



## Annual General Meeting

### President's Report

21 October 2021 - transcript

Thank you once again for an opportunity to reflect on the year as president of the Bellingham Youth Orchestra.

We have continued to be impacted by COVID restrictions this year and we all recognise that there will be a rebuilding challenge as we move forward and return to rehearsals and performance. Whilst we were impacted by missed performances with Valla Voices, the FMF and our patron David Helfgott, there is a broader impact on continuity and engagement as we try to maintain moments of success and shared music with all of our young players. We are an organisation that recognises that the process of engagement is often more important than the product of performance and this is the area on which we could focus as we move into 2022. As we have worked through two years of Covid impact I would like to acknowledge the determination and commitment of the music teachers, led by Annie Phelan, who have worked so hard in very trying circumstances to continue to inspire and teach the young players. Particularly those teachers associated with the leading and teaching of the ensemble groups who have continued to inspire their players throughout; an incredible job! Thank you Jacquie, Elizabeth, Susan, Tash and Amber.

Of course, we should also recall the musical achievements of the year including the ACO visit, a trip to Gleniffer Hall and the success of our inaugural camp with so many visiting musicians coming to support us. A feature of these events was the opportunity to see our young players continuing to support each other and develop mentoring relationships.

We have continued to receive support from a wide variety of people across our community and beyond. We have had an extra donation of \$10,000 from the Lansdowne Foundation and a series of considerable donations and support in kind from our community. As we move forward it will be important for us to recognise and work to retain those strong relationships.

The last year has also seen us continue to grow as an organisation and I would like to recognise all of the hours that have been dedicated to building more rigorous systems to ensure the orchestra can go forward on a sustainable footing. We have developed a strategic plan, reworked volunteer roles in areas of costume and afternoon teas and prepared an instrument log, maintenance and hire process. We have also worked to develop a new website and we are looking forward to its launch ... not only for the way it will represent the achievements of our players but also for the streamlined systems and communication that have been developed around it. A particular thanks to Rainee Herron who has driven this project

I would like to thank all of the volunteers including those who work on the committee for their commitment, time, good humour, patience, and expertise. Everyone does incredible work, often quietly and behind the scenes but it has been a great privilege to once again work with such committed people with clear vision and determination. Thank you as well to those volunteers like Lindsey who have moved on to new stages in their lives. The players and the orchestra, as a whole, are certainly a product of all of the generous people who support them.

2021 was a year of loss with the passing of Arthur Dyason whose involvement with the orchestra spanned so many years and who continued ... to the end, to have ideas to raise us up.

This year we welcomed Hazel Buchannan, Bonnie Nilsson and David Ellis as tutors and look forward to their continued contribution, particularly as we are work on the development of brass and woodwind players through 2022.

We are also losing two teachers: Amber Davis and Natasha Dyason. The role of a teacher is not always to be an expert but someone who can build a relationship that facilitates and nurtures the strengths and hidden genius in each child. We will be sorry to say goodbye to these two wonderful teachers and certainly hope that we have many opportunities to work with them into the future.

BYO continues to prosper, even through trying times as a result of the teachers, volunteers and community who work so well together to ensure the very best experiences for all of our young players. Thank you

David Neville

BYO President 2016 - 2022