

# The Newsletter of Dalcroze Australia Inc.

# hopp!

## REPORT FROM DR. JOAN POPE, OAM

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JUNE 2009 WAS A BUSY MONTH for me getting papers and chapters written, presentations and teaching courses ready for July and August, then those months busy delivering them. In company with Dr. Jane Southcott I attended the annual ANZARME conference which was held for the first time in New Zealand. Decades ago this organisation was known as AMEL (Australia Music Education Lecturers), later broadened to AARME (Australian Association for Research in Music Education) and now formally includes New Zealand colleagues. Held at Akaroa, on the eastern seaboard some distance from Christchurch, it was a congenial gathering attended by a diverse range of contributors. I presented a paper on some of the first English Dalcroze teachers to settle in New Zealand in the 1920s and early 30s, Jessie Benham in Christchurch, Eileen Russell in Wellington and Beryl Whistler and her assistant Muriel Howling, in Auckland. It mentioned the visit to Christchurch in 1924 by Ethel Driver, of the London School of Dalcroze Eurhythmics (LSDE), with Australian graduate Cecilia John, and the six-month teaching and demonstration tour in 1928 by Winifred Houghton, also from the LSDE. Houghton returned to London with a young teacher from Christchurch, Jean

Hay to whom a scholarship was awarded for the 3-year course. Houghton was the music and movement lecturer at Gipsy Hill Nursery Training College in London from 1917 until 1949, and when I attended the Dalcroze Training Centre in London in 1953, she was one of the many helpful staff I met.

I have been invited to develop this historical topic for the New Zealand Music Education Research Centre's next publication, especially about Jean Hay and the influence of E. Douglas Tayler, the inaugural Supervisor for Music Education in New Zealand from 1926-1931. He was very pro-Dalcroze Eurhythmics. Professor James Shelley, one of the Vice Presidents of the first Dalcroze Society in Great Britain formed in 1915, and a significant figure in New Zealand education and broadcasting circles, is also of interest with his support of Dalcroze Eurhythmics there from the 1920s. Like two other Australian graduates of the London School in the 1920s, Heather Gell and Jean Vincent (née Wilson), Jean Hay broadcast 'music and movement' programmes to schools in NZ. All three had all been taught keyboard improvisation at the LSDE by Ann Driver who began the BBC Music and Movement sessions in 1932. Hay started in 1933 and by 1935 her 'Rhythm for Juniors' was a regular weekly feature. It lasted until 1958. Gell's programmes began in Adelaide in 1938 and continued in Sydney from 1939 until 1959, while Vincent from Perth began in 1941 and continued until 1969.

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Following the Akaroa conference Jane and I attended the NZ Music Education Conference in Christchurch. It was nice to catch up with Julian Raphael, now resident in NZ. We had both taught at the UK Dalcroze Summer School, and met again in Geneva, several years ago. He is now resident in NZ and has published a lively book/CD of African songs. His wife is a music therapist and had presented at the Akaroa conference.

Then on to Tasmania for the Australian Society for Music Education where Jane and I presented papers and workshops and were pleased to be present at the launch of the *Festschrift* for Dr Doreen Bridges, *Musical Dimensions*, edited by Martin Comte. It was interesting to find out that Martin had Dalcroze lessons as a young school boy in Paris and then, later as a student in Melbourne, with Nancy Kirsner. Jane, Sandra and I had contributed chapters to this book which is a great collection of lively chapters by a fantastic range of authors. I also presented a Poster noting Dalcroze links in Tasmania and was able to add to my research about Elizabeth Wade thanks to the assistance of Megan Cavanagh-Russell, Don Kay, Amanda Wojtiwicz, Joan Wright, the University Library staff and Elizabeth's nephew. Later in Melbourne I visited the Womens' College at the University where Elizabeth was in the first intake in 1937 and later made a significant bequest to provide a fine Music Room in the new building.

While in Melbourne I took the opportunity to have a meeting with Richard Gill. Committee members will recall that Sandra Nash had prepared a well-considered letter proposing that we think seriously about some kind of cooperative merger with the Australian Orff Association. Richard was wholeheartedly in agreement with this proposal, as were members of the Heather Gell Dalcroze Foundation, and he has written on our behalf to the National President of the Orff Association urging that we make contact and pursue a positive liaison. Coincidentally, Susie Davies-Splitter who attended our Melbourne-March workshop, approached Sandra and me with an idea which we would like to pursue, namely considering working together presenting joint Dalcroze and Orff sessions with colleagues in Hong Kong and Singapore.

So, why not also in Australia? Sandra and I are discussing how we might establish a special course for people already holding Orff qualifications and blend in a Dalcroze approach. It would appear sensible that we approach the Kodaly association similarly. Margaret Smith, a HGDF member, has a long history in both Dalcroze and Kodaly would be keen to see co-operation. It is worthwhile noting that in the UK Kodaly teachers present much of the Solfa element of the Dalcroze courses. Perhaps we should initiate such liaison. The three approaches have more in common than in opposition and it would seem a practical move to assist teachers, wherever we can, to develop a broad skills base. Your comments are welcomed.

