



LYCO NEWS

This is the bimonthly newsletter for members of the orchestra community. We welcome your articles, news, contributions and all suggestions. For items, including musical coming events, please email Newsletter@lyco.org.au

MUSIC FOR EVERYONE - Margaret Hoban, LYCO's Musical Director, on excellence not elitism ...

"I was talking to my doctor the other day, and she said 'I love music, but I can't sing'. I said 'but you have a gorgeous voice - were you told you couldn't sing in early primary school?' She said, 'yes'. To me, it's criminal what happens with people being told they can't do it, particularly something that comes from so deep in one's psyche. Music, it's like 'here is my soul on a plate for you to criticise'.

THE LAUNCESTON
YOUTH AND
COMMUNITY
ORCHESTRA (LYCO)
EXISTS SO THAT PEOPLE
OF ALL AGES AND
MUSICAL ABILITIES CAN
ENJOY PLAYING
ORCHESTRAL MUSIC
TOGETHER

"I squelch elitism wherever I see it. It does so much damage. Elitism, not excellence. Elitism in music is damaging because it says 'we can do it and you can't'. Music is of the people, for crying out loud. Rhythm, music, song, dance; this is the stuff of human community. Innate musicianship exists. No one questions a wonderful player; quality shows. But in music, when you go down the route of expertness, these lines are drawn that say 'you can't do it, you are not good enough yet', or a version of this. And it kills a whole part of humanity.



"Boys in particular, serious artistic creative boys, struggle finding a group to be in. I'm not saying girls don't struggle, but boys really can. I've worked really hard with the string camp to build that part of it. And I laughingly once called LYCO the orchestra of musical misfits in Launceston. All the people that didn't fit in other groups landed up in LYCO, and it's grown a unique sort of character. You don't have to look to realise it's incredibly inclusive, and for everyone. It isn't musical misfits, but it is people wanting something different.

"Concerts I think are great, but that's not my aim. I love the rehearsal process. I love putting things together. I like exploring more than performing. Concerts are not the only reason we have an orchestra. It's a real community of kids and adults enjoying doing something wonderful together. The community aspect of the orchestra is really important."



WINTER ORCHESTRA CAMP
STRING, WOODWIND AND BRASS
MUSICIANS FROM ACROSS TASMANIA
ARE INVITED TO JOIN LYCO'S WEEKEND
CAMP AND PLAY BEETHOVEN'S FIFTH
SYMPHONY. THE 2019 WINTER
ORCHESTRA WORKSHOP WILL RUN
FROM THE EVENING OF FRIDAY, 5TH
JULY 2019 TO SUNDAY, 7TH JULY
2019. ALL THE DETAILS AND HOW TO
APPLY ARE ON THE WEBSITE. FOR MORE
FROM CONDUCTOR WILLEM VAN DER
VIS, SEE PAGE 4.

HOW HARD CAN IT BE?

LYCO Committee Chair, Fraser Deeth, has asked and answered this question as a player, conductor and composer with LYCO over the past decade. “I haven’t had any formal training in anything,” he said. “I learnt to read music by sitting in the orchestra and saying ‘here’s a Haydn symphony, go!’” And while acknowledging the very real challenges of making music with other people, Fraser says he’s convinced that with music, everyone should have a go.

“I can’t remember who said ‘there are somethings in life that are important enough to do badly’. Music is definitely one of them,” he said. “Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn’t. But the first step in getting good at something is to be really bad at it, initially. It’s actually quite an important first step. You learn the most being loudly terrible at first, especially in a music group where people aren’t paying to watch you.

“I’m fairly sure that I am still right in the middle of that”, Fraser said. “But being loudly awful beats waiting until you are good. It’s really educational and useful, and fun to jump in and have a go. Everyone should do it all the time. LYCO is excellent for this, and I feel amazingly lucky and privileged to be part of it. Without Margaret and orchestra I wouldn’t be doing any of the stuff I have been able to, and life would be very different! I can never thank you all enough.”

