CHAPTER 8

1968–1978

NEW COLLEGE STRUCTURES

For many years it was the determined policy of the City of Dublin VEC to raise the status of the higher technical schools, such as Kevin Street and Bolton Street, to that of Colleges of Technology. It was also intended in an equal and special way to raise the status of the Municipal School of Music to that of a College. The formidable trio of John McCann, politician and man of culture, Martin Gleeson, Chief Executive Officer of the City of Dublin VEC, a most dynamic and farseeing administrator, and Michael McNamara, beloved Principal of the Municipal School, combined to initiate this ideal. The idea gained acceptance in the 1970’s and the technical Colleges led the way.

Dr J. J. O’Reilly Principal

With the retirement of Michael McNamara in 1969, the sense of purpose was carried on by his successor, Dr J. J. O’Reilly, and from 1973 by yet another Principal, Frank Heneghan. Against the backdrop of staff reorganisation and student agitation, the day-to-day work of the College continued and the foundations were laid for future development in the third-level area.

College Advisory Board (College Council)
One of Dr. O’Reilly’s first meetings as Principal, 17th November, 1969 was reported as follows:-

Mr John McCann was elected Chairman and Dr J. J. O’Reilly was elected Hon. Secretary. The names of the full Board are:-


Salient features of this meeting were two recommendations:-

Dr J. J. O’Reilly

Finn O Lochlainn
1. Appointment of Finn O Lochlainn B.Mus., B.A., H.D.E. as Librarian on terms proposed by the Principal (Here I recommended that ten hours be devoted to Library duties and that this time be taken off Mr O Lochlainn’s teaching time).

2. That the Madame Donnelly Cup Competition be reopened and continued annually with the presentation of a reduced replica to the winner each time. Mr Peter Killian, B.Mus., Department of Education, has agreed to act as adjudicator in an honorary capacity.

Other matters briefly discussed and listed for future meetings were:

1. The possibility of running a series of concerts to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Beethoven's birth (1770).
2. What interest, if any, is taken in music in other Vocational Schools?
3. Availability of music teachers and the possibility of bettering conditions for the training of music teachers on a larger scale in the College than is at present feasible.

The meeting was most satisfactory. Each member of the Board entered into the work in hand and contributed valuable suggestions for each item on the agenda. There was a general request for monthly meetings if possible.

I consider that the Advisory Board of the College of Music under the chairmanship of Mr John McCann is a valuable asset to the progress of the College.

In December 1969 a report of the College Advisory Board recorded:

Miss E. Costello, recently appointed Vice-Principal of the College of Music, was congratulated on her promotion and welcomed to membership of the Board.

Prize-winners 1970-1971

Lorcan Sherlock Medal and Scholarship
Gearóid Grant

Violin (Under 12)
Maighréad McCrann
Claire Lawlor
Terence Crehan
Aengus O Marcaigh

Violin (Under 16)
Naomi Gaffney
Patrick Fitzgerald

Violin (Senior)
Catherine Briscoe
Teresa Costello

Viola
Sally Ann Bryan

Organ
Margaret O'Sullivan
Deirdre Storey

Harp
Geraldine Cleary

Ely O'Carroll Memorial Medal and Scholarship
Anne Fitzsimon

The large requests from various sources for music teachers and teacher-training, the even greater requests for new classes in chamber music, orchestral playing, conducting and musical appreciation and the annually increasing waiting-list for admission to existing classes prompted the Board to recommend the new classes and the acquisition of the adjoining building as a temporary solution to space problems.

An early 1970 report noted that the Commissioner administering Technical Education had approved the acquisition of the adjoining building.

Once again the urgent need for more accommodation came to the fore in April 1970 in the request from the Speech and Drama class for more space in which to function. An extension to the existing stage was the best and only solution offered as a temporary expedient.

Premises

Outstanding significance in the unanimous opinion of the Board was given to the fact that the ever growing demands being made on the services of the College would have to be met with sooner or later.
Advisory Board Meetings 1970

The purchase of a Concert Grand Piano at an approximate cost of £3,250 for the Concert Hall was recommended primarily to meet two requirements:

1. To provide facility for advanced pianists who are now reaching International Recital standard in the College and for whom a Concert Grand Piano is an absolute necessity.
2. For use at the now very popular lunchtime Concerts which are frequented by the Press and general public.