In early August the Kindermusik regional organizer for South East Asia, Chiat Goh, arranged an intensive three day workshop in Singapore for the members, and invited me to conduct a course. Singapore is closer to Perth than a flight to Sydney, so I was happy to travel there to present for them. Attended by 45 very keen and attentive participants it included a large contingent from Malaysia, one of whom recalled that she had attended some sessions with me 20 years ago when she did her music education degree at the UWA Music Department! The course was held in the large establishment for Leadership Training Programmes run by the People's Association, and a number of the group stayed on campus. Excellent lunches and morning snacks were provided in the Canteen. The days were full-on, working from 9 until 4, and covering a great range of material with practical discoveries and discussion times. As it was a large group, it was very handy being able to show the Meerkats DVD taken in Sydney several years ago. There was a good deal of interest in purchasing our book about Heather Gell's lessons, and an additional quantity has been requested to be freighted over. Chiat was a tremendous host and the group had a great dinner at her house complete with husbands and little children! We would love to see many of them at the Dalcroze Sydney course in Aussie summer but of course, it is not a vacation time over there, although several had already made arrangements to attend the Orff course in Adelaide. I was accommodated delightfully at the Singapore Yacht Club. Several of

the participants also stayed on for the Dalcroze Training Course and undertook Foundation exams.

Although I, Sandra and Karin Greenhead have variously presented many workshops in Singapore for the past ten years or so, this was the first to be billed as a Dalcroze Training Course, organised and administered by Julie Tan of Music Essentials. There were three Courses planned this year to have commenced in April with Sandra and me, followed in July with Sandra and Andrew and finally an August session with Karin. Due to an unfortunate series of events including lack of suitable space at the critical dates, then the fear of Swine Flu which also caused the cancellation of the Hong Kong workshops with Sandra and Andrew, the entire sequence went askew. Therefore, Karin and I shared the August 6-day workshop, again 9am -4pm. We had the entire group of 45 together for Movement Preparation each morning, which Karin and I took on alternate days, and the whole group again in the last session for choral canons and movement exploration. We split the groups into those with some previous Dalcroze experience, and novices gaining an Introduction to the work. For the last several days we playfully named two re-arranged groups as 'X for EXAM', and 'Y' for 'Why not give other things a go'. The exam was 'Foundation' and comprised Rhythmics, Ear-training and Improvisation, plus written work, to be posted to me. Sandra and Karin had spent a great deal of time blending Australian Level One with the similar stage of the UK Dalcroze exams. It was an excellent 'trial run' and we noted a number of details which will need adjustment. It is most likely that this work will be of use to several other Courses such as that in Italy which is run in conjunction with the UK Society.

A one-day break divided the first 4 days and the latter two, and Exams (optional) were arranged for the last afternoon, after class, and the entire next day. A neat timetable ensured that people could be sensibly programmed to catch planes or get back to school and so on. It was an exhausting time and both Karin and I felt we needed to sleep for a week. Sadly, she had to get back to London and then off almost immediately to the Italian Course. I just went home and got bronchitis! It



was a really international gathering. 7 from Thailand, including Nillawanna who assisted in observing most exams, 3 from Hong Kong, 3 from Taiwan's southern group of teachers, and one each from Myanmar, Malaysia and Indonesia. Several Singapore residents were originally from Holland or Germany and OH, DELIGHT, there were 6 men. Some participants already had qualifications from Carnegie Mellon and experience from several other courses in Japan, Hong Kong, Taipei, Bangkok or had visited Geneva and did not take exams of course but participated marvelously and enjoyed the styles of teaching we presented.

We were very pleased that we could arrange an informal meeting of the key people, and several FIER representatives from these areas, to exchange news and explore the possibilities for sharing future courses and advising each other of their plans for visiting teachers. It was wonderful to know that Liang Mei Lin from Taiwan has now completed the translation into Chinese of the Jaques-Dalcroze book *Rhythm, Music and Education*. That is a spectacular achievement in which she was assisted by Patsy James of London to ascertain the relevant copyright requirements. It is now at the printers. We congratulated her!

Congratulations also to the six people who passed the Rhythmics Ear-training and Improvisation: Chiat Jin GOH, Yumi HASEGAWA, Joy Lip Fong KHAU, Kurnia KUSMANINGRUM, Chui Tan LEE, Zerlina Wai Ching WONG and also to those who decided to only do one section at this time.

*Joan at left Next to her is Lin Liang Mei from Taiwan who has just translated Rhythm, Music and Education by Jaques-Dalcroze into Chinese.*

## HISTORY FEATURE. PART I

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THE RECENT SUCCESS OF TV PROGRAMS SUCH AS 'SO WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?' REFLECT A GROWING INTEREST IN FAMILY HISTORY. WHAT ABOUT THE HISTORY OF DALCROZE EURHYTHMICS?

THESES, ONCE WRITTEN may be read in University libraries, or online. However, in order to disseminate the findings of recent research more widely among our members and colleagues, Hopp! will present a series of articles in the coming year, arising from current research. It is also another way of ensuring that the history of Dalcroze in this part of world is recorded and acknowledged.

