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**Julian Budden, Verdi expert
and writer, has died**
March 13 2007

The writer, radio producer and Verdi expert Julian Budden has died, aged 82.

Best known for this three-volume study of Verdi's operas (published in 1973, 78 and 81 and now available as paperbacks from Clarendon Press), he also wrote Master Musician biographies of the composer as well as one of Puccini.

Budden went to school at Stowe before studying at Queen's College, Oxford and the Royal College of Music. He joined the BBC on leaving the RCM and was employed by the corporation for 32 years: he became a music producer in 1956 and then chief producer, opera in 1970. In 1976 he moved to the BBC World Service where he worked as organiser, BBC External Services until he took early retirement in 1983.

His books were translated into Italian and it was in Italy, outside Florence, that he settled on his retirement, continuing to lecture on opera both in English and Italian. He was widely acknowledged for his scholarship receiving a fellowship of the British Academy in 1987 and an OBE in 1991 for his services to opera. In 1997 he was made Presidente del Centro Studi Giacomo Puccini in Lucca.

His urbanity was much appreciated by colleagues and friends alike and beneath an exterior that could seem scatty and disorganised, lay a formidable intellect and a razor-sharp, inquisitive mind.

Born April 9, 1924; died February 28, 2007

James Jolly, Gramophone editor-in-chief

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