

A 2022 Welcome!

In March we lost our beloved founder and friend Martin Bates. This newsletter and this year's *A Touch of Basil* concert are both dedicated to his memory. In his unwavering dedication to music, and particularly the nurturing of creativity in young people, Martin was a man who epitomised everything the Trust stands for.

Despite Martin's passing, and the lingering impacts of the COVID pandemic on the world of art and music, the Trust has continued to provide much-needed support for creative young people this year, and we aim to continue to do so for many years to come.

In this edition we have some great articles for you about the Trust's work, both past and present, and the people who have made it all possible. Now that live events are taking place once more we will hope to see you all at our *A Touch of Basil* concert in September, or our games and quiz night in the Spring.

Mark Gamble

Would you be willing to receive this newsletter by email? We are working to save money and paper, and to protect the planet so please get in touch and let us know if you would like a digital copy:

info@philipbatestrust.org.uk

Martin Bates (1951 - 2022)

Sadly, Martin lost his battle with mouth cancer in March 2022. This has been a massive loss, both on a personal and a musical level. We mourn the loss of a wonderful musical family member and friend, who has been influential in the lives of so many.

Martin was born in Birmingham and was always involved in making music as a pianist, accompanist, conductor and church organist for a wide variety of performances around the Midlands area. This was in addition to his 'day job' as Head of Music in Birmingham secondary schools spanning a teaching career of 34 years.

While a pupil at Saltley Grammar School, Martin won a scholarship to the Birmingham School of Music where he studied piano with Constance Warren, moving on to Manchester University in the early 1970s. During his degree course he also studied under the noted concert pianist Hedwig Stein at the Royal Manchester College of Music. As a solo performer his great loves were Bach, Brahms and Rachmaninov.

After university he returned to Birmingham where he became répétiteur for Ex Cathedra and accompanist for Birmingham Schools' Chorale, both under the baton of Jeffrey Skidmore. He also enjoyed playing continuo for baroque concerts and accompanying several choral societies in the Birmingham area. More recently he played for Advocati, a choir consisting of musicians in the legal profession under the baton of Sir John Saunders. He was the concert accompanist of choice for Birmingham Savoyards and St Alphege School Solihull's children's choir SongSquad.

Martin was Head of Music at three Birmingham secondary schools during his teaching career: first Queensbridge School, then Moseley and finally John Willmott School, where he stayed for 19 years after job sharing initially with Jeffrey Skidmore. He is remembered fondly by many ex-pupils and staff for his kindness, dedication and inspiring enthusiasm for music.



Martin with Philip, early 1990s

While a secondary school music teacher Martin particularly loved the fun of creative examination work with older pupils and direct-

ing the annual school musical. Altogether during his teaching career he was the musical director for over 35 shows and many ex-pupils have attested to the difference being part of these shows made to their lives. Indeed, some felt that the school show helped to keep them focused and positive and prevented them going 'off the rails'.



Martin with Sue, Rachel and granddaughters Beth, Lucy & Alice at 2019

As a composer Martin wrote over fifty pieces, some of which reached wider audiences through recordings, radio and television. In particular *King*, a rock musical based on the life of Martin Luther King, was written for Queensbridge School in 1981. It was subsequently performed at Birmingham Old Rep, filmed for national television by Central TV (as *I Have a Dream*)and more recently revived at the MAC in Canon Hill Park.

Several pieces of choral music were written for Ex Cathedra including *Three Songs for Christmas.* These have been performed many times at Ex Cathedra's Christmas Music by Candlelight concerts and recorded by the choir: they also travelled 'across the pond' to be included in three concerts by the Orpheus Chamber Choir in Dallas, Texas.

The 30-second *Blessed are the Peacemakers* was commissioned by Birmingham in its bid to stage the 1992 Olympics and was first performed in Lausanne, Switzerland. Most recently, during lockdown, Martin wrote eight seasonal songs for solo or unison singing to poems by his two older granddaughters, Beth and Lucy.

Martin was the conductor of Heart of England Singers for over thirty years, directing them in many successful concerts. Until the lockdown four concerts were given each year: two major ones such as Mendelssohn's *Elijah* or *The Armed Man* by Karl Jenkins, a lighter summer concert and a Christmas carol concert. For a number of years the choir was twinned with Stadtkantorei Barsinghausen, a choir based in Germany, and visits were made between Barsinghausen and Birmingham every two years resulting in memorable concerts and friendships being formed. Subsequently a connection was also made to Horsforth Choral Society through Martin's sister Margaret who lives in Leeds.