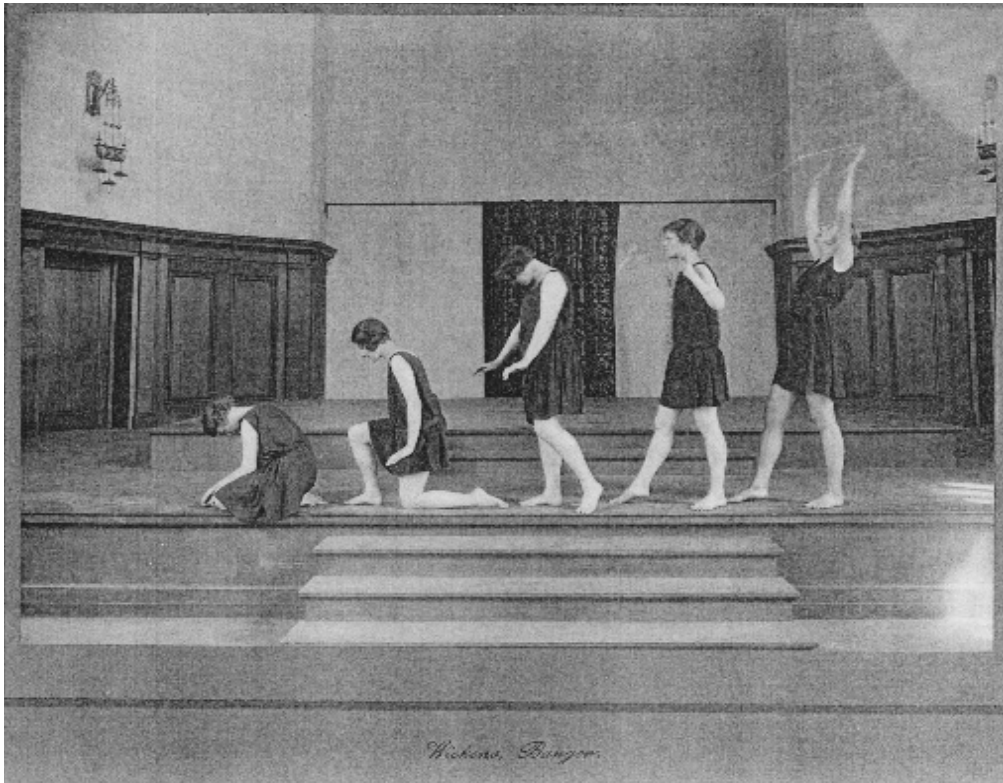
Joan Pope's doctoral thesis '*Dalcroze Eurhythmics in Australasia: the first generation from 1918*' traced the lives and careers of seven Australians and one New Zealander who studied at the London School of Dalcroze Eurhythmics, and ten English women who visited, or settled and taught in those countries between the end of World War One and the economic depression of the early 1930s. This initial profile is that of the first Australian graduate from the LSDE, Irene Wittenoom who commenced teaching in Western Australia in 1918.

*Irene Sarah Wittenoom (1893 - 1968)*

Born in Geraldton, WA, in 1893, Wittenoom was one of the children of Sir Edward Horne Wittenoom, KCMG, (1854-1936) and his first wife, Laura Habgood. Irene's father was influential in the community, a company director and pastoralist in the North West. He was a Member, and later President of the Legislative Council, and served as Minister for Education and Minister for Mines, Posts and Telegraphs in Colonial and State Governments. As Agent-General for WA in London from 1898-1901, he conveyed the news of Queen Victoria's death to the State Government in 1901. He was the last person to be knighted by the

Queen. His daughter received a good education but from whom is not known. Information from relatives indicates that Irene could speak German and there is a belief that she and her sister, Thelma, spent some time prior to the war 'on the Continent' at finishing school. The family maintained a residence at Cumberland House in Kensington, London and Wittenoom commenced studies at the London School of Dalcroze Eurhythmics (LSDE) in January 1915. The outbreak of war prevented Wittenoom from attending Hellerau but her years at the LSDE involved some remarkable teachers, as with the circumstances of 1914, a number of the teaching staff of the Jaques-Dalcroze College of 'Musik und Rhythmus' had moved to the safety of England. Staff during 1915 included Annie Beck, Ethel Driver, Simone Kunz, all Diplômées, and Loulette Badollet, Marthe Bischoff, Myriam Ramberg (later Marie Rambert), Douglas van Schnell and Albert Lowy, all with Certificates. [Decades later this term was changed to Licence].

Class photographs taken in London in 1915, show Wittenoom and several women who would later travel to Australia or New Zealand, Mary Whidborne, Elli Hinrichs, Beryl Whistler and Winifred Houghton. Several pursued careers in education, music and dance. To count Beryl de Zoete, future dance critic and ethnographer, and Ann Driver, BBC broadcaster of 'Music and Movement' amongst one's fellow students at a small college is noteworthy. Public demonstrations were good publicity for the London Dalcroze School and the training school students, some twenty five women, including Wittenoom, were involved in many. The first public demonstration for elementary children, as distinct from those for select girls' schools, was at Goldsmiths' College in



*L to R: Heather Gell, Ethel Driver, Cecilia John, Irene Wittenoom and 'Joanna from Denmark' in a posed crescendo again at University College, Bangor North Wales Summer School, July 1923*

1917, and the same year there was a demonstration for 'National Baby Week' attended by Queen Mary. Wittenoom's final exams were in July 1917, however she failed one subject. Several months later this 'Realisation' component was passed.

Following her return to Perth, Wittenoom found a sympathetic school for some teaching. Highgate, North Perth was a demonstration State School with an excellent staff. Jessie Horton, Deputy Principal of the Infants School, had visited the LSDE in early 1914 and encouraged local teachers to learn more of the Dalcroze Method, and the new Principal, Jane Smith, from England, had some eurhythmics background. One young pupil at that time, June Epstein, later remarked in, The woman with two hats 'we had classes in eurhythmics.

