the applause.

There was a fine violinist called Peter Gibbs who had come as an extra. Peter had been a Battle of Britain fighter pilot so presumably had not much time for 'strop'py' Germans. Although normally a quiet, mild-mannered and gentlemanly chap he seemingly became particularly resentful of this behaviour by Karajan.

At the end of the rehearsal for the last concert in Boston, he stood up and in restrained and polite fashion asked 'Mr. Karajan' if he could address a few words to him. I immediately thought, what a good idea, instead of the 'Vote of thanks' coming from the leader, Manoug Parikian, as would have been normal, the address was to be made by a back-desk player. As Peter's quiet but firm speech went on we began to realise this was no eulogy but in fact a strong complaint and 'dressing down' of Karajan for his rude behaviour after the last two concerts which Peter pointed out had offended a number of his friends in the audience, who had looked forward to and made some effort to come to the concert. He finished by asking Karajan to offer an apology for his recent behaviour and sat down.

Karajan made his usual muttering and spluttering sound when at a loss and dismissed Gibbs with a shrug and indeterminate wave. Peter stood again and quietly said, 'I do not consider that that constitutes an apology, Mr. Karajan' whereupon Karajan stormed off and sent Jane Withers [the Philharmonia's Managing Director] back to the platform to announce that Karajan had instructed her, 'If that man played in the concert he would not conduct.'

The orchestra had an immediate impromptu meeting at which it was decided that there was a definite fault in Karajan's behaviour but that Peter could have chosen a more discreet method of showing his displeasure. Most of the members were beginning to regard Karajan's arrogance as more than tiresome so it was agreed that it would be left to Peter Gibbs to decide if he wished to take part in this last important concert and we would support his decision either way. He said he had contracted to do the tour so he would prefer to complete the engagement. This was relayed to Karajan who eventually conducted the concert in a normal and orderly fashion.

... The final chapter in the Karajan saga was as follows. Shortly after our return to London and again at a session in Kingsway Hall, we were told by [Walter] Legge that a letter had arrived from Karajan's solicitors in which he accused the orchestra of having 'gone on

strike' in Boston and insisting that all members should admit this and sign the enclosed document, which was in effect an abject apology to Karajan. A meeting was held at which various members expressed their opinion of this further example of Karajan's arrogance [including] Dennis Brain and other leading members including Manoug Parikian (who had bad flu but got out of his sick bed to express his objection to this unprecedented display of Prussian behaviour by Karajan). ... When Walter Legge tried to smooth things over and persuade the orchestra to sign I pointed out that we would be the laughing stock of the orchestral world if we signed this intolerable document. One could easily imagine Karajan sadistically framing it and hanging it like a trophy in the Musikvereinsaal.

The result was that it was returned to Karajan unsigned and without further comment although unbelievably there are always some creeps in every organisation, some of whom were prepared to sign. One (true to his normal form) said, when I remonstrated with him, 'Well, he brings us a lot of money.'

Karajan made no further reference to the matter, after all he had got what he wanted thanks to the Philharmonia. He simply issued a statement to the German press as follows: As he had now been appointed to the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonics, he no longer had time to work with foreign orchestras such as the Philharmonia.

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And there are other stories, such as this one told by Peter Mountain in his book *Scraping a Living: A Life of a Violinist*:

Peter [Gibbs] was a man who took risks all his life. Rodney Friend told me he used to sit with him on the second desk of the LSO. He often gave Peter a lift to concerts, and once, on the way to an Albert Hall engagement, they hit solid southbound traffic on the north side of Hyde Park, at the height of the evening rush hour.

"God!" said Rodney. "We're going to be late!"

"Move over," said Peter. "Let me drive."

He took the wheel, crossed into the right-hand carriageway, which was completely empty, sped through the Park and across Kensington Gore with the lights at red, and parked nonchalantly outside the Artists' Entrance.

