



friends of the **martyn donaldson** music trust

Newsletter 2 | January 2003

Happy New Year to all our Friends!

Welcome to our second newsletter. In the last six months there has been a lot of activity and the newsletter will fill you in on the latest developments. There are also some articles telling you more about the organisations the Trust was set up to support.

We are delighted to tell you that the amount raised since Sept 2002 comes to the magnificent sum of £14,500! This is an excellent start and we are now looking forward to bringing you news of exactly how your contributions are actively helping young people in the Macclesfield community, the UK and in Africa.

We hope you enjoy reading the newsletter and welcome any comments or suggestions for future articles. We look forward to seeing you at some of our fund-raising events in 2004.

With best wishes,

Stephanie Corfield
Jane Maric

Friends Scheme co-ordinators

FIRST MDMT JAZZ AWARD GOES TO...

It was a beautiful July day in 2003 and half the trusty trustees (and their offspring represented by *Ruben Maric*) travelled south and ventured into the heart of London town. As we approached the world famous Royal Festival Hall on the banks of the Thames we could hear music wafting towards us and, as we got closer, coming through every door, behind every wall and under every chair. We had come to listen to the annual National Festival of Music for Youth, Europe's biggest music event for young people. This is a week long 'happening' with music of every description performed by children as young as 5 and as grown up as 21! Today was for senior jazz bands from schools and music centres in England and Wales.

Many of the groups warmed up for their performance in the Hall by entertaining the large crowds of spectators in the sunshine on the terraced area overlooking the river. The energy and buzz created by these youngsters reverberated off the 1950's concrete surroundings creating a carnival atmosphere and this before they even got on stage! It reminded me of the times when All Hallows School Choir had taken part in the Choral Day at the National Festival and we had received the Highly Commended and Outstanding Performance awards. Our star 'prize' was to be invited to sing at the Schools Proms later in the year in the Royal Albert Hall with Mr D conducting and Bob Holness from 'Blockbusters' and Richard Stilgoe compering and 'good lucking' us back stage. I had to sing the solo in Stanford's 'Bluebird' in front of an audience of 3,000 and managed it even if I did add a few of my own interpretive shakes to the performance!

So, back to this trip. Having being shown to our VIP seats, the trusty trustees and Ruben prepared to be amazed and we were not disappointed. It really was something special. There were loads of young people on stage

playing with such personality, confidence and ease that someone should have called the police! There were just far too many underage jazz musicians in one place! Some of the solo playing was quite breathtaking, especially the saxes and keyboard players from the Queen Elizabeth Grammar School in Wakefield - all genuine improvisation free from the black dots!

It was brilliant to see so many young musicians really feeling the music and enjoying themselves on stage. As a listener, you couldn't fail but join in with clapping, tapping, grinning or head bobbing, - the music simply demanded it. The instruction in the programme to 'refrain from applauding in between items to avoid running over-time' was happily ignored by one and all.

When it was time for the adjudication representatives of each band took to the stage and were given certificates to mark the occasion. However, **The Outstanding Performance Award** sponsored by the Martyn Donaldson Music Trust was presented to the Abraham Darby School Jazz Band from Telford in Shropshire, a band we hadn't heard play as it was a 'morning' band and we only arrived at midday. Our very own *Stephanie Corfield* made the presentation and gave a fantastic speech in 2 mins flat about MDMT, about Martyn's involvement in Music for Youth and his passion for all kinds of music - especially jazz. As she quite rightly pointed out, why isn't this brilliant showcase of the best of young Britannia headline news and celebrated in all the national tabloids and broadsheets and where were the TV cameras??

We strongly recommend a day out at next year's event in the second week of July to all MDMT Friends to see what a magnificent enterprise you are helping to support. There's a good café or two close by and our day ended with big fat cake eating activities in the café (double portions for Mr D).

P.S. MDMT hope to invite The Abraham Darby School Jazz Band to give us a concert in Macclesfield in June/July. Details later.

Lis Murphy



Stephanie Corfield presents the Outstanding Performance Award at the National Festival of Music for Youth 2003.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS IN 2003

A **Quiz Night** at The Waters Green, hosted by **Steve Berwick** made £100, the retiring collection on Good Friday after the performance of **Mozart's Requiem** made £1524, Easter Sunday's '**Maccstock**' at **Cuban Knights** brought in £1512, £200 was donated by the **Macc Methodist Church Stewards' Coffee Fund**, Royal London Insurance donated the proceeds of **Dress Down Day** totalling £250, the **Youth Fellowship** at Macc Methodist Church held a Coffee Morning which raised £308, a lunchtime concert featuring the staff of the **Concert Office at Birmingham Conservatoire** made £469.