Incidental CDVEC Minutes included the following:

That a grant of £100 be made towards the expenses of Miss Emer Buckley, student of pianoforte, College of Music, to enable her to study abroad during the summer. Miss Buckley has been a brilliant student in the College since 1959 and is at present a 2nd year B.Mus. student in U.C.D. She intends making music her career.

That the fee for a Radio recording (£18) made on 27th May 1970 by the orchestra of the College of Music be given to the Students' Union.

The report of the July 1970 meeting noted:

A good attendance of the Board dealt with all matters for consideration with unanimity. Posts of Responsibility were gone into and a recommendation made. In doing so the numbers in each department were taken into account.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pianoforte</td>
<td>846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strings</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wind and Percussion</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmony</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organ</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech and Drama</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harp</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1598</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In October the report included the following:

There was, as usual, a good attendance of the Board. The decease of two members of the staff, John O'Keeffe and Leo Rowsome, was noted with very sincere regret and arrangements made for letters of condolence to be sent to their families.

A notable feature of the Meeting in its consideration of the Annual Report of the College of Music, 1969/70, was the stress the Board laid on the need for new accommodation for the speedy and efficient training of new teachers to meet the ever growing demand in this sphere.

The Board was also of the opinion that at least two lectures per term should be given by distinguished musicians in Musical Appreciation to bring our students, in particular the advanced ones, in touch with the outlook of the outside world on this subject.

It was noted with great pleasure that choir training had been resumed in the College and that the Library had been reopened, and recommended that £200 be sought to buy necessary reference books as soon as possible. It is also regretted that the number of books in the Library is very small and totally inadequate for 1,600 students.

The November meeting considered the following:

The need for greater attention to teacher training than is possible at present was discussed. The lack of facilities for aspirants to professional playing was reviewed.

The need for more wholetime teachers was deemed essential for the better conduct of the College teaching.

A Concert Grand Piano, so badly needed for the Hall, was the subject of serious consideration. The purchase of a Petrof Concert Grand at £720 was recommended in lieu of the Steinway at £3,750 previously sought.

Three years later it was reported that an allocation of money from the VEC for 1973/74 had made possible the purchase of a Petrof Concert Grand Piano for the College Concert Hall. This was enthusiastically received by the Board, it being stated that
the question of the inadequacy of the instruments in the Hall had been referred to on many occasions at Board meetings and by visiting examiners. Recommendations had been consistently made to Committee on this issue.

Teaching Staff 1969-1970
Leo Maguire and Mrs Mai Byrne-Raymond had retired as whole-time teachers in August 1969, but both reappeared on the part-time list in October:

Piano
- Miss Josephine Curran
- Mrs M. Byrne-Raymond
- Miss Maeve McSwiney
- Miss Mary Farrell
- Miss Cecily O'Flynn

Violin
- Miss Emer Calthorpe

Singing
- Mr Leo Maguire

Accompanist
- Miss Veronica McSwiney

Part-time teachers in 1970 included the following:

Piano
- Miss Mary McAuliffe
- Miss Cathleen Rogers
- Mr Peter Sweeney

Violin
- Miss Kitty Dalligan

Violoncello
- Miss Nora Gilleece

Violoncello for Chamber Music
- Miss Coral Bognuda

Chamber Music
- Mr David Lillis

Singing
- Miss Anne-Marie O'Sullivan

In June 1970 Feis successes were noted as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Prizes:</td>
<td>62</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd prizes:</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Others:</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Three whole-time teacher appointments were recommended, including one for combined cello and piano – "cello tuition to occupy the greater number of the appointee's hours."

Mr John O'Connor, permanent whole-time teacher, was allowed seven hours' piano accompaniment instead of piano teaching. Three years later approval was requested for the replacement at an equivalent level of:

Mr John O'Connor, a member of the staff who has been on a two-year leave of absence, has now, following his success in the recent International Beethoven Competition in Vienna, intimated by phone that he wishes to resign from the College staff to pursue a concert career.

