APPENDIX 1

MUSICAL MEMORIES

Andrews, Edward
Beckett, Dr Walter
Bonnie, Joe
Calthorpe, Nancy
Darley, Arthur Warren
Davin, Maud
Donnelly, Madame Lucy
Dunne, Dr Veronica
Gannon, Sister Mary
Gillen, Professor Gerard
Greig, William Sydney

Heneghan, Frank
Keogh, Val
King, Superintendent John
Larchet, Dr John F.
Maguire, Leo
McCann, Alderman John
McNamara, Michael
Mooney, Brighid
O’Brien, Joseph
O’Callaghan, Colonel Frederick
O’Conor, Dr John

O’Grady, Dr Geraldine
O’Reilly, Dr James J.
O’Rourke, Miceál
Roche, Kevin
Ronayne, John
Rowsome, Leo
Sauerzweig, Colonel F. C.
Sherlock, Dr Lorcan G.
Valentine, Hubert
Walton, Martin A.
Edward Andrews

Edward Andrews was porter, and his wife, Mary Andrews, was housekeeper, in the Assembly House, South William Street, from about 1885. He was the first porter connected with the Municipal School of Music. They were employed by Dublin Corporation, and remained in South William Street when the Municipal School of Music moved premises. They had a daughter, Mary, who was one of the first piano students, and her two daughters, Eithne Russell and the late Maura Russell, were both students and teachers in the College of Music.

Edward and Mary Andrews also had a son, William, whose sons Eamonn and Noel became well-known broadcasters, and some of his family were students in the College. In the next generation, a great-grand-daughter, Elizabeth Donohoe, was a piano student at the College. The only family connection at the present time is Eithne Russell (grand-daughter) on the teaching staff, but there is another generation almost ready to join up.

Dr Walter Beckett

In 1946 I left my job in Kilkenny, as organist of St. Canice's Cathedral and returned to Dublin. Victor Love was appointed to my job and he suggested that I might like to take his teaching post in the Municipal School. When I found that he did sixty hours per week I was horrified, but decided to try and split the job in two. Michael McNamara, who was Vice-Principal, was agreeable; so I approached Sydney Greig and before long we had got the job, and I started to teach thirty hours per week at 5/= per hour. We were all part-time, and so could get holiday pay by getting the dole. Many summer days I spent in a queue at the Labour Exchange.

The large room at the head of the main stairs was the Library, just three or four cases of books and music, looked after by Willie Reidy, who also taught the cello in this room. The Principal at this time was Joseph O'Brien.

Soon a terrible thought struck me. The way I was living meant that I should go through this life without ever playing in a string quartet. This was intolerable, so before long I left a free half-hour in my timetable and went to Willie Reidy to learn the cello. I was about thirty-two years old then. After about four years or so I could manage the easier Haydn and felt a bit more content. But I soon saw that I should never see the art treasures of Italy or hear its music. I left the School and went to London for a few years. Then twelve glorious years in Venice, seven years in England (at Kenilworth) and then back to Dublin to find myself at the College of Music again. My dear friend Dr O'Reilly was Principal and so I fitted in very well. Willie Reidy was no more. After a few years I moved to the Academy and finished my teaching career there.

Joe Bonnie

Joe Bonnie was a Dubliner who was a legend in his own lifetime. He was a master performer and drummer. He took joy and pride in his craft. In the early days, it was Joe Bonnie only who could mould the kid skin into shape for timpani and drum heads. He was known as Ireland's premier drummer. His drum and xylophone solos always stopped the shows in the theatres. Joe was an excellent teacher and he taught Ireland's best-
known drummers, including Dessie Reynolds, Ian McGarry, Shaun Wilkinson, and Larry Mullen – to name but a few.

He was a member of the original Theatre Royal Orchestra under the baton of Jimmy Campbell, and later of the orchestras in the Capitol, Olympia, and Gaiety Theatres. He also had his own club orchestra. Joe was the percussionist in the Radio Éireann Light Orchestra under Dermot O'Hara for many years, and he frequently broadcast on solo xylophone with the Orchestra. He was the timpanist in the Radio Éireann Symphony Orchestra under Michael Bowles. It was Joe who started the percussion classes in the School of Music and he taught there until his death in the late seventies. He taught and wrote the drum and marching movements for the Artane Band, and these are still played today, together with the xylophone solos. He was an exceptional teacher at the School for the Blind in Drumcondra. Joe Bonnie is still remembered as the “Smiling Drummer”.

Nancy Calthorpe

I first came to the Municipal School of Music as a deputy teacher when Mr Joseph O'Brien was Director. Soon I was appointed a part-time teacher and Mr O'Brien asked me to form musicianship classes – then known as theory classes. There was a wide range of age groups and the classes were so large that most of the class time went in calling the roll!

When Mr O'Brien retired he was succeeded by Mr Michael McNamara, fondly known as “Mac”. Together with another theory teacher, Miss Mary (Chummy) Keogh, aunt of Des Keogh, presenter of *Music for Middlebrows*, I graded the classes and prepared the students for VEC examinations, which were held in Rathmines.

Mr William Watson, FRCO, of the Leinster School of Music and organist in St. Ann’s Church, Dawson St., was invited to act as examiner and to correct the papers. Classes went from strength to strength and in subsequent years pupils were entered for the examinations of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, London.

When the School was undergoing reconstruction, theory classes were held in the School of Tailoring, Cavendish Row (opposite the Gate Theatre). Many past pupils from these theory classes are now on the staff of the College; some became Heads of Departments.

There was a very active Students' Union during “Mac’s” time as Principal. We gave several performances of *The Arcadians* in the Archbishop Byrne Hall and in Blackrock College. “Mac” was conductor, I was chorus mistress and pianist, the late Bill Foley of the Abbey Theatre was producer.
May Ward (now Mrs Briscoe) was leader of the orchestra.

May was daughter of the late Dick Ward, the highly-respected head porter. His living quarters were in the School and some of his family were born there. Many student concerts were held and some of the pupils taking part have since become international artists. These include John O'Connor, Miceál O'Rourke, Gerard Gillen, Geraldine O'Grady, Suzanne Murphy, and Ann Murray.

When “Mac” retired, the staff commissioned Harry Kernoff RHA to paint his portrait, which was duly presented to him.

The next Principal, Dr J. O'Reilly, was a very fine piano teacher. Among his past pupils are John O'Connor and Veronica McSwiney, who have played all over the world, and Hilary Macnamara, now an Associated Board examiner.

The present Principal, Mr Frank Heneghan, is also an excellent teacher of piano, whose pupils have brought credit to the College of Music. All the Principals have stamped their own mark on the advancement of the College, Mr Heneghan has worked untiringly to bring the College to the status it now enjoys in the third-level area.

In the early years of the Municipal School of Music, Dr J. F. Larchet acted as Director and later as examiner. His daughter, Mrs Sheila Larchet-Cuthbert (for many years principal harpist with the RTE Symphony Orchestra) taught Concert harp and Irish harp, and has acted on many occasions as examiner for harp examinations in the College. In the early 60's I took over as teacher of the Irish harp. Caitriona Yeats, granddaughter of W. B. Yeats, later taught the Concert harp class.

The repertoire for the Irish harp was then very limited, which inspired me to arrange pieces by O'Carolan for the third centenary of “the last of the Irish bards”. In 1974 Waltons published The Calthorpe Collection which was launched by the late President O'Dalaigh, at his first public engagement, in the Foster Place Branch of Allied Irish Banks, sponsors of the book. Since then other publications have appeared, including A Tribute to Moore, A Celtic Bouquet, Ocht nAmhrán le Tionlachan Cruite and, in 1988, a Tutor - Begin the Harp with Nancy Calthorpe. The reception to launch the Tutor was given by the Bank of Ireland in the Baggot St. Branch. In 1980 I was invited to give recitals, lectures and workshops to the Irish Cultural Society, New Orleans. As a result I was made Honorary International Citizen of New Orleans and presented with a replica of the key to the city.

