

keynotes.



The Newsletter of the North East of Scotland Music School

Issue No 20 • September 2011

Where are they now?

It's said that time flies when you're enjoying yourself but to find myself after ten years preparing the twentieth issue of *Keynotes* is almost disturbing, writes Neil Jones. Just where did the last decade disappear to?

Nevertheless, in celebration of *Keynotes'* tenth birthday, I thought it would be interesting to see what some of the students we mentioned in previous issues are currently up to.

Let's start with issue number one, back in February, 2002. Although our front page story was about Joseph Long's new CD of early 20th Century romantic piano sonatas, strictly speaking he doesn't count as he was already a tutor at the time!

But there were plenty of 'real' students in those early issues. People like singer Colin Brockie, who completed an MMus in June and who will be starting a Postgraduate Diploma in solo performance (PGDip) in a few weeks time. "I'll be continuing with Stuart MacIntyre as my singing teacher and will be in the December RNCM opera *Albert Herring* playing Superintendent Budd," Colin reports.

And Samantha Pearce who has recently finished four years at the Royal Academy of Music (RAM) in London and graduated with First Class Honours and was awarded the Chris Taylor flute prize. She will start a Masters course in Cologne, Germany in October, studying with Robert Winn at the Hochschule für Musik und Tanz.

"During my time at RAM I have been lucky enough to play principal flute with many of the Academy's orchestras, performing under Sir Simon Rattle, Leif Segerstam and Yan Pascal Tortelier" she reports "Other



Violinist, Alan John

opportunities included playing with the London Sinfonietta under George Benjamin, a recording workshop with the BBC Concert Orchestra and performing in masterclasses to Emily Beynon and Emmanuel Pahud.

"Also in my last year I won first prize in the Academy's 'All Flutes Plus Flute Prize' 2010 and also won the chance to perform Ibert's flute concerto with RAM Concert Orchestra in May 2011. I have been playing in a flute and guitar duo for the charity Live Music Now, and recently played period flute with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment within the Ann and Peter Law Orchestral Experience."

In addition, Samantha was recently awarded a Philharmonia Orchestra/ Martin Musical

Scholarship towards her post-graduate studies. The award includes the opportunity to perform recitals around London including St.Margaret's Westminster Abbey and at the Royal Festival Hall in April 2012. "I'm very excited about this," she says.

Another student to feature in early issues of *Keynotes* was violinist, Alan John. Alan went on to the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (RSAMD) where he earned a First before going on to postgraduate studies. He has now completed just completed his first year with the Royal Scottish national Orchestra (RSNO).

"Following an audition I was offered a trial that lasted about 10 months. I was then offered a position in the first violins just before summer last year," Alan reports. "I've already played at the BBC Proms, in Luxembourg, Paris, Munich, Vienna, Belgrade, Leipzig and all over Scotland. I've thoroughly enjoyed my first year with the RSNO and look forward to many more." Alan has also recently married, to a fellow RSAMD student, Fiona, who was studying on the contemporary performance practice course.

A complete family – or, at least, the children thereof – who also *continues on page 2*

“NESMS played a big part in the musical education of our children and we are delighted that the same opportunities continue for others today.”

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About the School

Providing the highest standards of advanced tuition for promising musicians

The School provides a centre where young people of outstanding musical promise can obtain tuition which is not available within their existing framework of study. Any musically talented child, student, teacher or lay person living in Scotland may apply for an audition to the School.

TUITION

Internationally acclaimed professors and teachers are brought to Aberdeen on a regular basis from all over the British Isles.

COURSES

The School offers one-to-one teaching together with occasional workshops and masterclasses. There is a close relationship with the University of Aberdeen, through the Director of Music, and also with Aberdeen City Music School in Dyce.

FINANCE

Finance is generously provided by trusts, commercial organisations and individuals. Continued support is essential in order to maintain the high quality of the teaching programme. The Administrator will be pleased to assist with all enquiries about donations, sponsorship or scholarships.

FEES & SCHOLARSHIPS

Students pay their own fees, although scholarships are available and are applied for annually. Any award is made on a balance of musical potential and financial need.