Regional Schools
The report of the July 1971 meeting included the following:

The Board's view on music in Regional Schools was not in tune with that expressed in the extract from the Board of Studies meeting of 28th May 1971. The chief reasons were as follows:

1. The original idea of the Board was that teaching in Regional Schools should be for non-vocational students as well as for vocational students in piano and violin only, aged from 6 to 12 years. For older beginners general musicianship and choir training should be the thing.
2. Percussion bands are only for children under 12 years of age. Older students have no interest in such activities.
3. Beginners over 12 years are not taken in the College of Music. It is regarded as impractical.
4. Music as a serious subject for Remedial Training is, as yet, too precarious a matter for teacher training in the College of Music. Too much still remains to be done in the field of ordinary training.
5. It was not the Board's aim to intrude on work in other Vocational Schools but to extend its own activities on Saturday mornings (and evenings if possible) to Regional Schools and to help with general musicianship and choir training where possible in them.
Development Plan: Jeremiah Sheehan CEO

In January 1972 the new Chief Executive Officer of the City of Dublin VEC, Jeremiah Sheehan, launched an important plan for the College:-

The College of Music has an enrolment of over 1,700 pupils over the full range of levels of instruction, which run from Grades I to VIII below full professional standard, with an additional two-year professional course to Diploma for those wishing to teach or practise as full-time musicians. A number of students attending B.Mus. degree courses at the Universities in Dublin also attend at the College of Music for post-Diploma instrumental work, including preparation for major competitions in the Feis Ceoil and other events of similar standard. The College’s record of competitive awards is consistently excellent over many years, over a wide range of instruments, and in all age groups.

Present Staff Structure

Following representations from individual members of teaching staff, and from the Vocational Teachers’ Association, for more favourable gradings of teaching staff in the College generally, I have examined, in consultation with the College Advisory Council, the present organisation structure and the salary grades of individual teachers in relation to their levels of work.

There are 18 whole-time teachers on the College staff and about twice that number of part-time teachers. Part-time teaching accounts for about 60 per cent of total hours of instruction, as the attached summary shows. All but four members of whole-time staff are on Class III (i.e. common standard teachers’ scale, applicable to all primary and post-primary teachers). Two teachers are on the Specialist scale (middle level, applicable to teachers of senior grade and lower technical courses in other Colleges in the Committee’s scheme). The Principal has Scale B salary, and the Vice-Principal is graded Class I.

Grading Criteria

In other Colleges within the Committee’s scheme, and generally in the vocational teaching service, Higher Technological/Commercial grading is available to teachers who are engaged mainly or solely in advanced work (i.e. undergraduate professional or the later stages of advanced technician diploma courses). The corresponding standards in the College of Music would be Diploma and post-Diploma work.

Specialist grade in other vocational education Colleges is applied to teachers who teach 55 per cent or more of their allotted hours either in fourth or later years of apprenticeship or above Leaving Certificate level, Grade 6 being considered equal to or marginally higher than the corresponding Leaving Certificate examination standard.

Posts of Special Responsibility

Graded posts of the kind applied in post primary schools, whereby over 40 per cent of teachers hold an allowance above the basic scale, have not been provided in the College of Music because of

(a) difficulties in calculating points ratings of an equitable kind for an institution where nearly all tuition is individual rather than by class group.

(b) the fact that some instruction was of very high standard and well beyond post primary range. Neither have grading structures of the kind used in the Committee’s Colleges been applied to the College of Music.

New Proposals

I think it essential to the continuing success of the College, which must depend in large part on the quality of teaching staff, that grading be applied on a basis corresponding to that used in the other Colleges within the scheme. In particular, I recommend:-

1. All teachers engaged wholly or mainly in Diploma and post-Diploma instruction should be assimilated to Higher Technological/Commercial Grade III scale.

2. All teachers whose timetables include 55 per cent or more of instruction above Grade 6 should be assimilated to Specialist grade.
3. That Heads of Department be appointed to the two major Departments of the College, namely, Piano and Strings, each post to be of Technological/Commercial Grade II status.
4. That the Vice-Principal post be graded as Vice-Principal (Ordinary)
5. That appropriate retrospection be applied to assimilations corresponding with similar provisions elsewhere in the service.

Jeremiah P. Sheehan
Chief Executive Officer
12th January 1972

Dr O'Reilly’s term of office was coming to an end, and his last meeting was recorded as follows:

The Advisory Board of the College of Music had its usual good attendance for the meeting held on Friday, 9th June, 1972 at 7.00 pm.