Peter Carter, in his online blog tells another anecdote about Gibbs behaviour (the full version may be found at <http://petercarter.net/other/von-karajan-part-1/>, including another Gibbs story involving Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra and Karajan):

Peter Gibbs was a larger than life character ... full of amazing and terrifying stories of his adventures. He loved pranks and the American tour was full of incidents which I'm sure the general public wouldn't expect from a touring international orchestra.

Perhaps the most outrageous was somewhere in Ohio where we had stopped for a picnic lunch and had all been given large brown paper bags for our sandwiches. I became aware of Peter collecting grasshoppers which seemed to be in abundance where we were sitting. He filled the paper bag with them and though we all thought this a bit odd, we were by this time fairly used to Peter's slightly individual behaviour, gave it no more thought...

...until in the middle of the performance that evening (Beethoven 7) he suddenly produced the bag and emptied its contents on to the floor amongst the violinists. Fortunately the



grasshoppers were by this time quite soporific (they had been pretty lively when caught) but nevertheless the violin section was rather more concentrated on the floor than on von Karajan's beat.

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Peter Gibbs's name crops up again in a BBC Prom in the Royal Albert Hall in 1957. The concert was given by the LSO on 9 September 1957 at 7.30pm.

Heather Harper soprano  
Joyce Allen, piano,  
Maisie Balch, piano  
Dennis Clift, trumpet  
Peter Gibbs, violin  
Hugh Maguire violin  
Geraint Jones, organ  
London Symphony Orchestra, conductor Basil Cameron

Handel, arr. Elgar Chandos Anthem No.2, *In the Lord put I my trust*, HWV 247  
Bach Concerto for Two Keyboards in C minor, BWV 1060  
Bach Brandenburg Concerto No.3 in G major, BWV 1048  
Bach Cantata No. 51, *Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen!*, BWV 51  
Handel Concerto for Organ in F major, HWV 292, Op 4 No.4  
Handel arr. Harty Music for the Royal Fireworks, HWV 351  
Petrassi Concerto for Orchestra No.6 *Invenzione Concertata*  
Ravel Boléro

Peter Gibbs was the BBC Scottish Orchestra's Leader from 1960 to 1963. Peter Mountain in his autobiography recalled those times:

Peter was appointed leader of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra during the conductorship of Norman Del Mar. None of his colleagues there who remember him can speak too highly of his ability, although I suspect Norman found him pretty difficult to handle. During this time, he used his talents in property dealing to make a lot of money.

Bernard Keefe, Assistant Conductor of the BBC Scottish Orchestra, 1962-1964 (Norman Del Mar was then Principal Conductor), recalled that 'The leader was Peter Gibbs, former RAF pilot who still occasionally took to the air outside the studio. He had a strong section, crisp in rhythm and with acute intonation.'

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It's worth seeking out online the BBC Genome project which lists *Radio Times* billings across the years. Search for 'Peter Gibbs', ignoring the entries for Peter Gibbs, film editor, Peter Gibbs, weather forecaster, and Peter Gibbs, chairman of *Gardeners' Question Time*!

Around 1970 and 1971 Gibbs led the BBC Northern Ireland Orchestra (conducted then by Kenneth Alwyn); around 1971 and 1972 he led the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

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Across these years, Gibbs had been flying privately. He joined the Surrey Flying Club in June 1957 and then flew more-or-less continuously for the next 18 years. He bought a De Havilland DH.82A Tiger Moth. A photograph, reproduced below with kind permission, can be found at <http://www.abpic.co.uk/search.php?q=Peter%20Gibbs&u=operator>

The photograph was taken by Peter Fitzmaurice whose copyright it remains. The footnotes on the website of the Air-Britain Photographic Images Collection states: 'Had modified luggage locker to carry owner's violin. Crashed at Redhill, 20 December 1959.'



Photograph © Peter Fitzmaurice

Source: <http://www.abpic.co.uk/photo/1077708/>

Peter Mountain recalled that Morrison Dunbar, a prominent businessman, a keen violinist (a Stradivarius owner) and a moving spirit in Glaswegian musical affairs, once accepted Peter Gibbs's invitation to fly from Glasgow airport over Loch Lomond and the Trossachs. Once only.