Sadly, Martin and Sue's son Philip

died at the age of 19 and, together with his sister Rachel, they set



Martin at the organ, St Mary & St Margaret's Castle Bromwich

up a charity in his memory. Philip Bates Trust supports young people involved in the arts up to the age of 25. Martin always enjoyed playing at the annual *Touch of Basil* concerts organised by the Trust, where he could be seen accompanying a wide variety of vocal and instrumental music from the standard "classical" repertoire through to rock, jazz and experimental newly written material. He also introduced the items in his own unique and inimitable style. Philip Bates Trust has also collaborated with Royal Birmingham Conservatoire in organising a composition competition, *Philip Bates Prize for Composers and Songwriters*, and Martin was one of the adjudicators.

Since retiring from classroom music, Martin concentrated on piano teaching and became the organist and musical director of St. Mary and St. Margaret's Church in Castle Bromwich, Birmingham. He was instrumental in raising money for the restoration of the historic pneumatic action Conacher organ at the church, partly through organising Sunday afternoon concerts where he often accompanied soloists himself. He also worked as a mentor for young teachers through the Teach First scheme.

Martin Bates will be sadly missed by his many musical colleagues and friends, the pupils he taught and his fellow teachers, but most of all by his wife Sue, daughter Rachel, granddaughters Beth, Lucy and Alice, sister Margaret and the wider family.

Sue Bates

Ashleyan Opera News

Apparently a competition was held in March 2022 but we were not informed by Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and so do not have any details. Never fear, I will be on the case next year!

Former Ashleyan Opera Prize winner Samantha Oxborough did a great job of singing the national anthem solo at the opening ceremony of the Birmingham Commonwealth Games.

Does Anyone Have any Compositions by Martin?

In the few weeks following the passing of my Dad I found myself in touch with a long- standing friend Anneke Scott, who mentioned that she had a composition, Patterns II, that he had written especially for her to play on her French horn. She had clearly treasured it over the years as it had been a personal gift.

It was a touching reminder of the way that my Dad operated and I know that he created compositions for a number of people: for example, recently at *A Touch of Basil* concert we heard an exciting and memorable performance of a violin and piano piece called *A Day in Town,* written for Georgina Bloomfield. He also wrote a piece in 2020 for SongSquad called *I'll Sing You a Beautiful Song* which they recently performed at a lunchtime recital at St Alphege's Church in Solihull, thoughtfully dedicated to his memory.

If anyone has a copy of any of his compositions I would be most grateful please if you could get in touch, even if you think we have it. He was somewhat casual about care of these musical treasures as I am not too sure he was hugely confident of their musical value and some copies have been lost.

I am extremely keen to make sure that we have all his compositions to preserve his legacy and hopefully we can then see them performed.

To that end also, could I encourage you to consider performing his compositions and letting me or my mum, Sue Bates, know if a performance is coming up so we can try to be there or hear a recording. This is a way for us to feel close to him as well as encouraging live music and composition.

Rachel Bates

Rachel's email:
littlemissbates1@hotmail.com
Sue's email:
sue-bates@hotmail.com

Djembes Galore



Djembes in use at St Alphege School

When Allison Taylor moved from the infant to the junior department at St Alphege CE School she found a distinct lack of instruments to use in class music lessons. Philip Bates Trust has been pleased to supply 35 djembes knowing that Allison, in addition to training their wonderful school choir SongSquad, would make great use of these drums.

Reflections on A Touch of Basil

As I watched the opening ceremony of the 2022 Commonwealth Games the voice of Samantha Oxborough took me back to hearing her at *A Touch of Basil 2018*. It also led me to reflect on the number of performers we have given a platform to over the last 20 years: aspiring professionals who have received support from the Trust on their musical journey, prize-winners sharing the hard work they have been recognised for or Philip's family and friends wanting to perform as a celebration of his life.

Thinking like this brings to mind some memorable performances from the first few years when *A Touch of Basil* filled out the now demolished Adrian Boult Hall: the cast of Bishop Vesey's and Sutton Girls' Schools *Iolanthe* production singing highlights from their show, poems and readings from Steven Robinson, songs performed by Philip's own band *Szocialist Brigad,* piano and vocal collaborations of Jonathan Chatwin and Jonathan Styles and piano duets featuring Martin Bates and Andrew Fletcher. I could go on….

Some items have now become staples of the concert: Martin's 'Home team', as he referred to them, Heart of England Singers, who give something different every year, the thought-provoking opening poem, the prize winners from John Willmott and Bishop Vesey Schools, Ex Cathedra vocal academies, Sue Bates and Steve Davis' vocal duets, Basil's Bunch and the final big sing with the entire company and audience participation.