DOROTHY HATELY

Dorothy founded NESMS in 1975 with the support and encouragement of Lady Aberdeen. Thanks to Dorothy's dogged determination over the years, the School has greatly increased its teaching disciplines, tutors and pupils. Sadly, Dorothy died in 1996, before she could see the School in its own premises in Huntly Street. However, we strive to maintain the high standards she set and intend to take the School from strength to strength.

NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND MUSIC SCHOOL

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THE ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP CONCERT PRESENTED BY THE FRIENDS OF THE NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND MUSIC SCHOOL CRAIGIEBUCKLER CHURCH

FRIDAY, 3 JUNE 2011

The annual Scholarship Concert in Craigiebuckler Church presented by the Friends of NESMS brought together the four NESMS Scholarship holders in a joyful cavalcade of musical contrasts that showcases the finest young talents currently benefiting from the top flight teaching and inspiration available at NESMS. The wonderfully varied programme was supported by one of Aberdeen's finest accompanists, Drew Tulloch and with violinist Freya Hall also making a special guest appearance in one of the items.

Kay Ritchie is probably the most experienced of the four musicians. It was no surprise then to hear a performance that in addition to its consummate technical proficiency was a little masterclass in wonderfully mature musical expression. Handel's Sonata in F for flute was played with matchless elegance and élan, especially the Siciliana while the Rondeau from Mozart's Flute Concerto No.2 in D, K314 was delightfully bright and playful. Most intriguing of all however was John Purser's Piobaireachd for unaccompanied flute also nicknamed Wai Taheke meaning Falling Water.

There was also a powerful element of atmosphere and visual colour in Richard Bailey's performance of the three pieces that make up Debussy's Estampes: Pagodes, La Soirée dans Grenade and Jardins sous

la Pluie. Richard's playing was strong and intense when required but with enough nuance to conjure up the three "postcards" as Richard called them in his introduction.

Soprano Megan Campbell has a delicate and ethereal quality to her singing that was particularly well suited to her performances of Purcell's Hark! The Echoing Air and Bach's Aria, Auch mit gedämpften, schwachen Stimmen from Cantata 36/1. Her diction especially in the Purcell was beautifully clean and clear and the fluency of her singing in the Baroque style was excellent. It was in the Bach Aria that she was accompanied on violin by Freya Hall who also played Bach's marvellous flight of fancy with remarkable freedom and fluency.

These were all prime performances but for me the one that really stole the show was given by thirteen year old clarinettist Emma Barnett. Over a spectacularly wide range of musical styles from the smooth flowing rivers of English melody in Finzi's Prelude and Romance from Five Bagatelles to the classical elegance of the Czech composer Krommer or the lavish romanticism of Saint-Saëns she demonstrated finely honed control across the whole range of her instrument.

Jenny Shirreffs quite rightly described in her closing remarks this as the best Scholarship Concert yet.



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featured in early issues of *Keynotes* were the Colemans; Jessica, Jeremy and Timothy. Jessica currently attends Chethams School of Music in Manchester and will be auditioning in November for a place to study violin at music college starting 2012, although at this stage she doesn't know which one.

Timothy is about to enter his last year as an undergraduate at Merton College, Oxford studying Politics Philosophy and Economics. He isn't lost to music, however, as he sings in the college chapel choir and is

playing his cello in the college orchestra whilst, last year, also acting as orchestral manager.

And Jeremy, having completed a music degree at Cambridge, will start as a post-graduate musicology student at Kings College, London, in October, working towards a PhD over the next three years.

Proud father, Richard – who still has occasional singing lessons at NESMS with Alan Watt, says: "NESMS played a big part in the musical education of our children and we are delighted that the same opportunities continue for others today."

Current students not short of ambition

Whilst reflecting on the high standards achieved by NESMS students over the past 20 issues of *Keynotes*, with more than a few going on to professional music careers, that high standard of music and keen ambition is being matched by the current crop of students – students like 24 year old Richard Bailey.