'It immediately became clear that Peter was navigating solely by means of a small AA Handbook. When he got lost, he would fly down and take a quick look at the road signs!'

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Flying was also the cause of Peter Gibbs's premature death in December 1975.

Peter Mountain again:

Peter's sense of adventure was eventually to be his undoing. After he left Scotland, he came back for a visit with a girlfriend to spend Christmas on the Isle of Mull. They flew north, and landed on a small airstrip on the beach close to the hotel. Before too long he got bored.

Steve Brew, quoted in the *Wikipedia* article on 41 Squadron, takes up the story:

He took off for a brief flight in a Cessna from Glenforsa Airfield on the Isle of Mull in Scotland on Christmas Eve 1975, but failed to return. A search was mounted but no trace whatsoever could be found of him. Oddly, his body was found four months after his disappearance part way up a hill, approximately one mile from Glenforsa Airfield, without his aircraft, showing the signs of having lain there all that time.

The original search for Gibbs had passed through the area at the time he had gone missing, but nothing had been seen. His body gave away no clues as to his cause of death. Gibbs' missing Cessna bewildered officials and his case soon became known as the 'Great Mull Air Mystery'.

It was not until September 1986 – almost 11 years after Gibbs' death – that his aircraft was located in the sea off Oban. The aircraft's remains also gave up no clue as to the reason it was there. It can only be assumed that Gibbs, for some reason, came down in the sea and that he had managed to free himself and swim ashore. It is thought he then tried to make his way back to the airfield, around a mile away, but, considering the time of year, location, and likely temperatures of both the water and air, probably succumbed to the effects of exposure.

Violinist Peter Gibbs was 55 years old when his plane went missing on 24 December 1975.

His body was found in April 1976.

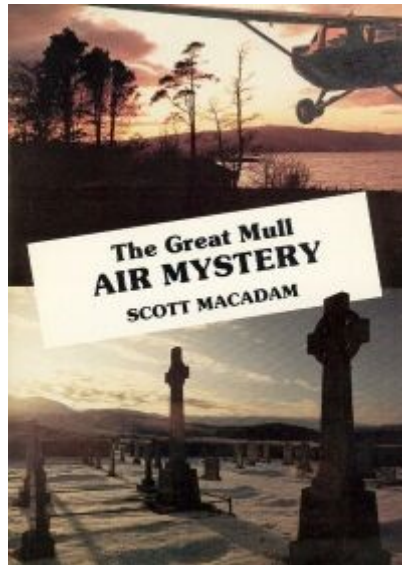
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In 1989 Jonathan Harvey wrote a nine-minute piece for violin and piano called *Flight Elegy* (1989). It was commissioned by the Brighton Festival with funds provided by South EastArts and first performed at St Bartholomew's Church, Brighton, by Irvine Arditti and Philip Mead on 8 May 1984.

Jonathan Harvey's programme note (<http://www.fabermusic.com/repertoire/flight-elegy-1152>) reads:

*Flight-Elegy* is an elegy for the RAF pilot and violinist Peter Gibbs. I knew him slightly when he was leader of the BBC Scottish Orchestra, in which I also played. He was extremely good-looking and rather fierce with conductors. He sometimes performed violin concertos and could, in the words of Norman Del Mar, 'play like an angel' though there occasionally manifested itself a strange erratic flaw. He remained passionately devoted to flying and would often take his plane to engagements. He rarely bothered with a map, but would dive down to read the road signs; in fact, he showed a lofty disregard for the laws of aviation, at times flying under bridges, etc. He died in mysterious circumstances. He took off at dusk in his plane from a remote sea-lochside spot in Western Scotland. He never returned. His body was later found without a scratch or trace of sea salt a few hundred yard inland. The plane was never found.

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This next, by David Howitt, is from <http://www.glenforsaairfield.co.uk/3.html>

A strange event took place on Christmas Eve 1975 that has become known as the Great Mull Air Mystery. Why on that evening after dinner, with his girlfriend and a bottle of wine, did hotel guest Peter Gibbs decide to take off and do a night circuit in a Cessna C150 G-AVTN? Why did his aircraft vanish, and his corpse turn up several months later 400ft up a hill within a couple of miles of the hotel?