Time moves on and we see a new era of performers, many of whom wouldn't have known Philip personally, but who have benefitted from the aims of the trust. The young composers' music we hear every year from the Philip Bates Prize for Composers and Songwriters and those who have sought help for their musical endeavours come and share with us. Georgina Bloomfield, who was supported as a young violinist. has committed to performing for us every year, al-



Georgina Bloomfield at an early Touch of Basil concert, Adrian Boult Hall



Ollie Feaver, who will perform on September 24th

lowing us to share in her progress and success.

Singers, instrumentalists, composers and dancers have all featured in 20 years of *A Touch of Basil* concerts. It is good to see that the trust is making such a difference to the lives of so many young performers.

However, sadly, we must go on without our beloved Martin, who was the 'glue' between the acts, the most inimitable host of the concerts with his wit, humour and abundant musical knowledge, even though he often told me 'I have no idea what I'm going to talk about for x amount of minutes while they set up!'

Onwards towards *A Touch of Basil 2022,* and this concert will be dedicated to the memory of Martin where we will have the regulars Heart of England Singers under their new conductor, Leon James, Basil's Bunch, Ex Cathedra Academies, Steve Davis, Sue Bates with John Saunders, John's daughter Sarah on recorder and Sarah's son Ollie Feaver with his saxophone, Devon Brown and Allison Taylor with the tremendous SongSquad from St Alphege School in Solihull. Georgina Bloomfield will play Bach and one of Martin's family's favourites, the Intermezzo from Cavalleria Rusticana.

I look forward to seeing so many good friends after these last few difficult years in the performance world at Bishop Vesey's Grammar School in Sutton Coldfield on Saturday 24th September 2022 starting at 7pm

This year tickets will be at heavily reduced prices (just enough to cover Philip Bates Trust costs) and, in lieu of paying more for their tickets, we are asking audience members to donate generously at the concert towards establishing an award in Martin's name. Tickets will be £5 for adults and completely free for children and students. The ticket price also includes a programme.

Sarah Dudley

Treasurer's News

Since our last newsletter it is fair to say that, due to recent events, things have been very difficult both for the Trust and on a personal level, as we all mourn the sad loss of our founder trustee and close friend.

The Trustees managed a face to face meeting in July to discuss current matters arising and review the submitted applications. It was really nice to see everyone in the flesh and not just as a face on a screen. Having said that, what would we have done without Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Facebook and all the other methods we have used to keep in touch safely.

My thanks go to my colleagues on the Board of Trustees for working together to achieve our vision for Philip's Trust.
The Trustee are: Sue Bates - Chair, Rachel Bates - Secretary, Sir John Saunders, Dr. Jill Robinson, Rev. Margaret MacLachlan, Alison Perrier-Burgess and Karen Moulton – Treasurer.

We must congratulate Jill Robinson who has gained her Doctorate last month. A fantastic achievement. Congratulations Jill from us all at PBT.

Since my last report, the Trust has supported:

5 organisations awarding a total of £3,600.00
4 Individual applications granting them a total of £1,489

We have managed to do this without generating a significant amount of income, as we have not been able to carry out our normal fund raising events.

I **am pleased to report that the Trust is currently worth £46,000**.

This is due to the careful management of the Trust and our investment with M & G in their Charifund which has managed to hold its own even in the current economic climate. Our thanks must also go to those who donate regularly and the supporters who use our PayPal account. Thank you. Please see opposite a few ways in which you can continue to financially help the trust.

Karen Moulton

How to Support Philip Bates Trust fi-

1 You will find this button at the top of the home page of our website http://philipbatestrust.co.uk/ You can send a donation straight to the Trust via our PayPal account.

2 When you shop online through smile.amazon.co.uk, Amazon will donate to The Philip Bates Trust and support us every time you shop.

3 We are registered with easyfundraising, which means you can help us for FREE. Over 4,000 shops and sites will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to yourself! All you need to do is sign up and remember to use easyfundraising whenever you shop online. It is easy and completely FREE! These donations really mount up, so please sign up to support us at www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/philipbatestrust/

4 Direct Bank Transfer
If you wish to donate in this way please contact me directly on moulton.k@icloud.com and I can send you details.

5 Of course, you can give any amount by cheque or cash to any of the Trustees, listed above or the Action Committee.

Our Action Committee members are:
Sue Bates – Chair, Rachel Bates – Secretary, Mark Gamble, Kirsty Robinson, Julie Woodward, Sarah Dudley, Karen and John Moulton. At this point, we would like to thank Hazel Teale who has just stepped down from the committee for her help and support since the Action Committee started.

Also, don't forget our Facebook page to keep you updated. And finally,….I would like to thank you for continuing to support the Philip Bates Trust. We could not do it without you!

