

OSTINATO WANGARATTA INC.

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NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2005

Pater 1868 "Renaissance".

"We are all under sentence of death
but with a sort of indefinite reprieve.....
We have an interval,
and then our place knows us no more.

Some spend this interval in listlessness,
Some in high passions,

The wisest,

at least among the children of this world,
in art and song-----"

Friday 18 March - The Centre - Seniors Week.

We sang to a small audience - a number had galloped off to an extra Computer Class - some were tired from the day and had gone home. Still, 16 to 18 of us sang well just the same. We will take care under what conditions we perform in the future. (we hope).

Sunday 3 April - La Spinas, Whorowly - Luncheon Fundraiser for Leukaemia Foundation.

- This was another experience. We sang well and brightly till we were hoarse. A large percentage of the choir performed. The conditions were difficult - a noisy audience moving around fetching food in the large shed. Rainy weather had altered our thoughts on where to sing. Ruth was frightened she may fall off backwards off the truck stage, so that sight had been abandoned. Still, we introduced ourselves to a new type of audience. The fame of Ostinato will spread.

SUNDAY 12 JUNE: BOGGY CREEK VINEYARD - Luncheon.

We are to sing again! 10 min. brackets.

We may get fed. Patrons pay \$40.

"Stitched Up Festival" organisers had requested OSTINATO to sing relevant songs out at the aerodrome on 19 June. We declined, as the date at the time clashed with our Sunc Cathedral concert - which now has to be moved to perhaps 5 June.

We already have a booking for December Moyhu Carols by Candlelight.

Our year has begun with a steady number of invitations to perform - which is great!

Good advertising to make us known as a performing group in our local North East Area.

"Glissando" - The musical equivalent of slipping on a banana peel. Also, a technique adopted by string players for difficult runs.

Q: What do you get if you run over an army officer with a steam roller?
A: A flat major.

Q: What do you get when an army officer puts his nose to the grindstone?
A: A sharp major.

TUESDAY 26 APRIL 05 - 8:00pm. St John's Village Hall.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - election of office bearers.

A history of music in Australian schools: →

(i) Vocal music in NSW and Victorian schools. Due principally to their larger populations, school education in New South Wales and Victoria developed at a faster rate than in the less populous colonies. The origin of school music in Australia is essentially that of transplanted British educational practice. Vocal music was introduced to English elementary schools and teacher training institutions in the early 1840s when the Committee of Council on Education published an English adaptation by John Hullah of the French 'fixed doh' solmisation method. Vocal music was introduced to colonial schools not so much for its intrinsic values but as a form of pedagogy for instilling (through the words of school songs) moral, patriotic and religious values in children. It was also viewed as a healthy recreation for children and a means of making schools attractive to both pupils and parents.

In New South Wales, James Fisher (1826-1891), the singing master appointed to Sydney schools, introduced Curwen's tonic sol-fa (movable-doh) system as the official teaching method to public schools in 1867 and also established singing as part of the ordinary school curriculum. Since then, music teaching in NSW primary schools has generally been the responsibility of generalist classroom teachers. Hugo Alpen (1842-1917) was appointed as Superintendent of Music in 1884 and gradually transferred the teaching of music from tonic sol-fa to a movable-doh staff notation method of his own devising which pre-empted similar developments in English education by almost a decade. Alpen's successor, Theodore Tearne (1857-1926), was Supervisor of Music from 1909 to 1922.

The situation in Victoria differed significantly from that in New South Wales in that singing masters were appointed from the outset as itinerant specialists at the main centres of population. George Leavis Allen (1827-1897) was appointed as the first singing master in 1853. Other appointments followed and by 1862 an estimated one-third of school children in Victoria were being taught singing-using Hullah's fixed-doh method-by visiting singing masters. In 1862, the cost of providing specialist music teaching in schools saw the itinerant singing masters initially dismissed and then, after public protest, re-instated in 1864 under a system of extra-fees paid by parents, effectively making music an extra-curricular subject. By the late 1860s, the tonic numeral (staff notation) method-devised by John Waite in England-replaced Hullah's method in Victorian schools. In 1874, singing was included in the 'Course of Free Instruction' and taught either by itinerant singing masters or by licenced classroom teachers who were paid an additional £10 per annum to give musical instruction. In 1878, Joseph Summers (1839-1917) was appointed to the position of Inspector of Music which he held until 1891.

In 1879, Samuel McBurney (1847-1909) embarked a long but ultimately successful campaign for recognition of tonic sol-fa as a school music teaching method in Victoria. With the onset of the economic depression of the 1890s, the government dismissed all singing masters, abolished the position of Inspector of Music (to which McBurney was appointed in 1893), and ceased all extra payments to classroom teachers of music. Henceforth, singing was to be the responsibility of classroom teachers, although little or no music teaching was evident until John Byatt (1862-1930), an ardent tonic sol-fa-ist, undertook a re-organisation of school music from 1915.

(ii) School music in other colonies. In South Australia, tonic sol-fa was employed for teaching music in primary schools from the early 1870s. However it was until Alexander Clark (1843-1913), as an inspector of schools, promoted tonic sol-fa through in-service education for classroom teachers that singing became mandatory in primary schools in 1890 and a singing syllabus based on the tonic sol-fa was included in the school curriculum in 1895. This period saw the founding of a choir of children from public schools (later called the 'Thousand Voice Choir') by the Public Schools Decoration

Society in 1891, which has continued to the present under the South Australian Public (Primary) Schools Music Society. Frank (Francis Lymer) Gratton (1871-1947), a tonic sol-fa supporter, was appointed the first Supervisor of Music (1922-36).

In Queensland, music was being taught by itinerant specialists in Brisbane and Toowoomba by the early 1870s, and by 1875 vocal music was listed as a subject in the 'Primary School Schedule'. In 1908 George Sampson was appointed Music Adviser to the Department of Public Instruction until 1930 when Charles Hall took over this role as lecturer in music at the Teachers College.

The introduction of music to schools in Tasmania was a more gradual process and it was not until 1905 that singing by the tonic sol-fa method was included in the 'Course of Instruction' for primary schools. Key figures in the development of school music in Tasmania were Frank Gratton who promoted tonic sol-fa in Launceston and northern Tasmania from 1906 until returning to South Australia in 1911 and Victor von Bertouch, also a South Australian tonic sol-fa-ist, who was music instructor at the Hobart Teachers College.

Instrumental music in schools during the colonial period was limited to drum and fife bands which were viewed as an extension of military drill which was taught in many schools.