The College now has a prestigious Teacher's Diploma for the Irish harp. The first graduates were Angela Corkery and Evelyn Hearns in 1988. When Waltons presented a trophy for a professional performance, to lead on to the Diploma award, one of the first winners was Caílthrona Rowsome, whose father Leon and grandfather Leo were teachers of Uilleann pipes in the Municipal School of Music. As part of the Bi-Centenary Celebrations of the Belfast Harp Festival, a group of my pupils presented a programme entitled “Preserving our Heritage” at a lunch-time concert on 18th May 1992 in the John McCann Hall.

My other special work in the College is as a teacher of singing and voice production. I number among my past pupils Ann Murray, perhaps the greatest singer to leave Ireland since Margaret Burke-Sheridan, and the only one to date to have sung in La Scala, Milan, the Metropolitan, New York, Vienna, Salzburg and all the great Opera Houses of the world. Other past pupils include Ethna Robinson, a leading singer with the ENO at the Coliseum, London, and Regina Nathan, now singing in Lucerne, Switzerland, who was the first Irish singer to perform with Placido Domingo, at the Point Theatre, Dublin. Another past pupil, Colette Delahunty, who has just started her career with the Glyndebourne Opera Company, has been studying with Valerie Masterson in Trinity College London, with the aid of sponsorship from Siemens-Nixdorf. All my students are indebted to the City of Dublin VEC for their generous help throughout the years.

I celebrated my 80th birthday on 17th January 1994 with a launch by Waltons of new editions of The Calthorpe Collection and A Tribute to Carolan, which was attended by the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Tomás MacGiolla. Earlier a vocal concert in my honour took place in the very Hall in which I started teaching theory classes over forty years ago.

Walton's have presented a Bursary of £500 to be awarded annually in my name to a student of the College who intends to follow a vocal career. I thank God for enabling me to share my knowledge with so many generations, and for giving me the opportunity to instil in my pupils a love and pride in our own national music.

Arthur Warren Darley

From its earliest years, Arthur Darley took a dedicated interest in the Municipal School of Music. He encouraged its musicians, both teachers
and students, judged its competitions, and advised the City of Dublin Technical Education Committee on its organisation, finally being made its first Director in 1927.

To music lovers throughout Ireland, the news of his death came as a shock. Recently, he was in his customary place as leader of the Dublin University Choral Society, when it presented Mendelssohn’s *St. Paul*.

Mr Darley was the son of Henry Warren Darley, a land-owner with property in Donegal, Limerick, and other parts of the country. His mother was a member of the Green family of Castleconnell. He came of a musical family, his father being an accomplished player of both the violin and the Uilleann pipes. He was a near relation of Dion Boucicault, the actor and writer of Irish plays. George Darley, the poet, was another relative, while his grandfather was a close friend of Thomas Moore, and frequently sung the famous Irish melodies to Moore’s own accompaniment.

The late Mr Darley started the study of the violin at the age of eight, and pursued his studies in Dublin and London. He took a keen interest in Irish folk music, especially for the violin. An accomplished violinist himself, he specialised in the playing of unaccompanied violin music. In the early days of the Abbey Theatre musical interludes were provided by Mr Darley.

A successful performer on the concert platform both in Ireland and in England, his ability as a solo violinist at a recital at the Steinway Hall won the highest praise from the London critics. He was a keen student of chamber music, and took part in chamber music recitals at the Royal Dublin Society from 1893 for a number of years; while he was leader of the Dublin Musical Society from 1897 until 1902. Also, he lectured before the Royal Dublin Society and to audiences on both sides of the Channel.

In 1900, he was appointed professor of the violin at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, and held the appointment for some years. Later, he became keenly interested in the Municipal School of Music, of which a year or two ago he became Director.

He was a great collector of unpublished Irish airs, and published a collection himself, and afterwards edited the collection of hitherto unpublished Irish airs, which from time to time were submitted for competition in the unpublished Irish airs section of the Dublin Feis Ceoil.

Mr Darley displayed great activity in the promotion of feiseanna and musical competitions, and for many years adjudicated at the Feis Ceoil in the Irish fiddle and pipes competitions, as well as in the unpublished airs section. Also, he adjudicated at the Oireachtas competitions and other feiseanna in the country, and was a co-founder with the Reverent Father Aloysius of the Father Mathew Feis.

He was President of the Irish Musical Fund – a fund established about the end of the eighteenth century for the support of necessitous musicians.

*Newspaper Obituary, 1929*

Maud Davin
*(Mrs Frank Aiken)*

Is there snobbery in music in Ireland? Miss Maud Davin, Director of the Dublin Municipal School of Music – an institution founded for the cultivation of music among the middle-class, as well as the humblest people of the city and surrounding areas – holds that there is. In an address to the Dublin Rotary Club she said:

To my mind there has been too much snobbery in musical circles in Ireland. What the simple composers of the world – the men who sprang from the people – have created
has been regarded as the right only of the intellectuals.

This is not the case in other places, such as Germany and Italy, where the children have been educated from their infancy in hearing good music in the streets, the opera and the concert hall. It is the man and woman in the street who decide the success of the singer in Milan. It is the student and the workman who make music in Germany. They have been taught and brought up in the knowledge that the great composers of their country made music for them, that the national opera is for them, and it is the joy of the parent to see his children take their place in the musical world just as they do in the home orchestra or band.

Caruso came from a big Italian family of the people, and John McCormack also came from the people; but, while we want in Ireland more Carusos and more McCormacks, our especial aim is to encourage music and song amongst the masses.

I feel that for the development of the school a good deal depends on our citizens. Perhaps some day we may progress so far that Irish opera may have a permanent home in our city, and that we may be able to provide some of the artists from our school. Nothing is impossible where there is cooperation between the people and the school with an abundance of enthusiasm. We want to arouse all the enthusiasm we can amongst those who can help us and give us the encouragement we need.

For all Creeds and Classes

The Dublin Municipal School of Music, which is now under the control of the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee, was founded in 1890, when the Corporation of Dublin provided an annual grant of £300 to the School, then under the administration of the Royal Irish Academy of Music. In 1904 the School of Music was incorporated in the scheme of technical instruction for the County Borough of Dublin, its object being to provide an opportunity for the children of the city to obtain musical training, if not absolutely free, at least for a nominal fee, such as could not be had elsewhere. As well as the ordinary curriculum of most music schools, it included instruction in such instruments as the fife and drum, the Uilleann pipes, the Irish war pipes, and brass and wood instruments.

In other countries the National Conservatoires were open to every citizen, the funds being provided by the State, and rich and poor entered by the portal. Only the clever pupils and those who worked were retained in these great musical schools: for their object was to give the most highly technical training, and to create musicians for the nation who would bring renown and be a pride to the country.

At present, the Dublin School of Music could not boast of being in the position of any of those great conservatories, as our country has passed through a great upheaval, and peace was needed for the development of the arts, especially music, and more especially national music. But their ambitions for the City School were as high as any other nation's, and they wished first to impress on all that the Municipal School of Music belonged to the people of Dublin of every class and creed, and that no child in the city possessed of talent need be deprived of that training which might help him or her to be placed among the great singers or the greatest composers of the world.

“The Land of Song”

If the people would realise that the Municipal School of Music belonged to them, and would show a keener interest in it, then and then only would its influence be felt in the community. Music is the most democratic of the arts. It was more; it was as necessary to life as our daily food. In the life of a nation, as in that of an individual, the enduring works of greatness were not material but cultural. Therefore, in an age which tended to stress its achievements in terms of physical content, it could not be too definitely proclaimed that true progress was known only by the signs of freely advancing culture.

Every race had its own distinct cultural background and its own fund of musical tradition. That of the Gael could not be excelled either for beauty and variety of form or for depth of expression. Through our country's chequered history, music has been our unfailing solace and stimulus. Ireland had been called the land of song, and it was
the only nation in the world to bear as its standard a musical instrument.

We would like to hear more of our brass and fife and drum bands. There are many reasons why progress in this direction may appear slow, but often the most musical people are not those blessed with this world's goods, and these instruments are expensive buying. We have both the talent and the music in the country. All we need is the mode of expression, which is the training.

*(The Irish Times, 8th December, 1931)*

### Madame Lucy Donnelly

*(Mrs Thomas Gogan)*

Madame Lucy Donnelly died in 1950, and the musical life of Dublin had lost yet another of that gifted group who, in the early years of the century, did so much by their own performances and their enthusiasm, to place Dublin on the map as a musical city.