Karen Moulton
Treasurer and Trustee

Online Grant Applications

Apply Online

In 2019, we began working on our online application process. This went live shortly after. We are still happy to receive postal applications if preferred.

The application process for a grant from the Trust has been working well, albeit several applications received of late are not eligible for an award to be given. It may be that the individual is outside our age range criteria, which is up to 25 years, or the application does not fit the terms and conditions of the Trust and therefore is rejected. The application form can be accessed through our website by going to the Grants tab and clicking the Apply online box. www.philipbatestrust.org.uk.

How old are you?

We recently received an application from an individual with a date of birth 05/04/1900!

I must admit I had to do a double take in case I had misread it. I was sure this person wasn't122!!

Upon investigation they were 65, so still didn't qualify.

10/10 for effort! This one did make us smile!

Karen Moulton

Possible Past Pupils' Concert

We're collecting interest for a possible past pupils' concert in memory of Martin Bates.

If you are reading this, were a past pupil or associate and think you could offer a performance, then please get in touch!

Even if you had not seen Martin for a long time, he held all past pupils dear in his heart. Any and all musical styles are welcome - solos, groups or other. He talked about his students so much at home that there will be many people we will secretly hope to hear from.

One thing is certain: he would love to continue to inspire people to get up and perform live. Once we have gauged interest then we will look at viability, locations, dates etc. Please be in touch with either

Rachel on:-

littlemissbates1@hotmail.com

07855 776 692

or Sue on:-

sue-bates@hotmail.com

07712 532 433.

Games and Quiz Night 2023

The ever-popular Games and Quiz Nights have been a regular feature in the events calendar of The Philip Bates Trust over the last few years. The last quiz night took place in 2019, and now…….The Quiz Night is back!!

We are planning to hold the next quiz night at Arden Hall, Water Orton, on Saturday 11th March 2023. The feel of the evening will be different without the magic of Martin's music round, his quirky question calling and gentle humour, but the quiz night with all the favourite rounds will promise to provide fun, laughs and of course lots of competitive spirit!

Highlights of previous quiz nights have included Martin's music quiz round with its various themes including extracts from TV shows, a few bars from Beatles songs and well-known tunes played backwards; where it was almost impossible to identify any of the tracks!

Other highlights have been the general knowledge rounds organised by Stan & Sue Gamble, Drawing Game (aka Pictionary) round, Railway Riot and the Alphabet Game to finish the evening.

Tabletop puzzles or quizzes give everyone the opportunity to solve cryptic questions, crosswords, word searches, and spot the difference at their own pace, all contributing to the team score at the end of the night.

The bar at Arden Hall is open during the quiz nights for refreshments, and jacket potatoes with a variety of fillings together with a selection of delicious cakes, will be provided for all quiz-goers as brain food to help fuel lateral thinking and perfect problem solving.

We are excited about the upcoming quiz night at Arden Hall on 11th March and hope you will be able to bring some friends and family along to make up a quiz team for a fun packed night of eating, drinking and flexing your cranium to win the title of 'Cleverest Team in Arden Hall!!'

Tickets will be available from any Philip Bates Trust committee member or ring 0121 747 5705

Julie Larkin



A djembe close up

Who did we help 2021 - 2022?

The number of successful applications was down again this year, but we've still been able to help these young individuals and organisations

Ex Cathedra Academies – Philip Bates Scholarship scheme

Alec Banner, percussionist aged 14 - towards the cost of his National Youth Brass Band course

Santina Purrun – art materials for this student who was forced to drop out of her full-time visual arts course due to unfortunate circumstances

Anna Thirkettle, clarinet – towards National Youth Concert Band course l

Willow Bank School, a hospital school in Leicester – cost of tickets for vulnerable pupils with mental and physical difficulties to see *An Inspector Calls* at Leicester's Curve Theatre

Friends of Newborough School – cost of an outdoor bamboo glockenspiel for the Reflection Garden at this primary school in Peterborough

Drama Express, Cornwall – towards professional coaching for drama and performance workshops to benefit pupils with complex disabilities

St Alphege Church of England School, Solihull - 35 djembe drums for rhythm work in class music lessons

Golda Sterling – we granted Golda the cost of a year's online art courses with Schoolism. She is hoping to pursue a career as an illustrator for children's books



Golda Sterling's illustration 'Tooth Fairy'

Hadeel Elshak – the Trustees agreed a grant towards the cost of her National Youth Theatre course fees. However, in the meantime Hadeel had been offered the total cost by another charity. She was pleased to tell us this so that someone else could benefit from our funding.