

# keynotes

The Newsletter

of the North East of Scotland Music School

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## Keeping it in the family

Eleven of the North East of Scotland Music School's younger students have gained places in the National Children's Orchestra of Scotland – and three families have more than one of their children involved.

The orchestra, which is sponsored by insurance giant, Standard Life, will meet for a series of residential rehearsal weekends before giving a public performance at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall on 6th April under the baton of Julian Clayton.

What's more, three of the string pupils have been chosen to travel to China with a 22-strong string ensemble from the orchestra in July.



*Timothy Coleman (cello), Joe Boyd (horn), Jessica Coleman (violin), Jeremy Coleman (trumpet), Rachel Watson (cello), Alyson Boyd (oboe), Julia Maxwell (viola), and Naomi Watson (violin).*



*China bound: Julia Maxwell (viola), Jessica Coleman (violin), Naomi Watson (violin).*

Joan Thomas, the School's administrator, says she is delighted at the large number of students who have been chosen by the Orchestra. "It's a ringing endorsement of the quality of the youngsters we have and it's even more gratifying that we have a number of very talented families who are providing

more than one of the musicians," suggests Joan. "And for three of our string students to be chosen for the China trip – from 22 in the whole of Scotland – also says much about our commitment to excellence."

The three students chosen for the China trip are Naomi Watson and Jessica Coleman

(violins) and Julia Maxwell (viola). All three say they are excited about visiting and playing in China. They will perform at the Tianjin International Children's Culture and Arts Festival – the first group of any kind from the UK to be invited to perform at the Festival.

Naomi and her sister Rachel, a cellist, make up one of the three family 'partnerships'. Jessica and her brothers, Jeremy (trumpet) and Timothy (cello) are the second and Alyson and Joe Boyd (oboe and horn respectively) the third.

The National Children's Orchestra of Scotland was established in 1996 and provides talented 8 to 14 year old children with orchestral and instrumental tuition and performing opportunities that complement the work of local authorities and instrumental teachers in Scotland.

The North East of Scotland Music School is sponsored by:

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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 and Europe.

### 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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**President:** Dr Neil Mackie

**Administrator:** Joan Thomas

# Doctor James, I Presume!

One of the School's longest serving tutors, the legendary horn player, Ifor James, has been awarded a doctorate by The Robert Gordon University for services to music.

Ifor has taught at the School for over 20 years and made his latest visit during December when he also collected his doctorate in a ceremony at The Music Hall.

Nine of Ifor's pupils are now professors at music colleges around the world.

Unfortunately, a health problem means that for this term Ifor will not making the journey from Freiburg in Germany, where he has lived since 1980, when he became

Professor of Horn and Brass Chamber Music at the Staatliche Hochschule fur Musik in the city.

Well over 100 of his pupils – including several from NESMS – have become professional musicians, with 31 of them currently principal horn players with orchestras not only in England but in Germany, Switzerland, Scandinavia, the U.S.A., Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. Nine are now professors at music colleges around the world, two are the principals of German music colleges and a further six have solo careers. It could be said that Ifor has pretty much single handedly fostered a whole generation or two of horn players!

Ifor said after the award

ceremony: "Today was made the more special because I was able to receive it in Aberdeen. I love this city. It was really something special. Today was like a dream."



Dr. Ifor James, at his graduation in December.

## School Pianos

The School has for the last 7 years had the use of a splendid Bluthner grand piano and recently concluded long and protracted negotiations to buy the instrument for what School Vice chairman, Barbara McFarlane, describes as a very reasonable price.

"The piano came to the School by a somewhat convoluted route," explains Barbara. "It originally belonged to Aberdeen piano teacher, Gina Dallas Harper who, on her death left it to her sister Molly.

Molly in turn left it to her nephew Robert Brown. Robert didn't really have anywhere to keep it – he was often away travelling and so welcomed the fact that we could provide a loving home for it.

"However, last year his circumstances changed and he intimated that he would quite like his piano back. We were faced, therefore, with the prospect of either buying a new one, finding a previously owned replacement, or buying Robert's. The first two options

"I'm delighted it's now properly in the School's possession."

would have been very costly – perhaps more than our entire school running costs for a year – so being able to buy the piano from him has lifted a huge worry from us."

Since the purchase the Scottish consultant and technician for Steinway & Sons, Norman Motion, has undertaken remedial work on the piano, including replacing the hammerheads, toning the hammers and rebushing the keys. Norman says: "The piano is quite old but has an excellent sound quality and is very well built. It made far more sense for

the School to spend a modest amount of money on refurbishing the Bluthner rather than a lot of money replacing it with a poorer quality instrument."