He reports: “My lessons at NESMS with Nigel Clayton over the last few years have been thoroughly enjoyable and inspirational and I owe so much to NESMS for the scholarships they provided.

in helping me achieve this.”

Two other current NESMS students both set on music careers are the brother and sister, Iain and Freya Hall. Fifteen-year-old Iain, who is in his fifth year at school,

Scottish Academy of Music and Drama.

Cellist Megan Rolf reports that she is in her fifth year at Inverurie Academy studying advanced higher music, and hopes to take a gap year after her final year at school. “During this year I will prepare for my auditions for conservatoires as my ultimate goal is to become a solo cellist,” says Megan. “At the moment I am studying at NESMS with James Halsey and I intend to do this for the next three years.

“I enjoy giving solo performances and also working in small ensembles and cello orchestras. I spend a few weeks in the summer holidays each year on cello courses, which are the best weeks of the holidays! Music is my passion.”



Richard Bailey

“For the next two years, I will be studying for a masters degree in accompaniment at the Birmingham Conservatoire. I look forward to collaborating with other musicians whilst at the conservatoire and to forming some long lasting musical collaborations. In five years time, I would like to be involved in a piano trio and continue to perform in solo recitals. It’s been my dream to have a career in music and the support from NESMS has been instrumental

hopes that in five years time he’ll be finishing a music degree in London. “Somewhere that I can study performance on both cello and recorder,” he says, “and looking for somewhere to continue my studies elsewhere in Europe. In ten years I hope to be finishing off my studies and establishing a career in baroque chamber music performing abroad and in Britain.”

Sister Freya, who’s only 13, reckons ten years is too far to look ahead but in five years hopes to be studying music at the Royal



Megan Rolf

Every little helps!

For an organisation that relies almost completely on donations, every single pound is important. Derek Buchan, chair of NESMS’s Finance and Development Committee and head of Private Client Services at Deloitte’s Aberdeen office, offers some advice on how to make the most of your charitable giving.

Although giving to charity can take several forms, probably the best known way of maximizing the impact is through the Gift Aid system: rightly so as it’s easy to operate and very tax efficient.

Gift Aid increases the value of donations to charities by allowing them to reclaim basic rate tax of 25p in the pound on your gift. And if you pay higher rate tax you can even claim extra relief on your donations!

If you support or would like to support the School or its sister charity, The Friends of NESMS, and you pay tax and have not yet signed up to the Gift Aid scheme please ask Joan Thomas at the School for the appropriate form.

Gift Aid is not the only way of maximizing your giving, however. Leaving a legacy through your will is another – and sometimes overlooked – way of benefitting a charity you have supported during your life and helping it with its future work.

When was the last time you reviewed your will? It tends to be something that people put off, but having an up-to-date will is important to ensure that your

estate does pass to your beneficiaries in the way you want it to. Charitable legacies have tax benefits too because they are free of Inheritance Tax at 40% which currently applies to estates worth, broadly speaking, £325,000. (That may seem a lot but remember it includes the value of any property you might own so, even with today’s depressed property market, it’s a level that’s reached quite easily!) For anyone feeling particularly charitably minded, there is the likelihood of a reduced tax rate of 36% from next April if 10% or more of an estate is left to charity.

So the next time you are speaking to your solicitor about your will or are perhaps drawing one up for the first time, would you please think about the School and how a legacy might help it in future years? The School need not know if you decide to do this but if you wished, your legacy could be used to fund a particular part of the School’s work, in which case you might like to discuss this further with Joan.

Finally, if you are an employee, does your employer operate a Give as You Earn Scheme? This is another tax efficient scheme and an easy way to donate as a tax free payment comes off your gross salary every month and goes straight to the charity of your choice. You might hardly notice the difference but to charities like NESMS, the benefits can be invaluable. Do please check this out with your employer’s payroll department.