This concept of patterned responses to music, invented by Dalcroze, was then new to Australia, so we were very lucky.' In March 1919, Wittenoom gave a demonstration assisted by children from this School. It was originally scheduled for December, 1918, but whether it was given then and repeated several months later has not been established. However in June 1919, the West Australian gave a detailed account of the first public demonstration in Perth of the Eurhythmics of Jaques-Dalcroze, this time including adult students as well as children. It is believed that this was the first in Australia. It was held in Government House Ballroom under the patronage of His Excellency, the Governor of Western Australia, and the event was described as a 'novel educational method.' The

extensive programme included exercises, explanations and musical examples, and is clearly modelled on the demonstrations given by Jaques-Dalcroze in which Wittenoom participated. The West Australian noted that 'from first to last it was impossible not to be influenced by the beautiful purpose running through all the harmony of movement and music. Each exercise of their limbs and minds and senses, for all were brought into vital play, gave them a positive joy'. The Address was given by Cecil Andrews, the Director of Education, to a large and distinguished audience.

The word 'Eurythmic' [sic] became well known in Perth. In January 1919, a horse with that name won the Perth Cup in the only dead-heat in the history of the event. Overnight, this horse with a name from the Greek for 'harmonious rhythm' was a household word. Apparently his galloping action was anything but harmonious, and 'his off-foreleg moved in a swinging action endangering himself and others.' Nonetheless, he went on to win the Caulfield Cup in Melbourne in 1920, but had a bad start in the Melbourne Cup, although a day or so later easily beat the Melbourne Cup winner at another meeting. He was inducted into the Australian Racing Hall of Fame in 2002. 'Phar Lap' came from the same blood line as 'Eurythmic.' Sir Edward Wittenoom was a member of the Perth Turf Club and, with the Lee-Steere family, had more than a passing interest in horses. With a daughter just returned from studying this new form of movement it was a word in the news. This tale may explain why a speedy pickpocket well-known at country race meetings in the Eastern States, Arthur E. West, was given the nick-name 'Eurythmic'.

Wittenoom' taught at Presbyterian Ladies' College, a private school in Cottesloe, where the pupils were reported as being 'exceedingly responsive to this most interesting training, and the parents and friends were delighted at the results achieved'. She gave regular adult classes in Perth, and a number of Training College students and school teachers attended. A former Highgate School staff member, Lillian Mills may be counted among them. Mills, who in 1919 was appointed the inaugural

Physical Instructress for the Education Department, is credited with 'spreading the work of eurhythmics far and wide' during her years of considerable influence throughout WA. Wittenoom's close relationship with the Kindergarten Union of Western Australia was most important. She taught at the Kindergarten College between 1918 and early 1923, making it first tertiary institution in Australia to offer Dalcroze Eurhythmics. Committee Minutes of the Kindergarten Union from February, 1919, are in Wittenoom's distinctive round handwriting, and Mrs. Bessie Rischbeith 'personally thanked Miss Wittenoom for recording the Minutes during her absence overseas'. Rischbeith, originally from South Australia, was a significant force in local, interstate and international women's organizations. A theosophist, she was president of the Women's Service Guild and influential in many committees. She edited the WA paper *The Dawn* for many years. Wittenoom's work with young children at Meerilinga Kindergarten was publicly commended by the Principal, Enid Wilson, who in her 1922 Annual Report, commented that it was interesting to note the improvements in the children 'especially the difference in music. Eurhythmics has helped them tremendously, and the knowledge gained from Miss Wittenoom has been applied, and the putting of Dalcroze's ideas into practice with such very small children was found to be very absorbing'. The children's sessions were conducted in the mornings in the summer-house in the grounds at Meerilinga, and the College students had classes there in the afternoons.

Wittenoom visited England again in 1923, and the Kindergarten Union arranged for Athole Clifton to take over Dalcroze Eurhythmics classes. Clifton, a member of an artistic and cultured pioneering family, had graduated from the WA KTC in 1915. An innovative children's playground leader and a Kindergarten Director, she had been closely associated with Wittenoom's Eurhythmics classes. Clifton was Acting Principal of the College, during the absence overseas of the Principal, Enid Wilson, in 1921, and Director of the Meerilinga Kindergarten in 1922. She was a prime mover in the establishment of the Dalcroze Society in WA in 1923 and had corresponded with

the London School requesting that pamphlets and books to be sent out to Western Australia.

Whilst abroad, Wittenoom and her mother visited Europe. They went to Geneva to see the latest open-air theatrical production by Jaques-Dalcroze, *La Fête de la Jeunesse et de la Joie*. It preceded the July 1923 Summer Course held at the University College of North Wales, at Bangor, personally directed by Jaques-Dalcroze. Photographic evidence confirms that Wittenoom attended this. The professional prints taken at this time, in which she features, with Ethel Driver, Heather Gell and Cecilia John, were used in various newspapers in Australia some months later for the promotional tour conducted by Ethel Driver of the LSDE accompanied by two recent Australian graduates, Cecilia John and Heather Gell. The first stop on the tour was in Perth in late October and early November 1923, where a successful demonstration and then a week's course for teachers was held. Wittenoom's absence overseas prior to this series of events did not diminish the tremendous interest, due no doubt to the work of Misses Clifton, Wilson, Horton and Mills. Irene's home-coming in October, at that very week, was marred by the death of Lady Wittenoom at sea, three days out from Fremantle. The *Western Mail* devoted a lead paragraph in the *Women's World* stating that the sad news had been received by wireless from the RMS MONGOLIA. It noted a floral tribute from The Dalcroze Eurhythmics School in London was amongst those at one of the largest funeral ceremonies of the year.

