



BELLINGEN  
YOUTH  
ORCHESTRA

## TERM 2 NEWS 2026

### IMPORTANT DATES

#### Cygnets Spring Serenade

(BYOSS and BYOWS)

29 August

BYO (featuring Sinfonia)

19 September

The Proms (all  
ensembles)

12 December

2 – 4pm

5.30 – 7.30pm



#### ARTISTIC DIRECTOR UPDATE: ANNIE PHELAN

The Bellinggen Youth Orchestra celebrated a spectacularly vibrant and busy Term 2, showcasing the incredible depth of talent across all of its ensembles. The term kicked off with a monumental milestone at the Compass Concert series, where our dedicated musicians performed over two captivating nights. The orchestra brilliantly rose to the challenge of accompanying multiple choral groups before stepping into the spotlight alone to deliver a thrilling, high-octane performance of John Williams' "The Devil's Dance" from *The Witches of Eastwick*.

This momentum carried directly into our highly anticipated Scholarship Concert, where 16 exceptional students took the stage. Each performer demonstrated an outstanding standard of musical preparation and artistry, elevated by the masterful and intuitive piano accompaniments of Mei Wei Lim.

The term culminated in a magnificent end-of-term showcase that beautifully united the entire BYO family. The first half of the concert belonged to our junior groups, featuring stellar individual sets from the BYO Wind Ensemble and the BYO String School (BYOSS), before they joined forces to form the enchanting Cygnets Orchestra—leaving the audience in awe of their emerging talent. Following the interval, the senior Bellinggen Youth Orchestra commanded the stage for a blockbuster second half. Audiences were treated to evocative selections from Edvard Grieg's *Peer Gynt Suite*, interspersed with encore spotlight moments from our scholarship winners.

The energy in the room reached a fever pitch as the orchestra brought the concert to a triumphant close with the infectious rhythms of Arturo Márquez's *Danzón No. 2* and a final, roaring rendition of *The Devil's Dance*, marking a memorable end to a phenomenal term of music-making.



Foundation for Rural  
Regional Renewal



## OPERATIONS UPDATE

A heartfelt thank you to all our wonderful volunteers who continue to support our organisation in so many ways. Every contribution, big or small, helps us provide the best possible experience for our players, teachers, and committee, creating an organisation that runs smoothly and thrives because of your generosity and commitment.

Thank you also to the families who have already paid their Term 3 fees. If you have not yet had the opportunity to do so, we would greatly appreciate payment at your earliest convenience. If you have any questions or concerns about the process, please don't hesitate to reach out—we're always happy to help.

If you are new to our organisation and have skills, experience, or simply some time to offer, we would love to hear from you. Whether behind the scenes or in a front-facing role, there are many ways to get involved, and we are always grateful to welcome new volunteers with a variety of talents to our community.



## BYOSS UPDATE- DIRECTORS: JACQUIE GILL and LIZZIE SCOTT

What a fantastic term we've had at BYO String School! Our first performance of the term saw us take to the stage at the Bellingham Show on Lizzy's birthday! Despite the warm weather (and a few sweaty foreheads!), our string players performed their hearts out and beautifully represented the Bellingham Youth Orchestra Association. It was wonderful to share our music with the local community before enjoying all the fun the show had to offer.

Throughout the term, rehearsals focused on preparing for our annual Winter Concert, where we once again combined forces with the BYO Wind School. Students enjoyed refining Mozart's lively *The Abduction from the Seraglio* alongside the boot-scootin' favourite *Cumberland Cross*. The String School also worked hard on the stirring concert piece *Legends of Glory*, developing confident ensemble playing, musical expression and careful listening skills.

The Winter Concert was a wonderful celebration of music-making across all the BYO ensembles. One of the most valuable aspects of the evening was the opportunity for our younger musicians to hear the more advanced ensembles perform. Seeing the incredible musicianship of the BYO and Sinfonia players, along with the inspiring performances from our senior scholarship recipients, gives our younger students a glimpse of what is possible through dedication, perseverance and regular practice.

Looking ahead, we are now preparing for our standalone Cygnet Orchestra Concert on Saturday 29 August (Week 6), featuring the combined BYO String School and BYO Wind School ensembles. Students have an exciting and varied program ahead, spanning everything from one of Mozart's most famous arias from *The Magic Flute* to the high-energy fiddle tune *Fiddle Fever*, as well as memorable film music from *Harry Potter*.

As we work towards this performance, our focus will be on developing greater rehearsal focus and maturity, refining ensemble skills, and learning to perform confidently across a wide range of musical styles. We can't wait to share this exciting concert with our families and community.