A student from her early years at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, Lucy Donnelly, as she was so familiarly and endearingly known to a wide circle of friends and admirers, had a strikingly successful career, winning virtually all the prizes and honours that the RIAM could offer for pianoforte playing.

She quickly established herself as a brilliant accompanist and teacher, and with Jack Larchet (Dr J. F. Larchet), her friendly rival – she was in constant demand for concerts and other musical functions. Between them, these two accomplished pianists virtually skimmed the cream of the musical market, and those who had the good fortune to have Lucy Donnelly's accompaniment on the platform, freely admitted how much assistance she gave to all. She often accompanied John McCormack.

Full of enthusiasm and vitality, it was not surprising to find her one of the most active pioneers of the movement to establish the Municipal School of Music, and for years she was a most indefatigable worker at Chatham Row.

Her activities were many, and she found time to direct the orchestra at the Pavilion, Dun Laoghaire, where her husband was formerly manager. Church Choirs also won her attention, and she was organist at St. Michan's, Halston Street, and also at the Church of Mary Immaculate, Inchicore.

*(The Irish Times, 25th February, 1950)*

Veronica Dunne began her vocal studies at the early age of 12 years with the late Herbert Rooney, who was a student of the famous Jean de Reszke in Paris. He quickly recognised her potential for, and love of bel canto singing. In September 1946 she travelled to Rome to further her studies with Contessa Soldini Calcagni and later with Maestro Francesco Calcatelli. She made her operatic début in 1948 with the Dublin Grand Opera Society as Micaela in *Carmen* and Marguerite in *Faust.*

In the final year of her studies, 1952, she entered for the Concorso Lirico-Milano and won first place. In June of the same year she made her operatic début as Mimi in *La Bohème* at the Teatro Nuovo in Milan. The following September she joined the Company of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and made her operatic début there as Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier.* Her other rôles included Mimi (*La Bohème*), Susanna (*Figaro*), Euridice (*Orfeo*) by Gluck with the late Kathleen Ferrier. Her career took off and she remained with the company singing major rôles.

In 1958 she sang in the première of *Les Carmelites* by Poulenc singing the rôle of Blanche. She also sang major rôles with Welsh National Opera, Scottish National Opera, Sadler's Wells, now ENO, and the Wexford Festival. She
sang in oratorio all over England, Belgium and Germany and toured with Sir John Barbirolli and the Hallé Orchestra. Veronica Dunne has given numerous broadcasts and appearances on television with RTE and BBC. She has made several recordings with EMI including the first recording of the "Irish Ring" which has been a tremendous success all over the world.

In 1961 she joined the teaching staff of the College of Music, Dublin, and since then has devoted her life to the training of young voices. On 2nd April 1987 she received an Honorary Doctorate from University College Dublin. The Royal Dublin Society made her an Honorary Life Member on 23rd June 1988. A galaxy of singers gathered in the National Concert Hall in June 1992 to take part in a concert to mark her retirement from the College of Music. The programme included the following past pupils: Anna Caleb, Mary Callan-Clarke, Randal Courtney, Angela Feeney, Thérèse Feighan, Martin Higgins, Paul Kelly, Lynda Lee, Andrew Murphy, Suzanne Murphy, Frank O'Brien, Jack O'Kelly, Marie-Claire O'Reirdan, Ciarán Rocks, Nicola Sharkey, Kathryn Smith, Marie Walshe, and Finbar Wright.

**Sister Mary Gannon**

These recollections cover a period around 1910. As a tiny child I remember being shown the two big horses yoked to a huge fire-engine outside the building surrounded by an iron paling - ready to dash into action as the team of firemen mounted the engine and the big bell clanged its way to the scene of the fire. The men wore red blouses and steel helmets. All very spectacular to a child.

After many years, the building was converted into a "School of Music" providing tuition in pianoforte, violin, singing and band instruments, so that every afternoon and evening the sound of music could be heard even at a distance. The fees were most reasonable at the time. Lessons were given weekly for twenty minutes. Enrolment began in October; the course lasted until May of the following year. As an incentive, annual prizes were given - 10/-, 7/6, and 5/- collected by the recipients at the City Hall in the case of children accompanied by an adult.

The Secretary at the time was a Mr Healy; the pianoforte teachers included Mrs Halligan and later the late Dr Annie G. O'Higgins, R.I.P. She died many years later tragically in her home in North Frederick Street, Dublin. This lady actually prepared the writer for various examinations in the Leinster School of Music, reaching the teachers' and performers' diploma stage. As years went by I lost contact with those connected with the School of Music, as I entered religion in 1934.

**Professor Gerard Gillen**

I entered the College - or the Municipal School as it then was - as a timorous seven-year-old in 1949, and my main memories are of the dull all-pervasive green paint, the forbidding countenance of the Principal, Joseph O'Brien, his apparently permanently parked bicycle in the main hallway, and his ever-cheerful and encouraging Vice-Principal, Michael McNamara, who was soon to succeed him. As an energetic, innovative and immensely popular Principal of the school, Mr McNamara transformed it from a "for Dubliners only" institution to a College which had aspirations to be a National Conservatoire of Music.

Instruction in the junior piano class in those days was given on a number of "dummy" pianos, by the young, kindly, and gifted Rita Cunney, now Sr Rita Mary, O. P., who presides over the music department of All Hallows College; while theory classes were in the genial hands of Mr J. J. O'Reilly, soon to be awarded doctorates by both Trinity College and the National University. After this preliminary year, I was transferred to the private tutelage of the newest full-time piano teacher, the formidable Elizabeth Costello, and it was Miss Costello who presided over my musical studies in the College for the next thirteen years or so, and was a major inspirational influence on the development of my entire career.

The 1950's saw a major burgeoning of musical talent in the College: pianists Veronica McSwiney, Darina Gibson, Nuala Levins, Noel Kelehan, John O'Mahony (now an S.V.D. missionary priest), Colman Pearce, Michael Grant, and later John O'Conor and Miceál O'Rourke; string players Sheilá O'Grady, Mary Gallagher, Brian McNamara (the son of the Principal, Michael), Maire Ní Chuilleanáin (sadly recently deceased), Pádraig O'Connor, Séamus O'Grady, Brighid Mooney, Hilary O'Donovan, clarinettist Brian O'Rourke and other now well-known names, were then part of a student body, breaking out of the insular and defensive mould which had characterised the early post-Independence attitude of so many spheres of national life. A new confidence was abroad and it was stimulating to be part of such a student milieu. I remember with
particular pleasure the Monday evening “house” concerts, (so often introduced by the inimitably urbane Leo Maguire), where, from an early age, professional standards and demeanour were expected of the nervous young performers; and how we used to look forward with barely contained excitement to reading our names – with hopefully a complimentary sentence or two – in the Evening Mail whose music critic faithfully attended and reported almost every concert. Then there were the more formal occasions, prize-winners’ concerts and so on, which were usually held in the Aberdeen Hall of the Gresham Hotel, or the Round Room of the Mansion House, or Rathmines Town Hall. For me these were events ever to be associated with such horrific attacks of nervousness as I have never since experienced, thank God!

In the mid 1950’s, as part of Michael McNamara’s outward-looking and expansionist plans, the College acquired a pipe organ from Holland and set up its first organ class under the direction of W. S. Greig, until then a full-time piano teacher in the school, organist of Findlater’s Presbyterian Church and assistant organist at St. Patrick’s Cathedral. The College was fortunate in having Sydney Greig as organ teacher: a meticulously organised man in every department of his life, he brought to his teaching a well-thought-out pedagogical method and rammed home to his students the extra-musical – but ever so important – virtues of punctuality and reliability in all things. A man of impeccable, if conservative, sartorial taste; in a period of about eight years as his pupil, I remember him invariably sporting a Trinity tie! His expertise as a teacher was soon felt in the city as his pupils year after year captured all the organ prizes at the Feis Ceoil. Although a devoted member of the Church of Ireland, Sydney was particularly concerned to contribute to the development of organ-playing in the Roman Catholic Church, which, in Dublin at that time, had hardly any organists who had been professionally trained. His aim was to stimulate young people to be professionally involved in the music of the Church, and I remember him saying to me at the age of fourteen with almost prophetic insight, “you know, if you work hard and play your cards right, you could end up as organist of the Pro-Cathedral”.