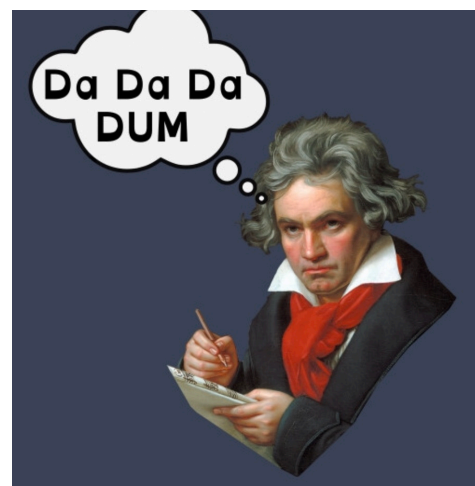
Fraser says he is as interested in the technical challenges in music as the expressive aspects. “In conducting the Piccolos, it’s a lot of fun getting everything together. The Piccolo string players can all play individually really well and trying to bring everyone together I find really interesting. It’s a lot of fun and I am learning a lot; hopefully fast enough to keep up with them.

“I think when you begin playing, your job is to form a continuous thread and continue it unbroken through time. The notes and the rhythms are tools we use to build the thread of ‘now’ or ‘here-ness’ over time. It’s a very good way of being - making music is right now, you’re alive right now. You can share that with other people, and it’s why an orchestra is really fun. Many people are creating and supporting each other right here, right now, continuously in the orchestra. And within that you can express all the inexpressible things that music does. Playing music with other people is the most together you can get. It’s a continuum of ‘here-ness’; that to me is the music.”

Beethoven and the Famous Five

The 2019 Winter Orchestra Workshop will see Willem Van der Vis return to Tasmania to conduct arguably the best known of all symphonies.

Beethoven's famous Fifth Symphony (Opus 67) is recognisable from its first phrase. But Willem says there's much more in the four movements for players to discover and enjoy.



"It's got this amazing beginning that people know, but then what does he do with that? He develops it, he inverts it, and throws it around the orchestra and takes you on a journey with it. He travels with it rhythmically, temporally, harmonically, and dynamically. Somewhere in the middle, the horns blare out BA BA BA BAA BAA BAA! Then he weaves it into a melody, adds layer upon layer, and uses that repetitive element, and slows it down for emphasis.

"The slow movement develops melodically. It's more stately and majestic. The third movement wanders around, and there's something underneath it that's irrepressible: call it the human spirit. I get quite emotional. It's one of my favourite bits and it goes on and on. It's so long and he doesn't lose the thread. Then it blazes forth in the last movement.

"It's the first time ever trombones are used in symphony orchestras. Trombones were used before in oratorios and the Mozart Requiem, for example, but here it's quite new. It's the human spirit blazing forth and unbridled happiness after all the darkness and turmoil. Some people say it is the knock of fate, that 'da da da dum'. But what is fate? You could say this is an exploration of it and Beethoven comes out the optimist. But people can relate to it in different ways. That's the beautiful thing about music. It's very personal."

What was Beethoven's Favourite Fruit? Ba-na-na-naaaa

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For Margaret Glen, life without music would B flat

“I’ve been to 19 consecutive music camps. So I’ve seen all sorts of people come and play, but I can’t think of anything exciting. I don’t remember anyone falling off their chair or doing anything like that.”

Margaret Glen has been with LYCO from the early days. Now, after more than two decades playing viola, she says friendship and good music are the reasons why. “I like to play with other people. It’s interesting and I like the companionship,” she says. “The people you can talk to and have a laugh with! I really enjoy playing and socialising, especially when you’ve got the winds. It’s wonderful when you’ve got the trumpets blasting.”

Margaret Glen’s life as a violist started when a newspaper notice caught her eye. “It said ‘Would you like to learn the viola? Go to night school and learn to play’. The teacher, Prue Warren took on six students, including me. We struggled, as adults do. They all dropped off, one at a time. I’m just grateful to my parents, that they sent me to learn music. I learnt the piano from the time I was six, but it’s a lonely instrument. You don’t want to practice because you are on your own. I wished it had been the viola, but least it was the piano, and that helped me. You never forget what you learn as a child.”



Robin Cross, Pauline Blyth, Margaret Glen and Polly-Mae Taylor at the String Camp

Margaret says through Prue Warren, she met and befriended violinists Pauline Blyth and Robyn Cross and Sally Gates, who followed her and joined the orchestra. “I asked them if they’d like to join Margaret [Hoban’s] orchestra, so they did. We played and

stayed. We were together in an ensemble for ages. And with LYCO, we've done so many things over the years, like the Deloraine Craft Fair and playing in the City Park bandstand. We were in Longford when they had a special thing on with musicians from everywhere."

With an active life, Margaret Glen says mixing music with social activities is the key. "I like to play golf. I love Scottish country dancing. I like playing lawn bowls and I go ballroom dancing on Monday nights. Then I have to walk the dog, and then I have to practice my viola to be helpful to Margaret [Hoban] and the orchestra. I enjoy all sorts of music, but I don't like anything that's too difficult, because then I have to spend too much time at home rehearsing."