The first Dalcroze Society in Australia was formed in Perth in November 1923, chaired by the Minister for Education, and attended by significant educators and enthusiastic teachers. Its aims were to further the spread of the Method, attract a qualified teacher to WA, run courses for teachers and encourage students to undertake overseas study. Sir Edward Wittenoom served as President for the first several years, but the Society had dwindled by the 1930s. Irene married in Perth in late November 1923, and moved to Singapore with her husband Frederick Rowan Heron, in January, 1924. Heron had extensive business

interests in WA. He was Manager, from 1909-1932, of the Cold Storage firm in Singapore, and credited with exceptional innovations which made colonial life for Europeans not only bearable but hygienic; he established a European style bakery, a piggery, cleared mosquito-ridden areas to establish a dairy industry, which in due course allowed the novel introduction of ice cream to Malaya. It was said that he allowed society ladies to store their fur coats at Cold Storage to preserve them from the atmosphere of the Tropics. They had one child, Jane, and lived in Singapore for some ten years before returning to WA. Research in Singapore has not revealed any teaching connections, although a Dalcroze colleague, Vera Bideleux, was married to Roland James from the Heron's home there in 1927.

It appears that Irene had no further practical involvement with Dalcroze Eurhythmics, although she continued her membership of the LDTU for several decades, and made donations of support from time to time.

Mrs. Heron was one of a small group of WA women who contributed towards a 'purse' for me when I went to Geneva to continue my Dalcroze studies there in 1961-62.

In the interests of space, details of the extensive references have been omitted. Any reader wishing such detailed resource background is invited to email Joan: popejoan@cygnus.uwa.edu.au

Her research covered archival sources in England, at the National Resource Centre for Dance, University of Surrey, and in Geneva at the Institut Jaques-Dalcroze, various Western Australian Newspapers, WA Kindergarten Union, WA Education Department and Schools records and minutes held at the Battye Library and WA State Records Office, Alexander Library. Wittenoom relatives, and their commissioned family history biographer, Dr Pamela Statham-Drew, were consulted. The small volume *A Record of the LSDE and its Graduates at Home and Overseas*, compiled in 1973 by Natalie Tingey for the London Dalcroze Society was referred to.

## CALLAWAY DOCTORAL AWARD.

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AT THE JULY 2009 NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY FOR MUSIC EDUCATION HELD IN LAUNCESTON, TASMANIA, THE CALLAWAY DOCTORAL AWARD WAS PRESENTED TO DR. JOAN POPE OAM FOR HER OUTSTANDING THESIS, *DALCROZE EURHYTHMICS IN AUSTRALASIA: THE FIRST GENERATION FROM 1918*.

**T**HE NATIONAL PRESIDENT, Jennifer Rosevear from the University of Adelaide made the presentation.

The award had a special resonance because Joan was one of Professor Callaway's first music students at the University of Western Australia in 1950s when she did her Arts degree. Moreover, Sir Frank's association with the Dalcroze work in Australia extended over many decades. He was also a Vice-President of the Dalcroze Society of Australia and a keen supporter of the work of Heather Gell from the 1950s through to the visit of



Elizabeth Vanderspar in 1972. In 1974 when the ASME national conference was held in Perth, with Sir Frank as host, Joan presented Dalcroze sessions, alongside teachers from overseas, such as Marta Sanchez. Callaway's international profile as president of ISME brought him into contact with other leading Dalcroze teachers: Charlotte MacJannet from Geneva, president of the International Union of Dalcroze teachers (UIPD) from 1955 to 1967, and Gerda Alexander from Copenhagen, the creator of *Eutony* — whose work he admired.



*Elizabeth and Rufus Vanderspar in Devon, July 1995*

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## OBITUARY

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### ELIZABETH VANDERSPAR

**E**LIZABETH passed away following a heart attack in London on Sunday May 3rd 2009 aged 89. She had gained her Dalcroze Licentiate in 1941 at Kibblestone Hall, UK, which was one of the sites of the London School of Dalcroze Eurhythmics used during the war. She went to Geneva to study for her Diploma in 1951. She married Rufus Vanderspar and they had three children, Christopher, Edward and Fiona, all of whom became outstanding musicians.

Elizabeth's link with Australia is a special one because of her memorable visit to this

country in 1972. Heather Gell realised that in order to attract well-trained musicians to the work, it was necessary to interest universities and Conservatoria around the country. Gell had at first invited John Coleman from New York, whose brilliant improvisation had dazzled her at the 1965 Congress in Geneva. Unfortunately, he was unable to come. She then approached Robert Abramson who declined due to ill health. Finally she turned to Elizabeth who at that time was teaching at London's Royal College of Music.

The Dalcroze Society of Australia was officially constituted in 1971 so that it could apply for funding from the Australian Council for the Arts, as it was then known. This resulted in a grant of \$2,500. Dalcroze supporters in all States undertook fundraising. A recent paper by Pope and Nash describes the tour:

Gell had always been good at using social connections to further her endeavours and her list of vice-presidents reads like a *Who's Who* of Australian music. The first annual report of the Society, given by its president Doreen Bridges, provides a description of the preparations and execution of a most ambitious project to bring a distinguished teacher to Australia. Most of what follows is taken from Bridges' report.