The salient feature of this meeting was the attendance of Mr J. P. Sheehan, Chief Executive Officer, and the business he presented. He outlined an excellent scheme for staff re-adjustment. Briefly this was unanimously considered by the Board to have been extremely well thought out. It was felt by all to be a great plan for the staff of the College of Music if it materialised and that it would improve general teaching standards.

The possibility that there might be a realisation of cash allowances to gifted students for Summer Courses was welcomed with much optimism.

The various Feis results of the College during the academic year were read. They were considered to be outstandingly good. The staff was complimented by the Chief Executive Officer.

Mention was made of the insertion of an advertisement for a Principal to succeed Dr J. J. O’Reilly, the outgoing Principal.

The meeting terminated in a very genial and hopeful mood for big things to come.

Signed: J. J. O’Reilly

The appointment of Mr Frank Heneghan as Principal took effect from 1st March 1973.

Frank Heneghan Principal

Presentation of Czech Government Prize, 1976, including Mr Frank Heneghan and Miss Noreen O'Neill.

The new Principal’s first report recorded the first steps towards implementation of the scheme of reorganisation, prepared by the Chief Executive Officer.

A meeting was held on Monday, 18th June, 1973 at 10 a.m. at the request of the Chief Executive Officer, to discuss the implications of the VEC proposals for allocation of posts of responsibility referred to in the Department of Education letter of sanction dated 15th January, 1973. All whole-time teachers and representatives of the Vocational Teachers’ Association were invited to attend.

Attendance: Mr J.P. Sheehan, Mr F. Heneghan, Miss E. Costello, Mr J. Vanecek (Part-time), Mr J.W. Hickey, Miss N. Calthorpe, Miss N. O'Neill, Miss M. Ellison, Miss C. Greene, Mr F. O Lochnainn, Miss S. O Loughlin, Miss M. Russell, Miss U. Russell, Mrs M. Tynan, Miss P. Victory, Mr Swords, Mr O'Neill, Mr McManus.

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs. Greig and Sweeney.

Following a detailed presentation by the Chief Executive Officer of the background to the re-organisation of the College staff structure, the method of allocation of posts of responsibility on a merit basis, as proposed by the VEC and as outlined in Mr Heneghan’s letter of 22nd May, 1973 to whole-time teacher staff, was openly discussed. The members of the teaching staff unanimously decided to allow the assessment by interview and demonstration lessons to proceed.
Many meetings of the College Advisory Board and of staff were held to discuss the implementation of the new College structures. Through long and difficult negotiations over the following years between College management, the City of Dublin VEC, the Teachers Union of Ireland and the Department of Education, the scheme was implemented.

Chief Executive Officer's Report

Mr Sheehan’s report of July 1973 set out the parameters for staff recruitment:

1. In January 1972 I proposed, through the College Board, a new staff structure designed to give due recognition to the range and level of teaching in the College. I envisaged a two-fold benefit whereby much better promotional prospects would be available to existing whole-time teachers, while at the same time the College could offer more attractive career prospects to highly qualified musicians presently working as part-timers or unwilling to engage in teaching because of the limited salaries available.

2. The College is unusual in that only about 40% of teaching is done by whole-time staff. A substantial part, therefore, of the justification for the new structure is contributed by part-time teachers. It would be reasonable for them to be free to apply for some of the more senior posts created on the strength of their work.

3. The new establishment includes a total of thirteen posts above basic (Class III) Grade as follows:
   - Principal (Senior Lecturer I)
   - Vice-Principal (Lecturer II)
   - Senior Teacher (Lecturer I)
   - 10 Assistant Lecturers.

   This compares with an existing establishment above basic level of only four, viz., Principal, Vice-Principal and two Assistant Lecturers. The Principal and Vice-Principal posts have been substantially upgraded in status. There are, therefore, nine posts to be filled at present and a tenth will arise on the retirement of the Vice-Principal on August 31 next. The Vice-Principal post will be advertised publicly in accordance with regulations and may be filled internally or externally. The Senior Teacher post is likely to be filled by internal promotion and may leave an additional vacancy at Assistant Lecturer level. There will thus be nine or possibly ten Assistant Lecturer posts available for filling next session.