Bollington Brass Band performed in June and made £885, a reunion of **NCH** staff donated £50, **Dudley Piano Competition** donated £25, programme/raffle ticket sales from **Carolyn's**

Dancing Show brought in £225, the **Ladies Circle at Macc Methodist Church** donated £100, **Hot Bananas** performed at Aborigines and made £300, '**Martyn's Music**' took place in September and the proceeds amounted to £1701, a concert at **Central Methodist Church, Dudley** the following week brought in £403, in October retiring collections after a week of performances of '**Carousel**' by **Macc Majestic Theatre Group** made £1016, the **Combined Choir from Methodist Churches in Dudley** donated £214 from an evening concert, and '**A Christmas Carol**', featuring Paul Connor, made £500.



Added to individual donations and Friends' regular contributions, this makes a total of approx. £14,500 at the end of 2003.

Trustees trip to Nairobi

by **Andy Donaldson**

Five Trustees - Linda and I, Stephanie, Katie and Lis - are visiting Starehe School and Centre for a week from 6th to 13th February, when we hope to establish a good working relationship with Dr Griffin and the Music staff. A direct and personal contact will help us to gauge how best we can support the educational and social needs of the boys and girls in the future. Yes, I did say 'girls', because as from January 2004, Starehe Girls' Centre opens, in the first of several development phases.

One idea we have is to sponsor the Music volunteer from the UK on a permanent basis. Martyn was, of course, the volunteer from 1996-98. When we have discussed this with the management at Starehe we will know whether this is viable or not. The next newsletter will have an account of our 'doings' in Nairobi and hopefully a clear focus for our future fundraising.

Starehe School, Part Two

(cont. from last issue)

A mere 24% of Kenyan children enter a secondary school and, out of all those who commence education, only 1.2% will attend university. Starehe consistently achieves enviable academic results, as demonstrated by the results of the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE), the university-entry exam. In 2001, a Starehe boy achieved the top marks in the country - in fact 10 out of the top 50 pupils were Starehians. Up to 85% of Starehe boys are expected to win highly competitive university places. Starehe's 2001/2002 report explains the school's approach to academic excellence: "...there really is no limit to what can be achieved by disadvantaged children if they are reasonably bright and can be given good care and proper facilities. And it underlines what we are constantly preaching: that a boarding school with a system of freedom, trust and the granting of maximum responsibility to pupils can achieve top results (this is important, for many boarding schools in Kenya are run like prisons, in the belief that harshness, even cruelty, is necessary to success)."

Starehe is run like an English public school, with a strong prefect system, which allows the older boys a great deal of responsibility in policing homework, the dining room and other school rules. Whole-class teaching and rows of desks facing the front is the norm. The boys have a forum to publicly raise complaints, make suggestions and criticise anything or

anyone (even the Director!), at the weekly session of the school Parliament, called 'The Baraza'. Most of the senior managers in the school are old boys, who grew up under this system, including the Deputy Director and Assistant Director. Director and founder of Starehe, Dr. Geoffrey Griffin describes the transformation that Starehe can engender: "For the poor boys coming here it is like going to Mars. They have never seen water coming out of a tap or worn new clothes. There are many cases of malaria and two boys came this year with chronic ulcers. One village boy screamed when he first saw a train in Nairobi, convinced a huge snake was after him. Twenty years on, he is a senior manager at Securicor."

As well as exam and university success, Starehe has achieved in other areas. The games master, Eliud Wasonga, has coached thousands of youngsters, including Paul Ereng, Gold Medal winner in the 800m at the Seoul Olympics! His framed photograph stands in the school entrance, underneath which he has written: "Thanks for showing me the path to glory." As you will read in Martyn's letter, the school regularly wins trophies at the Kenya Music Festival - in 2001 the school took ten trophies including the one for Best Overall School. The school band plays regularly for national events, including the Kenyatta University Graduation, leading the President through Graduation Square. Pupils also take part in The President's Award Scheme, the equivalent of the Duke of Edinburgh's



Award in the UK (80 Gold Medals in 2001), Scouting (East African Champions!) and First Aid competitions (Best in the Nation - tied with the Presidential Press Unit!!).

Dr Griffin concludes the school report with these words: "I wish we could somehow share our experiences with all of you whose generosity makes it all possible: the joy of watching boys find security and happiness, grow strong and healthy, progress well in their studies, do fine things in extra-curricular activity and, above all, mature into young men of sound character, able to face with confidence a future that had once seemed utterly bleak."