One of the School's outstanding piano students, Derek Buchan, originally learnt to play with Gina on this very same piano.

"I recall Gina having it overhauled but she didn't think it was quite right," says Derek. "So I hurried down to Burns Road to play it for her and assure her it was fine!" Derek recalls. "I then came to NESMS through a chance meeting with Barbara and it was certainly a bonus when I realised that I would be playing on the Bluthner again. I'm delighted it's now properly in the School's possession." Since becoming a NESMS pupil Derek has worked with Nigel Clayton and has taken an ABRSM Diploma in performance to add to his existing LRAM.

Derek will be giving a recital at the School in aid of the instrument fund on Saturday, 13th March. The programme will feature the Beethoven Sonata Opus 110, Debussy Images (Book 2) and works by Mozart, Chopin and Liszt.



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# Tutor profile – David Nicholson



Flute tutor, David Nicholson, was born and educated in Newcastle-upon-Tyne but, after studying flute at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama under the guidance of Geoffrey Gilbert, made his musical and private life in Scotland.

As a founder member and – for the first 26 years of its existence – principal flautist of the renowned Scottish Chamber Orchestra, he helped forge the orchestra's not inconsiderable international reputation and participated in almost every one of the band's 130 recordings.

David has been a frequent soloist with the orchestra, playing Bach, Vivaldi, Stamitz, Mozart and Nielsen. In 1991 he premiered and recorded the concerto written for him by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies. He has also appeared as a partner in double concertos with Jean-Pierre Rampal,

Aurele Nicolet and James Galway.

But it's teaching as well as performing that David enjoys. "I've been on the teaching staff of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama for over 40 years," he told *Keynotes* on one of his monthly visits to the School. "Not to mention my visits here for the last 25 years which are always enjoyable – the enthusiasm and talent of the students is tremendous. The whole School is a brilliant concept, with high quality tutors, many of whom seem to have been with the School for many years. Whether I'm high quality is not for me to say – but I have been teaching here for 25 years so I guess I can't be that bad!"

"I can't honestly remember how I was drawn into the School web. It might have been an introduction by June, Lady Aberdeen or directly by

Dorothy Hatley – or maybe both. But the School consistently finds and nurtures outstanding talent – just recently they asked me to listen to an eleven-year-old who has real potential. That's exactly what they should be doing."

David also runs an Edinburgh summer school and teaches every year at Lake Placid in the States and his pupils have been members of, or have worked regularly with, most of the main UK orchestras, from the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra in the south to all the Scottish orchestras via everything in between.

A recording artist in his own right, David's latest CD is Music from the North Lands with harpist Eluned Pierce. The CD features the work of a number of contemporary composers including Edward McGuire, David Horne, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Toru Takemitsu and Adrian Shaposhnikov.

David lives in Fife but also has a converted church hall on Orkney where he indulges his other passions of dog walking, cooking and bird watching. He is a keen ornithologist and, as we went to press, was heading off for a week's 'twitching' in Spain.

## Hugh Bean, the consummate professional

We are sad to report that Hugh Bean, one of the School's tutors during the 1980s, died on Boxing Day last year. Hugh was a friend of, a huge influence on, and of great importance to our current violin tutor, Gillian Findlay who writes:-

"Hugh was one of the finest violinists and orchestral leaders of his generation and had two periods as a leader with the Philharmonia Orchestra, the first from 1957 to 1967 and then in 1990 to 1994. He was appointed Leader Emeritus in that year. He also led the BBC Symphony Orchestra from 1967 to 1969.

"He began playing the

violin at the age of five. Then, from age nine to his 20's he studied with the great Albert Sammons with whom he became close friends. His professional career started in 1951 after his National Service when he served in the Grenadier Guards. By then he was already a consummate player and became known as 'The Cat-Gut Grenadier'.

"After his army service, he took second prize in the Carl Flesch competition and that started a professional career that extended until shortly before his death. He was veteran of more than 90 overseas tours with the Philharmonia and an

inspirational teacher. He was professor of violin at the Royal College of Music for 37 years and taught here at the School for several years.

"Away from music Hugh was a keen modeller, making model aircraft and trains. Indeed, he had a 4.5-inch gauge railway at the bottom of his garden, with a self-built model of the Duchess of Buccleuch locomotive that could haul two adults!"

Hugh leaves a wife and daughter.