Local writer Scott MacAdam has published a slim volume [*The Great Mull Air Mystery*, Staffa Press, 1985] giving the facts about this extraordinary happening. The event also inspired a surreal novel, *These Demented Lands*, by Oban author Alan Warner [Anchor Books, New York, 1998], in which the Glenforsa appears transparently disguised as the Drome Hotel. ...

For years after the tragedy, wild rumours abounded as to Peter Gibbs' motive in performing this apparently insane act. It was speculated that he was an agent of MI5, doing cloak-and-dagger work in Northern Ireland. He succeeded in flying over there, but his cover was broken and the terrorists (or whoever) murdered him, brought the body back, and dumped it on the hill as a grim warning to his superiors.

The body was not discovered till the following April. According to the pathologists' report as quoted in Scott MacAdam's book, its condition was '... entirely consistent with lying out there for a period of four months.' Also, there had been a huge land/air search of the area in the days following the disappearance which also drew a blank.

One wonders how much experience the pathologists had of bodies exposed for such periods. Supposing they had reported that its condition was not consistent with this period of exposure, what would the repercussions have been? Best to give the expected answer and allow the whole tragic affair to be quietly forgotten.

Also, forensic tests detected no salt or marine organisms in the body's clothing and boots. If he had crashed into the sea and swum ashore, some traces would remain in spite of heavy winter rainfall. But then, if he had crashed into the sea and was uninjured to the extent of being able to swim ashore, why would he cross the main road and stumble 400ft up the hill to die of exposure, when all he had to do was to follow the road back to the Hotel?



However, in September 1986, a clam diver working in the Sound of Mull, at a depth of some 100 feet, nearly a mile to the east on a direct approach to the (then) RWY26, discovered the wreckage of a light aircraft. But, instead of resolving the matter once and for all, the disposition of the aircraft indicated a considerable impact. The wings were found some distance away from the fuselage and both doors were still in the locked position. Escape from the aircraft could only have been through the shattered front perspex with a high likelihood of injury. The only occupant in the cockpit was a large lobster!

Speculation aside, the fact remains that the pilot performed an act of extreme foolhardiness; the motive for the flight will remain, perhaps forever unknown to us.

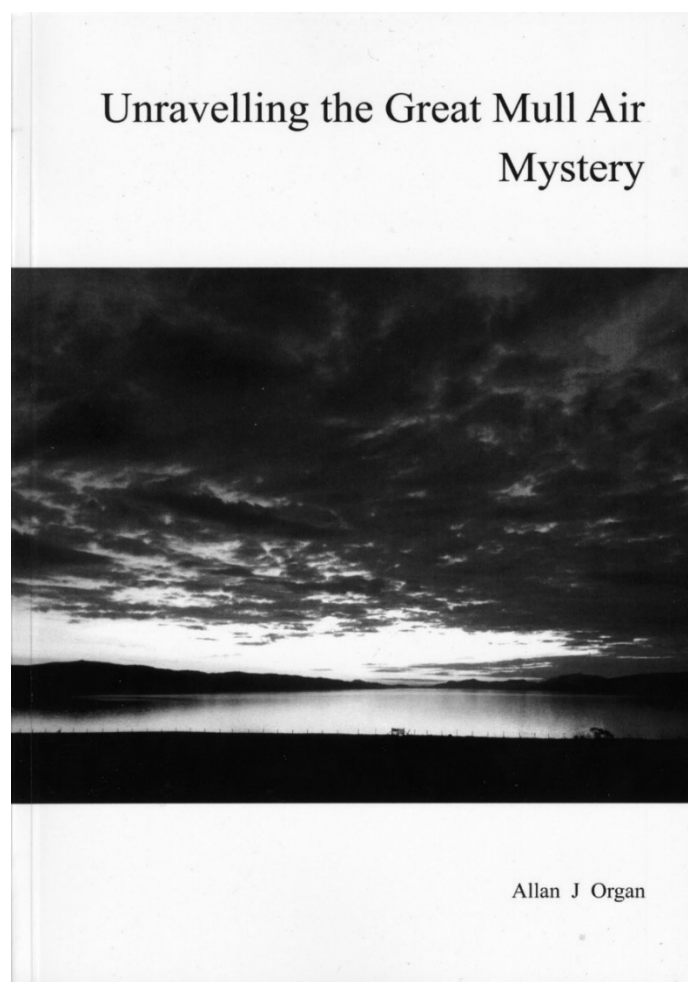
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Then, in June 2015, a new book was published: Allan J Organ, *Unravelling the Great Mull Air Mystery*.