In our next newsletter, we will of course be reporting on our trip to Starehe. We hope then to be able to focus on the music department and exactly how your contributions are assisting in continuing the excellent work at the school, of which Martyn was a part.



Martyn writes from Nairobi

Martyn wrote several articles from Nairobi to appear in Beech Lane Methodist Church's magazine. Extracts from these give his own impressions of life at Starehe and in Africa...

"With Christmas steadily approaching, I have recently spent a lot of time thinking how I am to describe the various sensations that combine to make Africa, with a mere pen and paper. After much consideration, I realised that I would need to produce a 500 page novel employing the descriptive ability of DH Lawrence to truly represent this astonishing continent.

I arrived in Nairobi in the middle of May (with the harsh winter drawing near, temperatures plummeting to as low as 60F!). I am working as a voluntary music teacher at the Starehe Boys Centre. Starehe is essentially an educational centre, established by the Director, Geoffrey Griffin, to care for disadvantaged and severely deprived boys. This may conjure up images within you of unruly, uneducated, unethical, bad-mannered street children - not at all. The boys here are extremely polite, very enthusiastic to learn, have a strong religious faith and shame thousands of schools and schoolchildren across Britain. Many's the day I have been awakened at 7am or disturbed at 11pm by a boy desperate for my keys to the Music Centre so that he can do some piano practice. The Starehe motto is 'Natulenge Jun', (meaning 'aim high'), and for the last 3 years they have led the examination results in the whole of Kenya, leaving fee-paying ex-patriates behind. Another notable success is their 22-year old grip on the National Athletics and Cross Country Trophy. I could go on...

My first task was to prepare the boys for the Kenya Music Festival. For this, Starehe like to have at least one entry in each category, which meant that I had my work cut out. Luckily the boys are so enthusiastic that they can be relied on to research and rehearse on their own if needs be. However, the Moi Girls' School (with whom we joined for various Mixed Choral categories) were an unfortunate example of what is widely known here as 'African time'. This concept of time is similar to that of British Rail. IF they turned up to rehearsals they'd be at least one hour late. However, with that familiar, fiery-eyed, red-faced Donaldson attitude that all Church Choir members will recognise (including some well-used clichés: 'I've got a 1001 other things I could be doing...' etc.), we provided Starehe with the coveted, prestigious First Position in the premiere Choral Category with our performance of Samuel Barber's 'Sure on this Shining Night'. Although much acclaimed, we only came second in both the other choral categories - this being largely due to some 'unorthodox' adjudicat-

ing that I had been forewarned of - everybody in Kenya wants to beat Starehe. 'Dodgy' decisions aside, Starehe dominated the instrumental and vocal categories and for the fourth year running retained the trophy for Best Overall School Performance, returning with their best results ever.

In my free time I have managed to obtain some extra work playing keyboards in a trio in the Nairobi Hilton Hotel. This requires me to catch a Matatu (minibus/taxi) into the centre of town. It is by far the cheapest, fastest (no one on the road argues with Matatu drivers) and probably safest way to travel. The matatu route takes me through some of the more unpleasant areas of Nairobi, where men, women and children, their legs crippled and their feet inflated with elephantiasis, can be seen lying anywhere and everywhere. Being white in Africa is unfortunately seen as 'being rich', so every journey into town has its encounters with street kids running after you for money and matatu touts trying to force you into paying double fares. Into the safety of the Hilton, where my contemporaries are two of the most interesting people you'll ever meet - on bass guitar is Purple, an Asian, thrown out of his natural home, Uganda, during the Idi Amin years. He and his family have spent time in India, Canada and the UK before Purple settled in Kenya. Without doubt the most placid, people-loving and easy-going person I've ever met. Then, on guitar is Mark, born and bred in Kenya though most of his family are from the Seychelles. Mark is the most versatile guitarist I know - he can play naturally (and brilliantly) in any style you care to mention, to the extent that every time I play with him, I feel in awe at the presence of a future genius.



Travel outside Nairobi and you really know you are in Africa. I have had the pleasure of visiting Lake Naivasha, where I heard birdsong as uniquely beautiful as anything in the world, and where I accidentally trod on a thorn from the Caisha tree. Perhaps my most memorable 'African' moment so far was on another trip out of Nairobi, camping in Hell's Gate Safari Park for a weekend. Miles from anywhere with two friends from Starehe, I sat round a camp fire on top of a mountain, overlooking the watering holes of zebra, water-buffalo and warthog. I sat and watched as the blistering, brightest sunlight imaginable changed through all the colours of the spectrum, and the moon (so large you could reach out and touch it) rose through the different shapes and shades of black and grey in the sky. Colin and Beryl North had mentioned these magnificent sunsets and I only wish I could conjure up a more vivid description to do it justice..."