Tutors at the School

as at April 2011

STRINGS

Violin	Gillian Findlay
Viola	Michael Beeston
Cello	James Halsey
Double Bass	David Inglis

WOODWIND

Flute	Catherine O’Rourke
Oboe	Joe Houghton
Clarinet	Alison Waller
Bassoon	Lesley Wilson
Recorder	Ian Wilson

BRASS

Trumpet	John Gracie
Horn	Lizzie Davis

PIANO

Nigel Clayton	Joseph Long
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SCOTTISH FIDDLE

Paul Anderson

SINGING

Raimund Herinx	Alan Watt
Ruth Black	Alison McDonald
	Jean Webster

STAGECRAFT & PERFORMANCE

Donald Maxwell

ORGAN

Dr Roger B. Williams
Donald Hawksworth

Forthcoming events

COWDRAY HALL

LUNCHBREAK CONCERT
12.45PM ON THURSDAY
20TH OCTOBER

Young NESMS students will perform. Do please try to come along to support our young students. A varied programme, played by Megan Rolf, cello, Iain Hall, cello and recorder, and Freya Hall, violin and recorder, awaits you. There is no admission fee, but donations towards the Lunchbreak Series are welcome. Light lunchtime refreshments are on sale.

FRIENDS OF NESMS COFFEE MORNING

SATURDAY 29TH OCTOBER,
10-12 NOON, IN THE SCHOOL

Don’t miss the Friends Annual Coffee Morning! A chance to catch up with your friends and buy the NESMS Christmas Card. All the usual stalls and musical entertainment too!

KEYNOTES AUCTION LUNCH

SUNDAY 6TH NOVEMBER,
AT THE MARCLIFFE AT PITFODELS

Your invitation is enclosed, so don’t delay – apply for your tickets today. This year our musical entertainment will be provided by The Ifor James Brass Ensemble, and as usual, Peter Mitchell will be our Master of Ceremonies.

PLAY-A-THON

SATURDAY 19TH NOVEMBER,
IN THE SCHOOL

The Friends of NESMS have agreed to run this popular event again. We will aim to have music played all day, so dust off your favourite pieces and get your family and friends to sponsor you. Please don’t be modest – we all want to hear you! Further information will be sent to you, but feel free to get in touch with the school for more information.

Pedal Power

John Ritchie, a member of the Finance and Development Committee, recently put both feet forward (or, more accurately, up and down) for NESMS by cycling from the Linn of Dee to Duthie Park in Aberdeen, raising around £900 for the school.

John reports that he's something of an occasional cyclist so the 65 miles was a substantial challenge, generally downhill or not! "I've had mountain bikes over the years and used them for exercise and for accessing the hills when walking. It cuts down some long walks-in and out," he says.

"But I was brought up in Brechin right on the edge of the country so in the 60s the only way to get around was by bike. Once I had a car though I stopped until we bought a bike when my daughter Kay was small and I decided it would be good to cycle with her on the old Deeside railway line.

"That got me cycling again and over the years I've done a couple of mountain bike challenges in the Cairngorms (100km events) and the Muggies Monster Bike and Hike, all for charity."

John's route for his NESMS ride was by road from Linn of Dee to Braemar and then to Crathie, where he persuaded one of the Metropolitan Policemen at Balmoral Castle gates to take a photo, then down the South Deeside Road and back over the river by the Polhollick Bridge. From there he went on the North Deeside Road to the Pass of Ballater and through it and onto the old railway line (Deeside Way) to Aboyne. From Aboyne it was back onto the North Deeside Road to Banchory and thence on the Deeside Way.

"I did have a great support team as my wife, Catherine, took me



to Linn of Dee in the morning by car and she and Kay came to meet me with sandwiches at Aboyne. Catherine met up with me again at Milton of Crathes and collected me at Duthie Park as I really wasn't up for the three mile cycle home at that point!" John says.

"Perhaps the best bit – other than the finish – was the old railway line that comprises the bulk of the Deeside Way. It goes away from the road a bit near Dinnit and that was really bonny with heather and birch trees and complete silence. Seeing it at cycling pace rather than from a car, and smelling the heather and fir trees, was a real treat."

John concludes by saying: "I was very grateful to all who so generously sponsored me and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank them very much indeed."



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LOTTERY FUNDED

Keynotes is produced for the North East of Scotland Music School

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