Other memories I have of that period are of the tall, gentlemanly, Victorian figure of Willie Reidy, cello teacher and librarian; Denis Cox, singing teacher, hobbling and warbling his way along the corridor; and Jaroslav Vaneček (with whom I occasionally had chamber music classes) who brought an element of ruthless East-European professionalism to all his work. Finally there was Michael McNamara, who seemed to know every student by name, and who wandered from class to class offering encouragement to all, and, if he heard something he particularly liked, dipped his hand into his pocket and proffered the lucky kid a two-shilling piece (a fortune in those days!) with the words – “that was great, – go get yourself an ice cream!” Oh happy days!
Cathedral in late afternoon for choral evensong and choir practice, to be often followed by a vigorous game of badminton.

Sartorially meticulous and punctilious in every aspect of his life, he was a warm and generous person, and intensely private for one whose life was organised on a routine that was as scrupulously adhered to as any monastic régime.

As a musician, he was steeped in the great Anglo-Irish choral traditions of Stanford and Wood, of which his own compositions were direct and worthy linear descendants. His skills were those of the great Cathedral craftsmen; an accompanist with flair and a sense of orchestral colouring, and an improviser of vignettes, perfectly encapsulating the mood of an occasion, hymn or psalm.

He once told me that teaching was his first love, and it was as one of his first organ pupils at the then Municipal School of Music, that I first came into contact with him in 1955. His dedication as a teacher was complete and the standards he demanded of one in terms of neatness and cleanliness of technique, and discipline in preparation, are attributes I have found to be of enduring value.

It is no exaggeration to suggest that his teaching transformed the standard of organ playing in Dublin. In common with practitioners of other instruments, opportunities for study and travel abroad for the post-war organ student were available at a level unknown to earlier generations, but it is thanks largely to the inspired teaching of Sydney Greig that so many of us were ready and able to avail of the new opportunities to develop our art.

Val Keogh

As a student in the Municipal School of Music from 1937 onwards, I remember many notable names. Violinists included the Maguires – Hugh, Charles, Elias, Treasa, and Monica – Clara and Honora Greene, Nell Kane, Nancy Delaney and Michael Tobin. Peggy Keleghan married Kevin Roche, cellist and bass player in the Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra, who later became Orchestra Manager. I also joined the R. E. Symphony Orchestra as librarian, percussionist and Assistant Orchestra Manager. Philomena Greene, cellist, became a member of the “Happy Gang” at the Queen’s Theatre. Others who come to mind are pianist Veronica McSwiney, flautists Jack Rafter and Doris Cleary (now my wife – Doris Keogh of the RIAM).

The Director at that time, Mr Joseph O’Brien, was also organist of St. Francis Xavier Church, Gardiner Street. Of the piano teachers, I remember Mrs Mai Byrne-Raymond, Madame Lucy Donnelly-Gogan, Josephine Curran, Maura Russell, and Cathleen Rogers – who was musical director with the Micheal MacLiammoir and Hilton Edwards Theatre Company. Piano students were taught in classes, each pupil had a dummy keyboard.

Other teachers included Jean Bertin and Kathleen Uhlemann (singing), Commandant Sauerzweig (wind and brass), John O’Keeffe (clarinet and saxophone), Patrick Murray (clarinet), Leo Rowsome (pipes). William Reidy,
who taught cello, was dressed all in black, and looked like de Valera.

During the war years, the school orchestra and soloists gave concerts for the troops in the Curragh Camp. The annual school concert was held in Rathmines Town Hall.

The Students' Union met on Saturday nights in Chatham Row for dances, and musical quizzes, and formed a symphony orchestra, conducted by Brendan Dunne. This was in addition to the Junior and Senior Orchestras, and the Brass and Reed Band, trained by Commandant Sauerzweig, who could play all the brass and reed instruments. On Union nights, John Ronayne's father cycled from his home in Capel St. to Chatham Row, with a tea urn strapped on his back for boiling water to make tea. In the summer, social outings to Howth Head, Bray Head, Enniskerry, and the Dargle Vale, were a feature of Union activities.

Superintendent John King

The Garda Band's Director of Music, Superintendent John King, began piano lessons at eight years of age at the Municipal School of Music with Mr (later Dr) J. J. O'Reilly, and Mrs Byrne-Raymond. Transferring to wind instruments in the 1950's with Mr John Hickey, he joined the Garda Síochána for the Band in 1957. He later followed the footsteps of brothers Bertie and Don when taking double-bass lessons from Mr Bobby Bushnell and spent many happy hours with Mr Michael McNamara's Junior Orchestra. A great advocate of the College of Music, John returned to resume studies for his Bandmastership Diploma in the early seventies. Teachers over the years included Miss Nancy Calthorpe, Miss Noreen O'Neill, and Mr Eric Sweeney. He did some part-time teaching at the College from 1971 to 1973.

For many years, John King, a French horn player, was Sergeant-in-charge of the Garda Band, being promoted to Superintendent and formally appointed Director of Music in February, 1990. Another past pupil, Sergeant Joseph Coleman, assistant to the Director of Music and solo clarinet in the Garda band, studied with Mr John O'Keeffe and Mr Joe Coughlan.

Dr John F. Larchet

John F. Larchet was born in Sandymount, Dublin, into a musical family in 1884. He was educated at the Catholic University School and at TCD. He studied under Michele Esposito MusD (TCD) RIAM, senior Vice-President and professor at the RIAM. He was a prominent member of the musical profession in Dublin for over forty years. He was senior professor at the Royal Irish Academy of Music from 1920, professor of music at University College Dublin from 1921 to 1958, and Director of music at the Abbey Theatre for nearly thirty years. As director of music examinations in secondary schools, he did much to raise standards of teaching. He was music advisor to the Irish army from 1923, and first President of the Dublin Grand Opera Society. He was awarded Hon. D.Mus (NUl) in 1953, and decorated with the order of Commendatore of the Italian Republic in 1958. As a composer, he is remembered for his adaptations of folk music. He died in Dublin in 1967.

Leo Maguire

(1903–1985)
Leo Maguire was born on 27th July, 1903, in Dublin. Educated by the Irish Christian Brothers at James's Street, as a boy and young man he was a keen Irish speaker visiting the West Cork and Connemara Gaeltachts. His first job was as a clerk for the Great Southern and Western Railways. He later joined the administrative staff of Dublin County Council and rose gradually to become County Secretary.

He was a very keen sportsman – handball, boxing, Gaelic football, rugby, hockey, golf, and tennis. It is, however, as a man of the broadest culture that he will be remembered. He was an excellent and keen musician, and had learned many national songs from his grandmother. He recalled being put up on a table by Michael Mallin to sing a song at the inaugural meeting of the Irish Citizen Army.

He perfected his singing under Dr Vincent O'Brien – John Count McCormack's teacher – and became O'Brien's closest friend, working closely with him in the Pro-Cathedral. In 1941, he married Cecilia McMenamin, another of Vincent O'Brien's pupils. Leo's first wife, Peg MacEntee, had died of TB. Leo and Cecilia (Cis) were both founding-members of the Dublin Grand Opera Society, which kept opera alive in Dublin even during World War II.

Leo started broadcasting with Radio 2 RN in 1927. He devised and presented Serenade for Sleep, a late-night programme with music and readings. He frequently sang, often with his wife Cis, on radio. For over thirty years, he presented the Walton Programme for his life-long friend Martin Walton. As well as planning details of the Glenside series of records and sheet music, even down to the label, Leo wrote a very large number of songs. The Whistling Gypsy was his most successful, written in a few minutes to fill a gap in a programme! Some others were Connemara Cradle Song, Come to the Ceili, Dreamy Shannon River (one of his favourites), and The Dublin Saunter – ("Dublin can be Heaven with Coffee at Eleven"), one of many pieces written for, and made famous by, the late Noel Purcell.

In the 1950's, Leo left the County Council and gave himself to his first love – music teaching. His basic teaching was with private pupils in the Dublin College of Music, and he taught choirs in a large number of schools and colleges. He had many successes in Feiseanna with choirs and individuals. The Walton Programme, which he scripted and presented live for more than thirty years, became the longest-running sponsored programme of RTE. It became a national institution with the phrase “If you feel like singing – do sing an Irish song”. He was the author of The Faithful and the Few, a book of songs and recitations published by Walton's Musical Galleries.