Gell coordinated arrangements with Dalcroze representatives in all States and over six weeks in Australia, Vanderspar visited six States. The tour was a resounding success. Through imaginative use of examples by Messiaen, Bartok and Stravinsky, Vanderspar showed that Dalcroze Eurhythmics had an important role in music education in the twentieth century. Advanced musicians were attracted by the improvisation aspects of her demonstrations and this was important because gaining their understanding was necessary for the work to be accepted at tertiary level. Vanderspar worked with children and adult students in classes already established by Dalcroze teachers in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth. She gave lecture-demonstrations in four states for the Australian Society for Music Education (ASME), including an in-service course for teachers arranged jointly in Adelaide by ASME and the Education Department. Public demonstrations were held in Adelaide and at the Sydney

Conservatorium of Music.

Vanderspar's visit prompted Daphne Isaacson (Mrs. J. Proietto) from Melbourne and Sandra Nash from Sydney, to go to London to take Vanderspar's Dalcroze Teachers' course. Robert Pritchett from Melbourne followed later and all gained the Dalcroze Licentiate. In 1973, Vanderspar had revitalized the Dalcroze Teacher Training in the UK which had languished by the 1960s. Doing most of the planning and administration herself, she enlisted three other teachers to work with her: Patsy James, Ruth Stewart (Guildhall School of Music) and Thea Ney. Arriving from Australia on my first trip abroad, I was so excited to be in London, and was surprised to find that the course had no 'home' and that we had to travel to different parts of London every day for classes which were held only during the afternoons and evenings. The course had an international flavour: there were two other Australians doing the course, Daphne Isaacson from Melbourne and Penny White (Why) from Perth; Ora Goraly from Israel, Ruth Alperson from New York, Yuri Ishimaru from Japan and students from England, including Susan Jesse (Young) and Anne Whiteley from Elizabeth's classes at the Royal College of Music. (At that time, Ruth was still feeding her new baby, Jeremy. She had been studying in New York with Hilda Schuster, but when she announced she was getting married, her teacher was not pleased! ) We often had visitors dropping in from the USA and other countries. Some were doing the Elementary or Specialist Certificates, and this helped to swell the numbers.

We became experts at getting about on London trains and buses as there was no actual 'school' as such. The weekly schedule unfolded: on Mondays we went to the Central School of Speech and Drama where Patsy took us for Rhythmics and Solfege; on Tuesday evenings we caught a train from Kings Cross to Elizabeth's house at New Barnet, north of London for Improv and Methods; Wednesday afternoons to Ruth Stewart's house at Chalk Farm, where we discussed the Dalcroze subjects in her lounge room, and did creative projects (including painting melodic contours on her freshly painted walls!) and plastique – pieces included Webern's Five Pieces for String Quartet Op. 5 and Ruth Alperson's 'Shaggy Dog Story' for rhythmic

speech, percussion, and movement with Yuri wearing a Japanese mask as the dog! (When we went as a student group to Geneva for the 1974 Congress, Fran Aronoff was a good sport and stepped in as the narrator for the 'Shaggy Dog Story' wearing a bright purple unitard. I think she was about 60, and really got into the spirit of it.) Thursday was for teaching in primary schools at Holland Park and Chelsea, and on Friday afternoons we went to Morley College where we did Movement Technique with Simone Michelle, a former dancer in Maurice Bejart's ballet company. We also had a term with Belinda Quirey, an expert in Historical Dance. After dinner in the cafeteria, Yuri, Daphne and I would walk across Waterloo Bridge, past the Festival Hall where we could pick up tickets for a weekend concert, and go up Drury Lane, past the theatres to the City Literary Institute, where we joined adult amateurs for Rhythmics with Elizabeth. She had to cater for people at all different levels of ability so she would sometimes get those of us in the training course to give part of the lesson.

Some of us also had morning jobs, and after 6 months we asked Elizabeth if the course could be located in one place. She secured rooms at Morley College which cost more, but it was a great improvement, saving us all travel time, and the numbers increased. As far as we could tell, Elizabeth carried most of the responsibility for the course on her shoulders. The Dalcroze Society existed but was not able to help in any practical way. Elizabeth continued to run this course for some years, moving to the London Institute of Education at Roehampton. One of the best aspects of the course was being with other like-minded people who were looking for a better way to teach music. We talked a lot over cups of tea, discussing, and 'pulling apart' our lessons. While it was a 'patchwork of classes,' it was good way to learn.

If one looks at how Dalcroze Eurhythmics has spread in the world in the last 30 years, many of Elizabeth's students have been leading the charge. In the UK, Karin Greenhead, one of Vanderspar's students at the Royal College of Music has carried the Dalcroze flame with distinction. In New York, Dr. Ruth Alperson is one of the leading teachers

in the United States today. In Italy, Ava Loiacono is actively promoting the work and training people, and Fanny Luckert in Venezuela. As president of the Dalcroze Society of Japan, Yuri Ishimaru has raised the profile of Dalcroze in that country (the two international conferences 2004 and 2008, and now there is a Japanese Training course). Yuri also had the foresight to make a film of Vanderspar's teaching during a visit to Japan in 1996.