Next time: Memories of Christmas in Mombasa,

Plans for Financial Support during 2004

Our visit to Starehe in February will give us more information about how best to support the pupils in their musical endeavours - more about this in due course.

We intend sponsoring two awards at the National Festival of Music for Youth in 2004, in the Jazz and Choral categories. The Festival will be taking place at London's South Bank Centre again in July - Jazz in the Queen Elizabeth Hall and Choirs in the Royal Festival Hall - and will feature school and youth ensembles from all over the UK.

We are delighted to announce our sponsorship of Macclesfield's Friends for Leisure group - young people aged 5 to 21 with physical, sensory or learning disabilities. Up to 40 people will be spending the next 5 months preparing a performance at Fallibroome High School, working with performing arts professionals. Everyone is involved in planning the storyline, rehearsals, costumes, set design etc. and it's a great way of developing self-confidence and self-esteem in the young people, volunteers and leaders alike. We will let you know the date of the final performance and hope some Friends can come along to see the final results of your sponsorship.

We are in discussions with the organisation 'Live Music Now!' about sponsoring musical events in Macclesfield. This outreach scheme was set up by Yehudi Menuhin in 1977, with two aims in mind: to promote the enjoyment and experience of live music amongst people who would not normally have access to it, and to assist gifted young professional musicians at the start of their careers. Live Music Now! organises professional music performances in venues such as hospitals, day centres, hospices, prisons, residential homes and schools.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Phil Kelsall

The Organist of the Blackpool Tower Ballroom
Thursday 11th March, 7.30pm, Macclesfield Methodist Church

Phil is always a popular visitor to Macclesfield and provides an evening of favourite music old and new, stunningly performed on his Technics organ, with all the sound effects and colours you could ever wish for! Phil was very happy to support Martyn's Music Trust through his association with Steph, who booked him on many occasions to perform at Dudley Town Hall when Arts Officer for the area! There will be the opportunity to purchase Phil's CDs and videos after the concert. Look out for your booking form for this event. Friends of MDMT will be able to purchase tickets at a reduced price, as usual.

To be confirmed...

Maccstock 2

Easter Sunday, 2004

We hope to repeat last year's massively popular marathon gig featuring local bands and DJs. Look out for more information about this nearer the time.

Summer Jazz

During the summer, we hope to arrange a concert to be given by the first winners of the Music for Youth Jazz Award - Abraham Darby School Jazz Orchestra, from Telford, Shropshire. We hope you will be able to support undoubtedly one of the country's finest young jazz bands - their energy and talent will knock your socks off!

"Dreaming"

This is the title of a newly-recorded CD of popular music for organ, piano, violin, flute and voice. The album was compiled in Macclesfield Methodist Church from July to October 2003 by *Andy Donaldson, Kirsty Mangan, Stephanie Corfield and Lis Murphy.*

The beautiful inlay cover was designed by James Bainbridge and produced by Chris Brown (our Publicity Trustee!). The CD is priced £5 and all profits are going to the MDMT. There is music by Elgar, Gershwin, Scott Joplin and Bach, to name but a few - see right for a full list of the music. Phone **01625 433187** or email **andy@primesiteuk.com** or visit the MDMT website to order a CD (or two!)



Trustee News

Friends' Co-ordinator **Jane Maric** is moving from Chetham's School of Music, Manchester, to the more exotic (and quieter!) climes of Jersey! She takes up the post of Head of Music at Grainville School in January. However, as flights between Jersey and the UK can be purchased for £15 (!), we will continue to see her (and Ruben) at MDMT events.

Congratulations to Treasurer **Matt Berry**, who recently announced his engagement to Lynsey Cox. Matt and Lynsey met through Bollington Brass Band and are planned to tie the knot in Crete in May 2005 (we're all looking forward to our invites!!).

Congratulations also to **Katie Muncaster** who has just started a new job, working for prestigious bar and restaurant, The Living Room (ditto above!)



Above: Paul Connor, at The Christmas Carol performance on 13th December 2003. The evening raised £500.00 for the Trust.

Your Friendly Trustees

- Chairman: **Andy Donaldson**
- Vice-Chairman and Friends Co-ordinator: **Stephanie Corfield**
- Secretary: **Linda Donaldson**
- Treasurer: **Matthew Berry**
- Publicity: **Chris Brown**
- Fund-raiser: **Katie Muncaster**
- Fund-raiser: **Lis Murphy**
- MDMT Trustee: **Colin North**
- Friends Co-ordinator: **Jane Maric**