As a raconteur, he was without peer, and he had a story for every occasion. Leo was everything that Cardinal Newman aspired to find in "the perfect Christian gentleman". Ni bheidh a leithid arís ann.

(Newspaper Obituary 1985)

Alderman John McCann
(1905-1980)

Alderman John McCann, politician and playwright, was born in Dublin and educated at Synge Street, Cathal Brugha Street, Kevin Street and Bolton Street technical schools. He became an engineer in the Post Office, joined the Irish Volunteers, and was dismissed from his job for his republican activities. He was a founder-member of Fianna Fail, TD for Dublin South City, 1939-1954, and Lord Mayor of Dublin, 1946-1965. Alderman McCann was the indefatigable champion of the Municipal School of Music for very many years, acting in his capacity as chairman of the School Local Sub-Committee or as chairman of the City of Dublin VEC. The main concert hall in Chatham Row was named after him. He wrote a number of very popular plays for the Abbey Theatre company, then playing in the Queen's Theatre, Pearse Street, of which Twenty Years A-Wooing was the most successful, breaking box-office records. He is father of the actor Donal McCann.

Michael McNamara

Michael McNamara, who died in his eighty-fifth year, played an outstanding part in the history of Ireland's music. He learned the violin from that famous Irish teacher, Patrick Delany, at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, and completed his studies in London. Returning to Dublin, he first taught at the Leinster School of Music, and then, at the instance of Arthur Darley, became a part-time teacher in the Municipal School of Music. He could well be regarded as the outstanding Irish violin teacher of this century. Probably his most famous living pupil is Hugh Maguire. In a lengthy interview, Hugh Maguire talked to me about his teachers in London, and of his studying with Enesco in Paris, and throughout the conversation there was a refrain, "but I only had one teacher, Mr Mac."
Part-time led naturally to full-time, and then the VEC had the wit to make him Principal of what he soon transformed into the College of Music. In those days the Principal was not allowed to teach, but he soon recruited Jaroslav Vaneček, whose teaching is still the paramount influence among Irish violinists. Mr Mac thrashed himself into building up his School. He made it his business to recruit the best teachers he could find, often quite blatantly poaching. For the College he plagued the VEC (who were wholly behind him), pestered the Department of Education, and badgered Ministers – and nearly always won. He was a brilliant Principal and well-loved by everyone.

When he retired from the College, Bridget Doolan, then Principal of Cork Municipal School, recruited him, and he was able to resume the teaching that he loved, and he commuted thither until last year. Dedicated also to chamber music, he was invited by the Dublin Chamber Music Group to coach their twice-yearly weekend schools at An Grianan at Termonfeckin. There, he was helping amateur players, whom he cherished and encouraged just as much as if they had been students or professionals. Over a pint, he was a fund of amusing stories, reminiscences, and witticisms. I never met anyone who did not love him. And it is the nature of things that his youngest son, Brian, is now the senior violin teacher at the College. To paraphrase Wren, if you want a monument, look around at his pupils and at the College he fostered in a most unhelpful building.


My first introduction to the College was when, at the age of six, I went with my mother to see Mr Reidy about cello lessons. He was horrified by the idea of someone so young starting the cello, because at that time the usual age was eleven. When he refused I must have looked disappointed, because he told me to go home, eat plenty of bread, and he would see how much I had grown at the beginning of term. I don’t know if I grew much, but I started lessons that September.

Some months later I was playing Piatti Study no. 8, when a man came into the room to listen to me. He was very impressed and told me that he was only on Study no. 4 in the same book. I remember feeling very sorry for him as I thought he must be very slow. I was to learn later he was the eminent musician and musicologist, Dr Walter Beckett.

Mr Reidy was tall and thin and he wore rimless glasses. He was quiet-spoken, very gentle and encouraging. He told me that policemen frequently saluted him; mistaking him for Éamonn de Valera.

The highlight of my early days was the Junior Orchestra with Mr Mac. My mother knew Mr Mac of old as she had been a pupil of his along with her cousin, my godmother, who had become a professional violinist. One Thursday after my lesson, I was sitting waiting for my cousin Kathleen Behan (also a professional cellist) to take me home; Mr Mac asked me where was my cello, I pointed to it, and he told me to take it out and play it. I had become a member of the Junior Orchestra.

The Department of Education Music Summer School included a course for conductors of school orchestras coached by Leslie Regan. We were the guinea pigs. Most of the students were nuns and it was sweet revenge for us seeing them obviously nervous, being corrected, while, on the other hand, we could do no wrong.

I enjoyed particularly the year the course was held in the College of Catering, Cathal Brugha Street, which I think was then a new building. What a change for College of Music students to have space! Our free time was spent jumping up to look through the glass panels in the doors to see who was teaching or listening to the master classes and when we got bored with that, running through the wide corridors. When I have occasion to visit the College of Catering now I always experience a remembered sense of excitement, and I still envy their space.

During my years in the Orchestra, some of the
members included Geraldine, Eily, Jackie, Moya and Sheila O'Grady, Mary O'Brien, Ruth Ticher, Brendan O'Reilly, Brendan O'Brien, Martin Fay, Maurice Kane, Ursula Donnelly, Louise Goldberg, Ita and Nuala Herbert, Thomas McNally, Maureen Carolan, and Nuala Levins. The list is never-ending and it is astonishing how many of them went on to become professional musicians.

Students had regular rehearsals with the official accompanist Madame Lucy Donnelly, a small business-like person with cropped grey hair. I never understood why she was always called Madame Donnelly, and I was fascinated to see that the VEC minutes also refer to her in the same manner.

I remember, too, the annual prize-winners concert as a very posh affair usually held in the Gresham or Shelbourne Hotel. Teaching staff wore full evening dress, and John McCann gave out the prizes.

I had been in the College a year or so when I got an extern scholarship for piano. My lessons were with the Principal, Joseph O'Brien. On his retirement, I studied with Cathleen Rogers, up to Grade VIII. When I decided to specialise in cello rather than piano, she was quite philosophical about my decision. In my final years with her, when my practice time was very limited, my piano lessons were some of the most enriching experiences of my student days, as we discussed in general, music, theatre, painting, etc. Sometimes a teacher can trigger off interests and ideas in a student, and for me, Miss Rogers was just such a teacher.

Following my student days in the College, I studied in Paris, after which I joined the RTE Symphony Orchestra (now the National Symphony Orchestra). Some years later, I was a founder-member of the Ulster Orchestra. On my return to RTE I was asked to deputise in the College for six months. The six months extended to two years, during which time I became a founder-member of the New Irish Chamber Orchestra. Between my duties in RTE and the Chamber Orchestra, I never gave lessons at the correct hour; consequently, due to lack of rooms, I did my teaching in the little box called the cleaners' room, which had barely the width of a bow length. I shall always remember with gratitude the kindness of Finn O'Lochlainn, who, on many occasions, took his work into the tea-room, and gave me the use of the old library.

In 1976, I was appointed cello teacher, and five years later Head of Orchestral Studies. When I became Head of School, I had three ambitions, one of which has been realised, i.e., the establishment of a wholetime performers' course. I was very aware that, although many of the components of full-time study were available in the College, there was no formal course. There was no obligation on students to take extern English diplomas, and, as most orchestral students aspire to a performing career, the possible future importance of sitting one of these diplomas was not obvious. As a consequence, some experienced performers are precluded from applying for posts in the College, although they may wish to change career as mature musicians. Therefore, on my appointment as Head, I proposed that a performers' course be formalised. It is fitting that during the College Centenary Year our first formal graduates took their final examinations.

My second ambition has been realised in part, i.e., a substantial increase in the number of string teachers. My third proposal on appointment has not been realised at all, i.e., a scheme of peripatetic instrumental teachers in Dublin, with a view to reaching a wider population. Years ago, the nuns (many of whom attended the Summer Schools mentioned above) performed a very important service through the schools by introducing children to string playing. When a child showed particular promise, contact was made with the College, and the child was often awarded an extern scholarship. I know that many of my professional colleagues were discovered in this way. We see the loss of this service caused by the drop in vocations and we must replace it by some other means.