When Elizabeth retired, she and Rufus moved a house in the country in Devon. They enjoyed their garden and were generous and welcoming hosts. I had the pleasure of staying with them in June, 1995. After Rufus's death she moved back to London to be near her son, Christopher and his family in Hampstead. In August 2007 after the Congress in Geneva, Joan Pope and I visited her and enjoyed sharing the good times and catching up on news. She and Patsy James also visited the UK Summer Course in Canterbury the following week. While she was physically frail, her bright blue eyes and alert mind didn't miss a thing!

A practical, 'no-nonsense' person, Elizabeth also had a good sense of fun. She will be remembered by many in the Dalcroze world as a remarkable teacher, and as a brave woman who could persevere, even when the going was rough. She was forthright, and sometimes people could mistake this for bossiness, but she was keen to get on with the job. She embodied much of the Dunkirk spirit, having worked with search-lights in London during World War 2, an ideal job for an expert in Time, Space and Energy! During our training course she gave us an assignment which came from her years in the forces: in no more than two minutes, explain clearly what eurhythmics is and convince your audience why they should do it. She always believed in getting straight to the point.

Members of the Dalcroze Society UK are planning to remember Elizabeth's life and work through the establishment of a special fund. I would recommend that in view of her influence in Australia, we contribute to that venture.

Vale, Elizabeth.

*Sandra Nash, a former student.*

# OBITUARY

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## YASUSHI ITANO

Dear Colleagues in Japan, as President of Dalcroze Australia may I express our condolences on hearing the news of the passing of Mr. Itano who was such a contributor to the development of the work in your country.

Personally, I was so happy to meet with him several years ago in Tokyo. I always thought it was interesting that he completed his Dalcroze Licentiate studies in New York with Hilda Schuster, just a year before I finished mine in Sydney with Heather Gell. What strong teachers we had.

I now ask Sandra Nash, our Director of Studies to continue with more thoughts and sentiments regarding the significance and legacy of his work.

*Yours sincerely Dr. Joan Pope OAM.*

*Mr. Itano and connections with Australia.*

There is a special connection between Australia and Japan because of Mr. Itano. 1965 was the year of the centenary of the birth of Emile Jaques-Dalcroze and the Institut in Geneva arranged a special International Congress to celebrate the event. People travelled from around the world to participate, including Heather Gell from Australia, then aged 69, and Mr. Itano, a graduate of the Dalcroze School of New York, from Japan. She was most impressed that he had about 300 students at his college in Japan, and he enjoyed her presentation on Music Through Movement for young children so much that he invited her to visit Japan on her way back to Australia. She accepted, and flew from London to Tokyo with numerous stops along the way for refuelling. Gell gave a demonstration lesson to students at Kunitachi College of Music, and a children's class at nearby school. Mr. Itano looked after Miss Gell throughout her week in Tokyo, and arranged for her to have a television in her hotel room so that she could observe Japanese programs for children. Gell was at that time creating and presenting 'Playroom,' the precursor of 'Playschool' on Australian television.

The summer workshop at Kunitachi College has a long history and many teachers from different countries have taught there each year. In August 2005, I had the honour to be invited and over dinner one evening, I met some people who were students in the demonstration lesson Gell had given on the stage in the main concert hall in 1965, 40 years earlier. They smiled and became very animated and excited when they recalled Gell's lesson, one of them, excitedly relating the exercises in great detail. She described it as a 'culture shock' – so different was her way of teaching. A few days later I spoke to Mr. Itano by phone and he remembered Gell's great skill as an improviser: 'It was so rich in harmony and very dynamic.'

Gell's book 'Music Movement and the Young Child' was published in Australia in 1949, and reprinted many times. It was used as the main text by early childhood teachers in training colleges around Australia for almost a generation. Following Gell's visit to Japan, Itano and Toshiaki Suzuki undertook the translation of her book, which was published by Zenon in 1973. Heather Gell was thrilled that her work was available to teachers in Japan and was always grateful to Mr. Itano for directing the project.

Because of this history, it was very moving to witness the presentation of the Diploma to Mr. Itano during the first International Dalcroze Conference held in Tokyo by the Jaques-Dalcroze Society of Japan in 2004. I was pleased to be able to talk to him afterwards about Heather Gell and he was very animated when he spoke of her visit which had been so successful. It was to be the first of many visits to Japan by the next generation of Australian Dalcroze teachers.

*Sandra Nash  
Director of Studies for Dalcroze Australia,  
Australian delegate to the FIER  
Member of the College,  
Institut Jaques-Dalcroze.  
September 2009*

*Yuri Ishimaru,  
immediate past-president of the  
Jaques-Dalcroze  
Society of Japan,  
wrote:*

On the afternoon of September 12th, Mr. Itano's farewell party took place. It was a peaceful ceremony with 350 attendants from all over Japan, and there was a remembrance of the great works he has done.

The messages of condolence you sent were read at the ceremony.

# TO MEMBERS OF THE FIER

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## WHY THE FIER?

THE “SOCIÉTÉ DE GYMNASTIQUE Rythmique, méthode Jaques-Dalcroze” (Society of Eurhythmic Gymnastics, Dalcroze method) was created in 1909. At that time there were about 200 trained rhythmicians in the world, who wanted to remain in contact with each other, and so the magazine *Le Rythme* began. As well as creating a forum for exchanging news, *Le Rythme* also published articles, some of which were written by Jaques-Dalcroze himself.