4. The Principal proposes whole-time appointments in four areas (Violoncello, Singing, Flute, Recorder and Guitar) where it seems likely that the persons appointed would be recruited outside existing whole-time staff. He regards it as essential to the development of the College to obtain very high grade talent in these instruments. These will not be forthcoming without the inducement of Assistant Lecturer status.

5. The existing whole-time staff will be eligible to apply for all posts and six of the ten Assistant Lecturer posts would be confined to them, even though they account for only 40% of total teaching.

6. No question of redundancy of whole-time staff arises. There is ample scope for the employment of all existing whole-time teachers even if four or five new whole-time teachers are added. Indeed, the total teaching load of the College is obviously such that still more whole-time teachers could be employed if this was felt to be the best policy.

7. It will be noted that two Post of Responsibility allowances at Grade B will also be available to existing staff. When recruitment and promotions are complete and consequential vacancies are filled it is probable that additional Posts of Responsibility at least at Grade B and possibly at Grade A will be justified under existing regulations of the Department. These should provide further promotional outlets for existing staff.

8. The future development of the College should be very much aided by the introduction of this new staff structure. With that development should come more growth in advanced work leading to further possibilities for the expansion of senior staff structure.

The following is Mr P. Malone’s resolution:

(a) That the re-structuring proposed is considered to be both acceptable and desirable leading as it will to more whole-time posts and in the belief that even higher standards will be achieved.
(b) Recognising the objectives of the questionnaire it is considered that it be presented or implemented on a less formal basis - preferably by personal contact.

(c) Recognising that the filling of certain whole-time posts will be by public advertisement, it is considered however that existing teachers who desire to apply for these posts, and whose qualifications and records are satisfactory, should be given special consideration by the selection board.

Premises
The Principal immediately began the search for a new extension to the College premises, as this letter of July 1973 records:

There is a long waiting-list on record; some 300 prospective students are turned away every year. Four possibilities of meeting this demand are under investigation:

(a) The College timetables for the past year are being assembled, scrutinised and reallocated. It is hoped that the premises can be more efficiently utilised in the new session by concentrating the junior students in afternoon periods and the more senior and adult students in morning and late evening periods; it is felt that this may allow some expansion in the services offered by the College.

(b) The adjoining premises, which have been vacant for a considerable time, have been the subject of numerous discussions and recommendations from the College Advisory Board and from previous Principals of the College. A factual report from the Committee on the possibility of assessing this building to the College vis-à-vis other rival interests would be appreciated.

(c) The demand being considerably in excess of the number of places available, the feasibility of using the College on Saturday afternoons has been considered. Sanction for additional teaching hours has been requested. We have 30 rooms available for individual and class tuition. If the College were to remain open from 1.00 pm to 6.00 pm on Saturday, 300 half-hour lessons could be given. It is worthy of mention that in the Royal Irish Academy of Music, Saturday is the busiest day, since all school-going students are available without the harassment of fitting lessons into weekday school schedules.

The Committee's approval to proceed with proposal (c) above, only as the need arises, is requested.

(d) It is noted as a matter of extreme urgency that the "Del Rio Café" which adjoins the College is for sale and might be acquired to ease the College space problem.

Advisory Board Meetings 1974-1975
Members of a new Advisory Board for the College of Music 1974:

Mr D. Fay, Mr J. McCann, Mr M.G. Dempsey, Mr J.K. Clarke, Mr B. Early, Representative of the Irish Federation of Musicians, Mr M. McNamara, Professor Delaney (replaced by M. Hopper), Mr P. Flanagan, The College Principal, The College Vice-Principal, Representative of the whole-time teaching Principal.

Appointments 1974
Temporary whole-time teacher of guitar:
Mr John Whitaker

Permanent whole-time teacher of violoncello:
Mrs Brighid Mooney-McCarthy

Permanent whole-time teacher of wind instruments: Mr Timothy Hanafin

Permanent whole-time teachers of pianoforte: Miss Emily Wilson, Miss Mary Breslin, Miss Evelyn Healy