One of my greatest satisfactions in the Department has been the development of ensemble work, both in the volume and standard of work, and great credit is due to the staff, students, and in particular to the conductors of the orchestras and bands.

Joseph O'Brien

The death of Mr Joseph O'Brien, 159 Merrion Road, Dublin, in 1961, saw the passing of a well-known musician of an old Dublin musical family. He was aged seventy-six.

Mr O'Brien was the last of the three O'Brien brothers who had music careers. He was church organist and choirmaster in Gardiner Street Church since 1931, and was Director of the Municipal School of Music from 1935 until he retired a few years ago. He was organist at St.
Eugene's Church, Derry, from 1912 to 1931. Joseph's brother, Vincent, was organist and choirmaster in the Pro-Cathedral, Dublin, and teacher of John McCormack, with whom he did a concert tour of the USA and Australia as an accompanist. Another brother, Louis, was organist in Westland Row Church.

(The Irish Times, February 20th, 1961)

Colonel Frederick O'Callaghan

Uniform was worn on and off duty in the Army School of Music during my time there as a boy student bandsman. "Civvy Passes" were a rarity. Indeed any passes, i.e., "permission to leave barracks" had to be submitted for signature and were a sine qua non, whatever the time and whatever the purpose of going out.

However, on Wednesday, January 13th, 1943, Boy F. O'Callaghan, no. 84085, aged fifteen, was granted a special pass, for the purpose of arranging to take piano lessons. And, having discovered that lessons in the Municipal School of Music would cost much less than lessons in the RIAM, he decided to enrol in the former.

His teacher was a Miss Haimer — a firm but understanding, and, indeed, inspiring, lady. The Tuesday night lessons were a joy, the army boots clanked along the corridor, turned right and arrived at the room where music (especially Beethoven) was revered, enjoyed, and adjudicated. Even examinations were an enjoyable challenge, and the pupil from the army did well at them, gaining a two-year scholarship into the bargain.

But Miss Haimer became Mrs Haimer Keely and left the teaching staff, and, although other teachers were kindly and encouraging, one pupil could never settle down again in the School, and, having sought and achieved a scholarship to the Read Pianoforte School, said farewell to Chatham Row, but not without gratitude and affection.

Dr John O'Conor

Born in Dublin, John O'Conor has built up an impressive national and international career, both as a recitalist and as soloist with many renowned orchestras. A pupil of Dr J. J. O'Reilly at the College of Music, and an honours music graduate of University College Dublin, he was awarded an Austrian government scholarship to study at the Hochschule fur Musik in Vienna with Dieter Weber. While studying there, he became the first Irish pianist to win an international piano competition when he won first prize at the Beethoven International Piano Competition in Vienna in 1973. Subsequently he won first prize at the Bösendorfer Competition in 1975.

Since that time, he has played extensively throughout the world, touring Japan seven times, and the USSR three times, and, since making his New York début in 1983, he has become a constant visitor to the USA. He has played with many of the world's greatest orchestras, including the Vienna Symphony, Czech Philharmonic, NHK Orchestra of Tokyo, Orchestre Nationale de
France and the Symphony Orchestras of Cleveland, Dallas, Montreal, Detroit and Washington DC. He now records exclusively on the American Telarc label for whom he is recording the complete Beethoven sonatas, Mozart concertos with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra under Sir Charles Mackerras, and chamber music with the Cleveland Quartet. His recording of the John Field Nocturnes became one of the best-selling classical recordings in the USA in 1990.

John O’Conor is co-founder and artistic director of the GPA Dublin International Piano Competition which is now regarded as one of the top six competitions in the world. For his services to music he has been decorated by the Italian and Polish governments and awarded an honorary doctorate by the National University of Ireland.

Dr Geraldine O’Grady

Geraldine O’Grady was born in Dublin, where she began her violin studies in the Municipal School of Music. Later she studied with Jean Fournier in Paris, and graduated from the Conservatoire Nationale Supérieur de Paris with the Premier Prix. She was awarded First Place and three special prizes – Prix Sarasate, Prix Milanollo and Prix Christine Nilsson.

On her return to Ireland, she was appointed leader of the RTE Symphony Orchestra. She spent four years with the orchestra before devoting herself full-time to a solo career. She has since toured extensively in Europe, the United States, South America and the West Indies. In addition to her recitals, she has been soloist with many major orchestras, including the London Symphony Orchestra, the Buffalo Philharmonic, the Kansas City Philharmonic, the Boston Pops Orchestra, and many times at home and on tour with the Ulster Orchestra, the National Symphony Orchestra, and the RTE Concert Orchestra.

In recognition of her services to Irish music, Geraldine was recently honoured by the National University of Ireland when she was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Music. She was also the recipient of the 1992 National Entertainment Award in the Classical Music category.

Dr James J. O’Reilly

For Dr Reilly, after four years as Principal, and four-times-four as Vice-Principal, of the Dublin College of Music, retirement is not the end of the road. Cheerfully relinquishing his administrative duties to the capable hands of his successor, Mr Frank Heneghan, he hopes now to be able to give more time to his first love, which is teaching. “I think teaching came naturally to me,” he says; “part of it is being able to diagnose talent in a child.”

A Dublin man of Co. Cavan forbears, Dr O’Reilly grew up in music. His father, who was born in New York but was brought home to Ireland as a baby, gave him his first violin lessons at the age of five. His mother, a good pianist and Sunday painter, stimulated his interest in the arts and classical literature. It seemed to them to be pushing it too far, however, when young James, at the end of his secondary course in O’Connell Schools, decided to make music his full-time profession. “They thought I was mad.”

The Christian Brothers helped by giving him some Three-R classes to teach while he pursued his musical studies, and, at a phenomenally young nineteen, he was appointed organist and choirmaster at St. Mary’s Church, Haddington Road. Later, he held the same office in Corpus Christi Church, Homefarm Road; the Franciscan Church, Merchants’ Quay; and the Carmelite Church, Whitefriar Street.

In 1946, after eleven years as part-time teacher, at what was then the Municipal School of Music, he joined the full-time permanent staff as piano teacher, and, in 1953, became Vice-Principal. He was Principal from 1969 until his recent retirement. In the meantime, he had taken his B.Mus degree at Trinity College, Dublin, and the same degree with first-class honours at University College, Dublin.

“Every child living should be taught music to a certain stage,” Dr O’Reilly says emphatically. “After that, it can be stopped, unless the child
really wants to go on.” With his predecessor, Michael McNamara, and Donnchadh Úa Braoin, he was co-founder of Ceol Cumann na nÓg, which has introduced many school children to good music.

To meet the present “colossal” demand for music among young people – the Chatham Street College alone has two thousand pupils at various ages and stages – the most urgent need he sees is for more qualified teachers. As Principal, he had recommended to the Dublin Education Committee that music courses should be established in the regional schools under their jurisdiction, to relieve pressure on the overcrowded College, and on parents who have to accompany their children from remote suburbs to its classes.

In spite of chaotically over-crowded quarters and restricted funds, the dedication of staff and students has kept the Chatham Street College gloriously afloat. Many of Dr O’Reilly’s own piano pupils are well-known on concert platforms – locally and internationally: Nuala Levins – wife of his son Jimmy – Veronica McSwiney, Hilary Macnamara, at present in the Royal College, London: John O’Conor, now studying in Vienna but returning in September to teach in his old College. Two brilliant young newcomers, Trudi Carberry and Emer Buckley, will be launched in the autumn.

Possibly the real trouble is that, with its superabundance of teaching and student talent, this nursery of music in Dublin has outgrown its red-brick confines, just as it outgrew its original name. Re-christening the Municipal School of Music the “Dublin College of Music” should have been only the beginning of reform. Dr O’Reilly and his colleagues must be praying that, under a new Minister, the Department of Education, notoriously lethargic in its response to the needs of the arts, will see that it is not the end.