The word “gymnastics” led to confusion, and in 1926 the original name of the society was changed to “Union Internationale des Professeurs Dalcroze-UIPD” (International Union of Dalcroze teachers). The goals of the UIPD were to maintain international contacts amongst rhythmicians, publish *Le Rythme* and with the Jaques-Dalcroze Institute organize the summer courses, just as the original society had done.

In 1976 the UIPD became the FIER (Fédération Internationale des Enseignants de Rythmique)- (International Federation of Rhythmics Teachers). This was the result of a wish to integrate into the Union rhythmic teachers whose diplomas do not mention the name of Jaques-Dalcroze, but only the word « rhythmic ». Although considered by some as a loss of identity, this name change showed an openness of spirit which would be important in helping rhythmicians of differing backgrounds to know, understand and appreciate each other.

Today there are around 1700 members in the FIER, coming from 15 National Associations, as well as individual members. Seven countries have small groups as FIER members. Many teachers are not affiliated with their National Association, and there are members of some Associations who are not rhythmicians.

I will quote here Frank Martin who was co-president of the UIPD between 1926 and 1935, writing in *Le Rythme* in 1939:

‘...The International Union of Teachers must not represent something immediately

and materially useful, it must be what its name suggests: an union, a link, the symbol of what in Rhythmics goes beyond the job[...] the Union must exist firstly in each city between teachers, between friends, then in each country and finally internationally. It must be present in these three ways, not for a specific and tangible reason, but because in itself this union is valuable. There are, after all, not so many of us in the world.’

Some rhythmicians feel that the FIER has no use and that national associations are sufficient to maintain contacts. In the sense that each country has its own particular needs, this is true; certainly it is important to be able to share concerns with colleagues close by. But as Frank Martin says, the international scene is also important. We must be united, we can be inspired by the work of colleagues from other countries and we can compare our various ways of working during international congresses.

*Le Rythme* illustrates the diversity of rhythmicians throughout the world. But how can we continue to produce an international magazine when the postal charges alone are so expensive?

In the age of the Internet, would it be possible to publish *Le Rythme* only on the Internet Site, and each person could read it there? Personally, I don't think this would be a good idea: The Internet may be an excellent way of communicating some kinds of information but does not encourage the conservation of documents.

One of the activities of the committee of the FIER is of course the publication of *Le Rythme*. Other goals include:

- Give financial assistance to projects (or trips) of colleagues.
- Contribute to the publication expenses of the book being written by Reinhard Ring on the history of Rhythmics in the world.
- The publication of *Chemins de Rythmique II* ( Paths to Rhythmics II)
- Collaborate with the Institute in Geneva in the preparation and

organization of the next International Congress (July 18-28 2011)

- Organize bi-annual committee meetings in Geneva. Since two members of the committee live abroad, the travel expenses of these members are paid.

In some countries, the rhythmicians feel quite isolated. I think of Australia, Central and Southern America, Israel and Greece. And those colleagues need to feel part of an international network of teachers who share the same ideals. Even if it were only for them, the FIER must and should continue to exist and to publish *Le Rythme*.

I conclude with the words of the French

child psychologist Françoise Dolto:

‘Every human group finds its richness through communication, through support and solidarity, through aiming for a common goal: the full development of each person within respect for the differences of others.’

*Madeleine DURET*  
*September 09*  
*President of FIER*

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## NEWS FROM GENEVA,

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31/8/2009.

**M**ARY BRICE IS NOW THE TREASURER of the FIER, our international teachers' organisation, so we are indeed lucky to have a contact so close to what is happening in Geneva. Here are some extracts from a recent email. 'At the International School I use rhythmic to teach music to my kids, but it is rhythmic with a bit of freedom and spontaneity, so I am happy. I love teaching rhythmic, but it is not the only way to approach music education and especially in a school situation there are other calls on one's time that can't always fit into a rhythmic mode of teaching - choir, concerts, Escalade, etc.

We go back to school tomorrow. I really enjoy my work but I love holidays - too many things to do to have to work as well! I started learning the cello 2 months ago and love it. A colleague at school could have been a professional cellist except she broke the little finger of her left hand, so she gives me lessons. At the moment I am hiring a cello. This year I want to start a string ensemble group at school: I realised that many children learn a stringed instrument out of school hours, and we have a structure called "after school class" where the children can sign up for a class they'd like to do. The choices are

wide: dance, basketball, hockey, cooking, ceramics, pottery, painting, Christmas decorations, origami, etc. One hour after school once a week. So I would like to start a string group: in middle school the kids will have the option to take part in orchestra, so I think it would be nice to start it a bit earlier. And it's this kind of thing that excites me.

Louise Mathieu told me of Joan's doctorate: she was here late last year giving research seminars to the Institute students and a couple of public conferences also. I am also working towards a doctorate and have done hundreds of hours of work.

Malou and the ASPRYJAD film committee is presently doing a DVD on Eurhythmic and Solfège, using Mireille Weber's lessons. It will be no doubt translated into English and an English version will be available at some time in the future. Malou might ask me to do the English translations as I did for the film about Rhythmic for dancers with Neus Fernando-Alonso at the Institut du Théâtre de Barcelona.'

Mary.

*Editor's note: The DVD, 'La Rythmique chez les Danseurs' is available in English and French. For this and other resources, go to the website, <http://www.dalcroze.ch/centre-de-documentation/librairie/>*

# What's hipp

*Dalcroze Australia*

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Further details on the Dalcroze Australia website  
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Director of Studies

The Summer School is presented with the generous support of the Heather Gell Dalcroze Foundation

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