Teachers' Council
In December 1974 it was announced that a Teachers' Council was being formed, and the College Advisory Board recommended every facility for staff to participate. The first meeting of the Teachers' Council was held on 21st February 1975, when an attendance of about 28 teachers elected Finn O Lochlann as Chairman. The name Staff Committee was selected and members were elected to represent the various curricular branches.
Part-time Staff
Mr Sweeney raised the question of the insecure position of part-time staff, one of them working wholetime hours, and asked whether the Department of Education could be asked to transfer those of the latter who sought it to wholetime status which would merely commensurate with their teaching effort. Mr Heneghan explained that this question had been asked on many occasions before and that the Department would only consider temporary whole-time status in the case of an advertised whole-time vacancy being unfilled because of failure to attract suitably qualified candidates. All new whole-time posts would have to be allocated by public advertisement and interview. The current Department sanction for the College staff structure did not allow for more posts; these could be recommended for advertisement but only following an enquiry into the situation and a submission to the Committee, and through them to the Department.

Mr Early suggested that, if only a small number of part-time teachers interested in a change of status were involved, the Committee might be informed. The Board recommended that Mr Heneghan should raise the matter at the January staff meeting and that applications from part-time teachers could be sent to the Committee, at least as placing on record the problem in the College.

College Orchestra
Mr Heneghan referred to the difficulty in ensuring satisfactory attendance at the College orchestral rehearsals. He referred to the regulations requiring students to attend and also to the forfeiture of scholarship rights as a result of non-attendance. He mentioned that he had addressed the attending members of the orchestra, many of them reluctant, and had agreed with the students to change the rehearsal time to an "after-tea" hour hoping that this would effect an improvement. The Board agreed that the orchestra was vital to the College and suggested that membership being open to former students should bring numbers in. Mr Heneghan stated that anyone willing to play in the orchestra would be welcome. The question was left pending the result of Mr Heneghan's talk to the students.

By June 1975 progress was reported on both these latter subjects:-

Mr Heneghan reported that the insistence on College Regulations on the question of attendance at Senior Orchestra rehearsals had had favourable results. There were murmurings and reluctance but the students had acquiesced and the improved attendances had made it possible to stage a concert which, at the students' request, had been arranged for 7th May, 1975, at very short notice. The venue was Clogher Road School very kindly made available by Mr Rossiter. There had been complaints from the students about poor publicity and lack of audience. Mr Heneghan said that he was satisfied that everything possible had been done to meet the requests of the students and paid tribute to Miss O'Neill for much of the preparation. Furthermore it was notable that practically no support came from the students themselves or from their families; the complaints had come from two students who had themselves been in a position to publicise the concert and had done nothing about it, one of them admitting to it.

On the other hand a highly enjoyable and totally delightful concert had been given by the Junior Orchestra under Miss Dalligan in St. Catherine's Church, Thomas Street, on Saturday, 24th May, 1975. Again Miss O'Neill had done a tremendous amount of work and was largely responsible for the success of the concert. The venue had to be changed from the Ely Hall owing to its unavailability. Mr Heneghan was gratified to note the attendance of members of the Board at both Senior and Junior concerts.

Strike Action
A dispute had arisen with the Students' Union due to new examination regulations, which were defended by the Principal at a meeting of the Advisory Board:-

The reasons for the current examination regulations were as follows:
The mandate in his induction interview to seek for improved standards. This had been endorsed in the Chairman's (Mr John McCann's) speech at the annual prizegiving held the previous night, 6th March, 1975.
Injudicious grading of students had been severely criticised by the Associated Board examiners.

There had been individual representations from teachers of the College to seek official protection from the troublesome advances of students and parents seeking to grade themselves for examination purposes.

By October 1975 the Students' Union had notified the Principal of strike action. At the Advisory Board meeting:

Mr Early took the initiative in summing up the situation:

1. Examination regulations were ostensibly the main bone of contention with the VEC. The students were calling not for revision but for complete removal.

2. That the examination regulations had been revised as originally intended; that they had been accepted by the Staff Committee; that the revisions had been implemented, no case of a teacher's recommendation for extraordinary promotion having been turned down.

3. That the rationale of the regulations and the revisions themselves had been approved and endorsed by the main Committee on more than one occasion.

4. That the students had been accommodated by the Committee in the matter of meetings to discuss their problems.

Strike action was taken by students on October 23rd and 24th. At the same time teachers notified the City of Dublin VEC that they intended to go on strike over the final implementation of the staff reorganisation scheme. Mr Sheehan, Chief Executive Officer, reported that he had written to the Minister for Education seeking a tripartite meeting between the Department of Education, the Teachers' Union of Ireland and the City of Dublin VEC.