(Miceal O’Rourke, Piano lessons began for me (a fat boy aged eight) in Chatham Row (Room 39) in September 1956. Miss Aileen O’Hanrahan, tall, young, and good-looking, was in charge of a class of eight or nine, which included two of my cousins. At the first lesson, I learned that I had clumps of bananas hanging from my wrists! Also, where to find Middle C on a half-size dummy keyboard! It was in this class that Aileen, one of my greatest supporters, inadvertently caused everlasting confusion by calling me “Michael” which was not (is not) my name at all. When, at the third lesson, it became apparent that I already had covered most of the programme for the entire year, Aileen and my cousins had quite enough of me and I was earmarked to be moved laterally and down one floor to Room 32 (chez Elizabeth Costello). This was really a terrifying prospect, even if my cousins considered it unfair promotion, and refused to speak to me again until we were grown men! Miss Costello went about slimming down my “banana fingers” with a mortifying diet of Czerny studies, and, even worse, Cesi (pronounced “chayzee”) exercises. Nobody has ever written more monotonous or truly odious “Music” than Il Signor Cesi. I therefore decided that his exercises were at least not for me. The first six months with Miss Costello saw many a battle royal as I attempted the impossible, i.e., to “fake” my way through the many contorted hand positions required of me by Signor Cesi. In the end, Miss Costello gave up, and prescribed some Bach. From that moment we were in business, and Miss Costello was a constant source of fine teaching, encouragement, and of moral support, until I took up my Diploma in London. She gave unselfishly of her time, thought, and energy to me, and to all)
her many pupils who showed promise.

During that period at the College there were also bi-monthly lessons with Professor Harry Isaacs, who was a fine English pianist of the Matthay School. He was an extremely musical man, who assured everybody that I was “a most musical boy”. Harry was a gourmet, witty in the extreme, and generous – a kind and loveable man.

My student days at the College are not least memorable for the high quality of teaching in other disciplines. I think especially of the outstanding talents produced by André Prieur and Jaroslav Vaněček. From the age of eleven or so, I gained immensely in musical experience, and in long-lasting friendships by playing in chamber groups with their pupils. Many years on, it remains a particular joy to team up with them again whenever I am concerto-soloist with the various Irish orchestras.

Throughout my years at the College, day to day affairs were in the capable hands of the much-loved Principal, Michael McNamara. Anecdotes about him, if collected and published, would make the non-fiction best seller list! In 1961, the school orchestra, with Mac on the podium, rehearsed a certain overture. He would stir it all up through a very lengthy crescendo until two bars before the climax. Here, he would trot off to the end of the room, from where, with both hands held firmly over his ears and with his back to the orchestra, he would shout “NOW!”. The cataclysmic entry of two well-meaning, but dubious, trombone players would then make every brick in Chatham Street shudder. Only ten bars later would Mac, with his head bowed, make his way back to the podium and proceed to wind things down. Hidden from view, I watched this performance every Tuesday for a whole term. I remember that the overture was *The Caliph of Bagdad*! I can still hear Mac’s hilarious and infectious laugh – “Sssss...”

**Kevin Roche**

I first enrolled as a cello student at the Municipal School of Music, Dublin, (now the Dublin College of Music) in September, 1937. The Principal at the time was Mr Joseph O’Brien, my cello teacher was Mr William Reidy; and my teacher for theory, harmony and counterpoint was Dr J. J. O’Reilly.

The following year, I started playing in the Senior Students’ Orchestra, which rehearsed every Tuesday evening from 8.00 p.m. to 9.30 p.m., under the baton of Mr Michael McNamara, who was known affectionately by everybody as Mr Mac. Mr Mac was the principal teacher of the violin and viola, and produced several players who were later to distinguish themselves in the music profession; including Charles and Hugh Maguire, John Ronayne, John MacKenzie, and later Geraldine O’Grady and Monica Maguire. (I think Brendan O’Brien and Brendan O’Reilly were probably pupils of his also). At the time that I joined it, the Senior Orchestra included the two Maguires and their sister Treasa (cello), John Ronayne, John MacKenzie (viola), Peggy Kelaghan (who later became my wife), Jimmie Kelly (later famous as the author James Plunkett), and his future wife Valerie Koblitz. (Other names that come to mind are Clara Greene, May and Lucy Ward, and Nell Kane).

The Orchestra was mostly strings, with a few (very few) woodwind – perhaps a flute, oboe and clarinet – and very rarely brass or percussion. Our repertoire included Mozart’s *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* and Overture, *The Marriage of Figaro*, Bach’s *Brandenburg Concerto no. 3*, Greig’s *Holberg Suite*, Boieldieu’s Overture, *The Caliph of Bagdad*, Haydn’s “Clock” Symphony, Beethoven’s Symphonies nos. 1, 2, and 5 and Overture, *Coriolanus*, Meyerbeer’s *March of the Prophets*, and Weber’s Overture, *Peter Schmoll*. All the missing wind parts were cued in on piano by Valerie Koblitz. The Orchestra rehearsal was the highlight of the week for all of us string players. The voice teacher at that time was a Frenchman named Jean Bertin, and the teacher of wind instruments was Comdt. (later Col.) Sauerweig, who had succeeded Col. Fritz Brase as Director of the Army School of Music.

In 1939, I won the senior cello competition at the Feis Maitiú. The Gold Medal awarded that
year (which I have still) was unique in that it was presented by the Czech Ambassador to Ireland at the time, who was himself an amateur cellist. By the time the competition actually took place, however, Czechoslovakia had been invaded by Hitler, the Ambassador had left Ireland, and the medal was never repeated. In 1940 (if my memory serves), I won the senior cello competition at the Feis Shligigh and Feis Ath Cliath. And, in 1941, 1942, and 1943, I entered for senior cello at the Feis Ceoil winning 3rd prize, 2nd prize, and, eventually, 1st prize.

It was Jimmie Kelly and Valerie Koblitz who introduced me to chamber music. We started playing Trios by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, at the house of an aunt of Jimmie’s in Irishtown; at my parents’ house in Tritonville Road, Sandymount; and in Valerie’s home in Richmond Hill, Rathmines. Other friends (including Peggy Kelaghan) joined us from time to time, and together we explored the string quartet and trio repertoire (for half a century). Peggy and I married in 1944, and Jimmie and Valerie married in 1945.

Around about 1942 or 1943, I became interested in the double-bass. The Senior Orchestra had no student bass-player, but was “helped out” by an elderly bass-player named Tom Mathers. Unfortunately, Mr Mathers met with an accident in which he fractured a wrist, and he never played again. I was encouraged by Mr Mac to try my hand at the bass. I took some lessons from Mr Bob Bushnell and soon found myself the regular bass-player in the orchestra. I also became very much in demand for professional engagements as a bass-player, including concert, theatre, and even dance-band work – (quite lucrative for an impecunious newly-wed). Meantime, I had joined the Department of Local Government and Public Health as a junior civil servant. Some time around 1942 or 1943, I became a private pupil of Mr Clyde Twelvetrees, who was principal cello in the Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra. Shortly afterwards, I completed a teacher’s diploma in cello, theory, harmony and counterpoint at the College.

In 1948, I was invited by Fachtna O hAnnrachain, Music Director of Radio Eireann, to join the R. E. Symphony Orchestra as a double-bass player. I jumped at the chance of getting away from the boredom of the Civil Service, and of making a career in music. At University College, Dublin, where my Professor was Dr John F. Larchet, most of the lectures were in the late afternoon and early evening, so I was able to attend almost all of them and still keep my job going. In 1951, the R. E. Symphony and Light Orchestras began to give concerts in the provinces, to participate in the Wexford Festival of Opera, and other events, and, in 1952, I was appointed Manager of the two orchestras.

In 1954, I completed my B.Mus Degree (with honours), and was conferred in October of that year. In 1956, I was appointed Assistant Music Director. Fachtna O hAnnrachain was still Music Director until about the end of 1960, when he became Director of Legal Affairs. 1961 saw the start of Tibor Paul’s régime as Director of Music, and principal conductor of the RESO, when Dr Gerard Victory became his Deputy. After Mr Paul’s departure, Dr Victory became Director of Music, and I was Deputy Director. In 1968, I was given the additional responsibility of Head of the newly-formed Light Music Department, and retained these two posts until my retirement from the staff of RTE at the end of 1979.