**HUGH BEAN, VIOLINIST AND TEACHER, 1929 – 2003.**

## Tutors at the School

as at January 2004

### STRINGS

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

### WOODWIND

Flute David Nicholson  
Flute Catherine O'Rourke  
Oboe Anne Rankin  
Clarinet Alison Waller  
Bassoon Lesley Wilson

### BRASS

Trumpet John Gracie  
Horn Ifor James

### PIANO

Nigel Clayton  
Joseph Long  
Tom Johnston

### GUITAR

Gilbert Biberian

### SINGING

Raimund Herincx  
Alan Watt  
Ruth Black  
Alison McDonald  
Jean Webster

### STAGECRAFT & PERFORMANCE

Donald Maxwell

## Forthcoming events

### Piano Recital

given by Derek Buchan  
Saturday 13th March 2004 at  
the school 7pm for 7.30pm  
Tickets £10 each to include  
wine and nibbles  
This concert is in aid of the  
School's Instrument Fund  
Tickets are strictly limited so call  
the school (01224-649685)  
and book now!

Friends' Annual Gourmet Evening  
Thursday 25th March at Aberdeen  
College, Gallowgate 6.30 p.m.  
Tickets £26 each from  
Jenny Shirreffs: 01224-321998  
Drinks reception, dinner and  
entertainment

### FRIENDS' FERRYHILL CONCERT SERIES

Thursday 1st April, 7.30 p.m.  
"Song and Wind"  
an evening with  
Christopher Lund – horn,  
Moira Docherty – soprano  
Colin Brockie – baritone  
Tickets £6 from the School  
(01224-649685) or  
at the door on the night

Summer term – date and venue  
to be advised  
Gilbert and Sullivan concert

Autumn term – date to be advised  
Recital with David Nicholson, flute

Comper: Neil Meldrum

## Recent events

The Friends of NESMS Concert Series continued into the autumn last year with a delightful evening on Thursday 9th October.

The concert was billed as "Ifor James and Friends", but unfortunately Ifor was unable to travel over to Scotland, but nonetheless we enjoyed a fascinating evening of horn music and singing. Ifor's former pupil, Christopher Lund, will Entertain again at Ferryhill Church on Thursday 1st April.

The last Friends concert of the Series, Mondschein auf Loch Lomond, with Donald Hawthorn and Sally Garden on 20th November, was an evening of music inspired by the Scottish muse. The programme included items by Haydn, Alexander Mackenzie and Hamish MacCunn.

As ever, the Friends Coffee Morning held in the School in October was a great success. The usual stalls were well patronised, and pupils from the School provided musical entertainment.

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Keynotes is produced for the North East of Scotland Music School

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## Auction

The Keynotes auction lunch last November raised over £3,000 through the sale of some interesting donated items, including a private sightseeing plane flight, a piece of modern jewellery by Malcolm Appleby, an Alison Ewan painting and a framed autograph of composer, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies. The lunch, attended by 80 supporters and friends, took place at the Caledonian Hotel who also kindly donated a night's accommodation as part of an 'evening out in Aberdeen' that was also auctioned.

The money raised will be used in part to fund this year's issues of the Keynotes

newsletter with the balance going to the instrument fund. "Keynotes is now an essential part of the way we communicate with our students, tutors, Friends and helpers as well as our funders," says Nicky Bradford, chair of the Fundraising and Development Committee. I'm certain that the professionalism of the newsletter does assist us in our negotiations with local government and the trust funds that support us."

*Musical accompaniment for the auction was provided by Catriona Schaupp and Derek Buchan, both pupils of the School.*



## Ifor's Friends

The horn players at the Ifor and Friends concert were Marshall Halliday and Christopher Lund and the singers were Moira Docherty, Alison McDonald, Pat Smith, Marjorie Willox, Ruth Black, Carole Addison, Roisin Jack, Ros Grant, and Mandy McDonald. The conductor and compere was Neil Meldrum.

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## Space cadet!

School flute pupil Kay Ritchie proved she's not just a talented musician when she was one of only 25 students from across Scotland to be selected to attend the Space School at Houston, Texas.

During their trip the students visited NASA to learn about the American space programme. Kay also featured as spokesperson for the group during TV coverage seen here in the UK.

## Indian winter

School piano tutor, Joseph Long, beat the winter blues by heading off on an intensive concert tour of India, playing Calcutta, Delhi, Bombay, Bangalore, and Poona. He even found time to take a few days holiday.

"Despite it being quite a tight schedule, it was a very enjoyable trip," says Joseph. "Mind you, it started quite stressfully as I arrived in Calcutta at 4.00 am on the morning I was performing!"