Meanwhile, the Students' Union occupied the building again on 15th November for a Chamber Music Evening. Eventually a compromise was reached:

It was agreed that the Students' Union could hold a Chamber Music Evening on 31st January 1976. Details of the exact programme arranged for other dates to be submitted for approval.

Scholarships 1975

Intern Scholarships

Pianoforte
Under 12 years
Hilary Dickinson
Maighréad McCrann
Mary Fitzgerald
Ann Heneghan
Edel Thomas
Daire Fitzgerald
Emer Kane
Síneád Conroy
Judith O'Dea
Edel Hegarty
Hazel Molloy
Edel Sludds
Ann Byrne
Valerie Johnson
John Bannon
Brian Corcoran

Pianoforte
Under 16 years
Maire Mannion
Linda Lawless
Rosalind Maguire
Deborah Gibney
Barbara Joyce
Mary Lennon
Caitríona Dunne
Mark O'Sullivan

Pianoforte
Under 19 years
Íde Dunne
Síneád Dunne
John Bonner
Geraldine Bolton
Linda Glen
Susan Gibney

Violin
Under 12 years
Catherine Bresnan
Ann Heneghan
Brona Fitzgerald
Maighréad McCrann
Mary Fitzgerald
Geraldine Bean
Audrey O'Reilly
Ann Harte
John Coffey
Edel Creely
Stephen O'Meara
Violin
Under 16 years
Dara de Cogan
Terence Crehan
Fionnuala Ni Eigeartaigh
Patrick Early

Violin
Under 19 years
Kevin Brady
Drostan Grant

Arthur Darley Medal
Helen Briscoe

Viola
Ciarán Donegan
Briain O'Duill

Violoncello
Fiona McCormack
Elaine O'Reilly

Irish Harp
Emer O'Brien
Gráinne Gormley

Organ
Paul Heneghan
Ann Sheil

Singing
Marion Creely
Alison Browner
Siobhán Yeats
Thérèse O'Dwyer
Frances O'Boyle

Ely O'Carroll Medal
Catherine Walsh

Wind
Triona Barrett
John Bannon
Cian O'Mahony
Roger Berkeley

I.T.G.W.U. Scholarships
Wind
David Ryan
David Agnew

McCullough-Pigott Scholarship
Pianoforte
Janet Harbison

Nordell Scholarship
Pianoforte
Gráinne Dunne

Additional Recommendations
Pianoforte
Catherine Treacy, Carol Gaffney,
Eoin Killian, Kevin Leake, Brona Fitzgerald,
Kevin Kennedy, Maire Kennedy, Catherine
Johnston, Niamh O Siochradha, Vincent
Thomas, John Fitzgerald, Maeve Dunne,
Saidhbh Nic Ionnraic, Janice Creely, Elsa
Lawlor, Lieve Stassen

Violin
Susan Briscoe, James Beausang,
Lydia Rock, Iselt Rafferty, Mary Jennings,
Liam Roe, Sinéad NiMarcaigh, Paul Kane,
Barbara Gaynor, Ciarán Donegan

Irish Harp
Angela Hamill, Ann Walsh

Organ
Geraldine Malone

Singing
Thérèse Bradley, Anna Caleb,
Kenneth Reynolds

Wind
Seán O Tuama, John O'Kelly, Brid Grant,
Declan Delamere, Frank Walsh

Continuation Grants
(Various Subjects) Brid Grant, Deirdre
Storey, Elizabeth Keighary, Eithne Graham,
Robert Houlihan, Michael Grant, Josephine
Beggan, Colette Grant, Evelyn Healy, Máire
Bhreatnach

Principal's Business

In February 1976 the Principal reported as
follows:-

Parents' Association
A Parents' Association was formed at a
meeting in Buswell's Hotel on Thursday.
29th January, 1976. This is an independent group which, although it may not at present be under the direct auspices of the Vocational Education Committee, should be of interest to all parents. A committee of ten was duly elected (Chairman: Mr B. Bigney, Secretary: Mrs S. O’Neill) and has already been in touch with the Principal. A letter from the Chief Executive Officer expresses hope and confidence that the Association will have a profoundly constructive influence on College affairs.