My father, a keen amateur violinist, was a student at the Municipal School of Music; a pupil of Maud Davin (Mrs Frank Aiken), and Michael McNamara. In 1938, I was introduced to the School, and I too became a pupil of Michael McNamara – always known as Mr Mac. All my memories of that time were happy ones. I looked
forward so much, at the end of summer holidays, to being taken by my father to re-enrol for the next year's lessons, and was always excited at meeting the various teachers again. I played in the Junior Orchestra – later becoming its leader. My memories of the Orchestra are particularly happy ones. There were always lots of cream cakes for us when we performed at our little concerts, and the Christmas party (arranged by Mr Mac in place of rehearsal) was always great fun.

My father, along with John MacKenzie, who later became my teacher at the Municipal School of Music, and a great influence on my musical life, Val Keogh (later in charge of the RTE Symphony Orchestra), and Paddy Murray, were co-founders of the Students' Union at the School. They held Saturday evening “At Homes” in what was then the bandroom (a large room at the top of the building) at which there was dancing and various forms of music-making. I remember playing at these functions – though I was never allowed to stay until the end, but this was compensated for by being taken home by car – a rare event in the Dublin of those days. Evening talks and lectures were also a part of the School life; these would be on all aspects of music.

J. J. O'Reilly was our theory teacher. He had a lively style, and was always ready to see the funny side of our efforts. Madame Lucy Donnelly was the official accompanist, and was always very patient and long-suffering when one appeared in her room to play through one's pieces for the forthcoming concert. She was always a tower of strength on the evening, and used to help nervous young performers along.

Colonel Sauerzweig (in charge of music in the army) was always in full uniform when teaching at the School – I found his shiny boots particularly remarkable. Jean Bertin brought his French accent and manners to his solo singing and choral classes. Only now, while writing these words, do I remember names and faces of both teachers and students that I had long forgotten. It brings back memories of the interesting times we had at the Municipal School of Music in those years long ago.

Leo Rowsome, Ireland's leading Uilleann piper, taught in the Municipal School of Music for fifty years. Among his distinguished pupils were Willie Clancy, Seán Seery, and Paddy Maloney. In 1936, he founded, and became President of, the Uilleann Pipers' Society – one of the groups from which Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann evolved. He was the first Irish musician to appear on television in 1928, when the BBC were starting regular transmission. He has made frequent radio broadcasts since 1926. He also played at numerous concerts, at home and abroad, and was a maker of Uilleann Pipes – a craft which he learned from his grandfather.
Colonel F. C. Sauerzweig

Frederick Christian Sauerzweig was recruited from Germany by the new Irish Army in 1923, and became its first instructional officer of music, and assistant to its new Director, Colonel Fritz Brase. Sauerzweig had been the bandmaster of the Second Foot Artillery in Greifswald, and then became a town musician playing in cities along the Baltic Coast. He was a first-class talent, both as a performer, having been trained in the Berlin Philharmonic Society, and as a teacher. He arrived in Ireland on March 1st, 1923, to take up his position in the Irish Army with the rank of Captain.

While Colonel Brase was on a negotiated special salary, Captain Sauerzweig was on a soldier’s pay, and, by 1935, Sauerzweig decided to supplement his income by teaching in the Municipal School of Music. His appointment is noted in the Minutes of 1935 as a teacher of double-bass and wind instruments (wood and brass).

Frederick Christian Sauerzweig had a most distinguished Army career, becoming Director of the Army School of Music on the death of Colonel Fritz Brase in 1940. He was promoted to Major in 1943, and Colonel in 1945. He retired in 1947, and died in 1953. His career in the Municipal School of Music spanned over ten years and was equally illustrious. His range of musical instrumental expertise covered strings, woodwind, keyboard, and brass, and he himself said that he could play and teach a total of up to fifteen instruments. He is remembered by many for his dedicated and enthusiastic teaching, and he developed a most important area of the School’s curriculum.

Dr Lorcan G. Sherlock
(1876–1947)

Dr Lorcan Sherlock was, for many years, one of the ablest City Councillors, and was Lord Mayor of Dublin from 1912 to 1914. He took a particular interest in the affairs of the Municipal School of Music, and was its official champion for many years. One of his brothers was Mr Gerald Sherlock, who was the first City Manager of Dublin. Their father, the late Mr Thomas Sherlock – journalist, poet and musician – was a member of the City Council, and became Judge of the old Court of Conscience in South William Street. He held that office until his death, when it was abolished.

As a young man, Lorcan G. Sherlock became interested in municipal affairs, and soon became a member of the old Corporation. He worked so well that he earned the high regard of his colleagues, and, in 1912, he was elected Lord-
Mayor. His outstanding ability and popularity were such that he was re-elected the following year, and again in 1914. He had a remarkable insight into the intricacies of finance, and, by his able guidance, was instrumental in rendering a signal service to the community of Dublin, in relation to certain important property. So satisfactory was his aid in the matter that, in recognition, the University of Dublin conferred upon him the honorary degree of LLD.

He became Sheriff of Dublin, and held that office until he retired in 1944. During his term of office in the Municipal Council, he was chairman of many important committees, including the electricity supply undertaking, which established the Pigeon House Station.

Hubert Valentine

Hubert Valentine, tenor, received his first vocal training in the Municipal School of Music from the great French baritone, Jean Bertin, who was his principal voice teacher, and took a great interest in the young singer. Hubert subsequently studied with Vincent O’Brian, before leaving for America in 1938. His first American recital was in the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and he sang in all the important concert halls coast-to-coast. One of the most outstanding experiences of his career was when he made his operatic début in the rôle of Faust, with the Philadelphia La Scala Opera Company.

On the outbreak of World War II, he volunteered and served for four years in the South Pacific, where he gave many concerts for troops, and received numerous citations. He was the first singer to record for HMV on the Irish label, and was a regular singer on the Hospital Sweepstakes Programme on 2 RN, and on Radio Luxembourg, with the renowned soprano, Renée Flynn. At the present time, he broadcasts a classical Irish music programme on Boston’s Radio station WCRB. The programme, entitled Music From Ireland, often features the National Symphony Orchestra, the RTE Concert Orchestra, the Irish Chamber Orchestra, as well as leading vocalists and instrumentalists, including past pupils of the College of Music.

Martin A. Walton

Martin A. Walton was a prize-winning student, and outstanding violin teacher, of the Municipal School of Music, in the early part of this century, before he established his own firm, to supply musical instruments, and also his own school of music. He came to Dublin from Kilkenny when he was one year old. He was born in the Marble City.
on February 27th, 1881, to Patrick Walton, a linotype operator, and Mary, a native of Castlecomer. He was an only child.

The breadwinner of the family became the manager of William O'Brien's paper, *The Irish People*. The paper failed, and the boy (Martin) was to grow up in the suburbs of Drumcondra, where, generally speaking, times were not all that rosy for a Catholic compositor. Most of the Dublin newspapers at the time were non-Catholic, with the exception of *The Irish Independent*, but Mr Walton was friendly with Alderman Nannetti, a most influential Catholic connected with *The Freeman's Journal* – an MP, and twice Lord Mayor of Dublin (Nannetti appears in James Joyce's novel *Ulysses*). Through him Mr Walton joined the Freeman in 1909.

Martin attended St. Patrick's National School, Drumcondra. One of his classmates was Frank O'Donovan, who became the well-known ballad-writer and comedian, and another was to become more famous as the protégé of Winston Churchill – Brendan Bracken. At fourteen, the tall young boy (Martin), had a shorthand speed of more than a hundred words per minute. His father paid a fee of £200 for his son to learn the wine-and-spirit business, and he subsequently entered the establishment of Martin Fitzgerald in Westmoreland Street. He remained in Fitzgerald’s until after his release from Ballykinlar Interment Camp at Christmas 1921. Whilst in Fitzgerald’s, he was capable of taking control of the office, doing the accounts, and the typing.

In the years before he was interned (November, 1920), he had a second job – four hours a day, seven days a week! Martin founded the music business in North Frederick Street after his release from internment, when he also married Patricia Leonard. They had one son and three daughters. He was a pioneer in publishing Irish songs and ballads; he went into the record business, and broadcast on the *Walton Programme* on Radio Éireann, which ceased after 30 years. He was founder-member of the association of the Old Dublin Brigade, 51 Parnell Square. He was also a Council member of the Old Dublin Society.

*(Newspaper Obituary)*