As always, a huge thank you to our dedicated tutors and helpers—Susan, Helen, Angela and Emere—for all their hard work, passion and encouragement. Your commitment each week helps make BYO String School such a welcoming, inspiring and rewarding place for our young musicians.

## BYOWS UPDATE - DIRECTOR: HAZEL BUCHANAN

Well, I think we blew them away!

Our Winter concert, Northern Resonances, was opened by our Cygnet Orchestra performing Mozart's Abduction from the Seraglio, and they nailed it! Dynamics, rhythmic accuracy, intonation: all the details we have been working on came together beautifully. Following a polished performance of Legends of Glory by the String School, Tom made his BYOWS conducting debut with an exhilarating rendition of Hungarian Dance No. 5. Fast, furious, passionate, and the audience loved it! Our last Cygnet piece, Cumberland Cross, provided a wonderful contrast, with its lyrical melody and toe-tapping hoedown.

It is such a joy to watch these youngsters letting go of the nerves and immersing themselves in the music. Best wishes to Iris, Eadie, Abby, Arden, Harrison, Eido, Grace, Chilli and Felix who are preparing for AMEB music exams in August. Keep practising hard! Also in August, our stand alone Cygnet Orchestra concert will be a musical feast of some very familiar tunes and a few that you may not have heard before. Be sure to get your tickets and bring the grandparents along!



### CONTACT US

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## SINFONIA UPDATE- AMBER DAVIS

Sinfonia made steady progress this term, gradually working towards our performance of *Vivaldi's Four Seasons* in Term 3. We balanced our rehearsal work with the wonderful Scandinavian folk music from *Last Leaf* and *Wood Works*, albums by the Danish String Quartet.

Our concert at the end of Term 2 was a real joy, and as always, the members of Sinfonia rose to the occasion, performing with exuberant confidence and demonstrating even stronger ensemble skills.

We are really looking forward to presenting *Vivaldi's Four Seasons* in September and will be charging full steam ahead into Term 3 so that we are well prepared and ready for the challenge. The work demands a great deal from both our soloists and the ensemble, and we are excited to embrace those musical opportunities.



## PRESIDENT UPDATE- DAVID NEVILLE

Term 2 seemed to capture everything that The BYO is about! It was fantastic to see so many opportunities available for the young musicians in our community. Working on the big stage with the Arts Unit across the Compass Concerts really highlighted the way the BYO is seen as a unique contributor in providing youth musical opportunities. We were able to act as a conduit to bring other musicians together from across the region, providing them with the same large scale ensemble experiences that, outside of Bellingen, are very, very rare for young players not located in metropolitan areas. This took an enormous amount of coordination from the team and it was wonderful to see the quality of what our team creates being celebrated more widely.

We then, of course, had the chance to come together for our winter concert and this is always a time to celebrate the wonderful support we have from our community. Our players seem to continue to tip the bar of excellence and this was reflected across all the ensembles and the individual performances. But we also had a chance to recognise what supports them in their love of music. I was thrilled to meet so many who continue to support us: from those who donate instruments to those who provide afternoon teas; from the many who support our finances to the groups and individuals who support our scholarship programs; from those who provide expertise in so many areas to those who are always the last out as we pack up after a concert ... our Winter Concerts are a time for us to celebrate what makes us that unique feature on the musical landscape!

## INSTRUMENT OFFICER UPDATE- KATHARINE SUTHERLAND

### Looking after our instruments during Winter.

With the cooler months upon us, it's a good time for a reminder on keeping your instrument in top shape:

- **Temperature changes matter.** Avoid leaving instruments in cars or near heaters. Sudden temperature shifts can cause wood to crack and strings to go out of tune more easily.
- **Watch the humidity.** Winter air can be quite dry indoors with heating on. If you play a wooden instrument (violin, viola, cello, double bass, woodwinds), consider a humidifier for your case if you have one.
- **Wipe down after every play.** A soft, dry cloth removes rosin dust, moisture, and fingerprints. This protects the finish and keeps strings/keys in good condition.
- **Check your case.** Make sure latches, straps, and handles are secure, and that the case is closing properly to protect against knocks and weather.
- **Address issues early.** A small crack, buzzing string, or sticky valve is much easier (and cheaper) to fix before it becomes a bigger problem. Locally, there are quality instrument repair services. Contact me for further information.

Thank you all for taking such good care of your instruments. It really does make a difference to how they sound and how long they last!