Students’ Union
The Students’ Union is now fully recognised by the Vocational Education Committee. The new Constitution has been agreed by both parties and guarantees, on one hand, the freedom of choice in the matter of membership and, on the other, a financial grant based on the number of students eligible for membership, whether or not this option is taken up. Students are encouraged to give the matter of membership and participation serious thought as without support from the students the Union cannot thrive.

The Annual Prizegiving to be held on 4th March was also discussed:-

A previous Board decision limiting speechmaking at the concert was upheld. Mr McCann suggested that the Chief Executive Officer, the Principal and the Chairman should be the only speakers; this was decided. It was also agreed that the Students’ Union should be allowed to have a short statement (50 – 100 words) on the back of the programme, the text to be submitted to the Principal and to be subject to the joint approval of the Chairman and Principal.

Staff agitation continued as part of the dispute concerning external versus internal appointments in the College. In January 1976 it was reported “that the dispute concerning three Posts of Responsibility (Asst. Lecturer) in the College was still being discussed in the Labour Court.”

A teachers’ strike took place between 3rd March and 1st June of that year.

The perennial topic of premises was raised at a meeting in March 1976:-

Mr Sheehan stated that there was no prospect of a new College in the immediate future. Three possibilities of progress, in the short term, were considered:

(a) Mr Sheehan to pursue the question of the red-brick building nearby as a matter of renewed urgency.
(b) A sub-committee be formed (suggested by Mr Early) to consider the problem and to raise it in any areas that might be influential.
(c) The desirability of pursuing the peripatetic idea at local (regional) school level.

It was felt that (c) above had the greatest immediate potential in relieving space problems.

The principle was established that a pilot decentralisation scheme in one or two regional schools might be tried, the administrative problems involved to be considered by the Principal and the matter possibly raised at a Board of Studies meeting in due course.

In June 1976 it was proposed to name the Concert Hall (which had informally been called the Dick Ward Hall) after John McCann.

Mr McCann put forward a counter-proposal to name the Hall after Mr Arthur Darley, who had given distinguished service to the College. It was eventually unanimously agreed following a further proposal by Mr Heneghan, seconded by Mr Fay, that the Hall be named the John McCann Hall as a perpetual recognition of the contribution made over a very long period of years to the growth and success of the College by the Chairman himself.

Advisory Board Meeting 1976
Recommendations of the October 1976 meeting included the following:-

Leaving Certificate Syllabus
It was agreed that the VEC should approach the Department of Education
(a) to have the Honours Paper (Music) restored in the Leaving Certificate examination in 1977
(b) to ensure full recognition for Music as a subject at higher and lower (not common) level and
(c) to ensure that Music should qualify as a subject for University entrance with full points in NUI terms at all constituent Colleges regardless of faculty, Mr Heneghan to advise Head Office personnel in the drafting of any letter sent to the Department.

College Curriculum
It was agreed in principle that a course in Opera might be included in the College curriculum for 1977-1978.

College Orchestra
It was agreed that Mr B. McNamara’s suggestion that the Senior Orchestra be reconvened, concentrating initially and selectively on a balanced string group should be proceeded with. It was suggested that wind instruments should be incorporated as quickly as possible.

Premises
The premises in Clarendon Row was discussed once again at a meeting in June 1977:-

Mr Flanagan raised the question of the vacant premises behind the College and the possibility of acquiring this finally for the College of Music. Feelings of frustration at the interminable delays in acquiring space for physical expansion to relieve overcrowding were expressed. Mr Heneghan stated that, within the last fortnight, he had sent an urgent letter to Ballsbridge dealing with the subject, particularly in relation to a further property of some 600 sq. ft. area adjoining the building referred to by Mr Flanagan. Mr Early stated that the possibility of acquiring Powerscourt House for the College, this also having been discussed by the Board in recent months, was now more remote than ever.

John McCann Hall
Mr Heneghan informed the Board that a concert performance of Mozart’s Magic Flute would be given in the Hall on Wednesday 29th June. Arrangements were being made to name the Hall officially on that night.

By 1978 the College of Music was poised to enter a wider constituency under the umbrella of the Dublin Institute of Technology. Since its tentative beginnings in 1890, as the Municipal School of Music, the number of students and range and level of courses had grown to fulfil many of the expectations of musical development in the City of Dublin.