Margaret Glen says viola parts are often harmonically, rhythmically or technically challenging. "I like it when the violas have the tune, which is not very often. When we do get the tune, I love it. I love playing a musical instrument with other people. Just playing the piano on your own, it's not the same. You would rather do something else - play outside or do something. I don't like to sit in the orchestra in the front. It makes me nervous being right under Margaret [Hoban's] nose. I like to see the young ones up the front. And I hate to be the only viola. Nobody wants to be just you, on your own."

Musical Director's Report to the AGM

This past year was a year of consolidation and regeneration. I feel that an amazing job has been done in this regard. Two wonderful concerts and two very successful camps is a big job for any committee. The finances are straightforward and easy to understand - thanks Simon. The camp forms are easy to fill in on line and registrations are going smoothly - thanks Jan. The website is moving forward after the huge change over to Janet from Michael - thanks Michael for your years of work and care. The TCF grant gave the orchestra a huge boost - thanks to Belinda for her major effort in its success.

I personally, have no words to express my thanks for the support and love I feel from members of the orchestra. This is a great little orchestra and everyone who works with it enjoys it. Adam comes over from SA to play with us; Elyane, who is used to professional orchestras, loved the

experience of starting her Mozart Project with us; Willem comes year after year, and these are just a few examples.

The Piccolo Strings was the hardest hit group and last year it was combined with Intermezzo Strings very successfully. This new calendar year has seen new students and with the help of Heidi and Fraser, is on the way back to being viable. Many thanks to Sarah Stagg for picking it up, when she really didn't have the time or spare energy to do it. Fraser is now doing a great job with a difficult sized group, turning it into an ensemble in its own right again. Thanks Fraser, it's a great challenge, a necessary group, so enjoy the ride!

2019 started out with Heidi Barker staying on after the String Camp and James Anderson having some weekends in the North and both offering us such expert tutoring and energy freely. We miss Heidi and are so happy to see James continuing on.

As always, but not always mentioned, thank you to our members who take up the baton when I am absent. I don't know who does it when I haven't organised it but thank you. I try not to be absent too often!

Thanks, so much gratitude to the leaving members of the committee, it was hard and everyone was valiant! Welcome to the new committee and a new feeling of going forward.

Margaret Hoban

EVENTS

3 - 8 June Launceston Competitions classical music Earl Arts Centre Princess Theatre. <http://bit.ly/30NINPV>

4 - 8 June Van Diemen's Band Coast to Coast Baroque Tour including Scottsdale and Latrobe. <http://bit.ly/2VRtK3c>

Saturday 22 June Mini TSO concert Albert Hall, Launceston.
<http://bit.ly/30HBYhX>

28 June - 14 July Festival of Voices performances and workshops around Tasmania. <http://bit.ly/2Urmr5z>

Saturday 6 July TSO The Best of Rodgers and Hammerstein, Albert Hall, Launceston. <http://bit.ly/2VUSLu6>

Friday 28 June 7.30 pm LYCO Mid Year Concert Launceston City Baptist Church. <http://www.lyco.org.au/calendar/>

Friday 5 - Sunday 7th July LYCO Winter Workshop
<http://bit.ly/2UnpiMY>

Saturday 27 July Launceston City Band Anniversary Concert Salvation Army Hall. <http://bit.ly/2JDOOrP8>

29 November LYCO End of Year Concert
Launceston City Baptist Church. <http://www.lyco.org.au/calendar/>

19 - 25 January 2020. LYCO 30th Residential Summer String Camp
<http://www.lyco.org.au/rssc/>

INTERESTING ARTICLES

The sounds of science: biochemistry and the cosmos inspire new music
<https://go.nature.com/2HdgPmK>

Does the Suzuki Method work for kids learning an instrument
<http://bit.ly/2Utyxef>

30 cellos in a Chicago swimming pool
<http://bit.ly/2UvHqUJ>

The craft of cello maker Robin Aitchison
<http://bit.ly/2K6QkEb>

Let them play! Is play becoming extinct?
<http://bit.ly/2VV3dli>

We hope you've enjoyed this newsletter. If you have any ideas for the August-September edition, we welcome your articles, contributions, news and all suggestions. Please contribute items, including musical coming events to: Newsletter@lyco.org.au

LYCO acknowledges the generous support of the Tasmanian Community Fund