It's 'Dedicated to the memory of Norman Peter Gibbs – musician, aviator, adventurer, animal-lover, inspiration' and provides a comprehensive examination of all the facts and possible explanations surrounding Peter Gibbs' tragic end.

The book is available from Tackle and Books, 6-8 Main Street, Tobermory PA75 6NU.

Contact details: <http://www.tackleandbooks.co.uk/index.html>

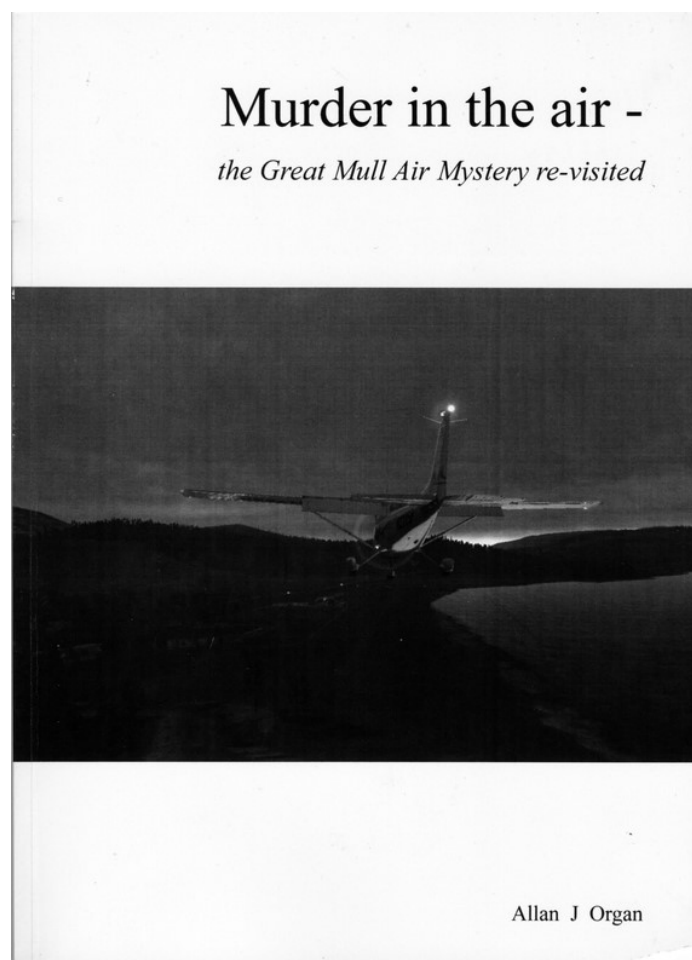


Finally, hot off the press, late in 2017, comes Allan J Organ's sequel volume, *Murder in the air – the Great Mull Air Mystery re-visited*.

Spoiler alert: its closing sentence reads, 'Sufficient circumstantial evidence exists to justify opening an investigation into *The Unlawful Killing of Norman Peter Gibbs*.'

Mr Organ ends the new book's preface with a request: 'A reader having the smallest scrap of information on, or recollection of, a gang murder in the vicinity of Oban around the year 1970 is asked to e-mail [the author] Allan J. Organ (email address supplied)'.

I await the next volume. And perhaps you too might be able to help?



Compiled by David Byers, 01 April 2014  
(with additions on 04 July 2015, 11 December 2017 and 30 July 2022).