

BRIAN DUGUID – Memorial Concert

Usher Hall, Edinburgh, Sunday, November 5th 2006

On Sunday, November 5th, a memorial concert was held in the Usher Hall, Edinburgh in memory of Brian Duguid. Brian was an inspiration to all who met him.

I first met Brian at a Bruce Pearson workshop in Edinburgh to launch the new *Best in Class* books. Bruce and Brian's enthusiasm, dedication, humour and love for wind bands rubbed off on me and got me into conducting and coaching at school, area, national and community level. Any problems? Need music? How do you conduct this bit? Find a good curry place? Phone Brian. A colleague, mentor and friend, still sadly missed.

The concert started with a lone piper playing *Highland Cathedral* in the organ gallery of the Usher Hall; how many friends have I seen off to this piece?

An ad-hoc wind band, made up from former pupils, staff, friends and students from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama got us off to a flying start with the incredibly difficult *Wee Cooper of Fife* arranged by Cedric Thorpe Davie and conducted by Nigel Boddice. This was followed by an original composition by Andrew Duncan called *Freya's Call* and conducted by the composer. The highlight of the first half was two songs from *Five Folk Songs for Soprano and Band* with soprano, Colette Ruddy, and conducted by Russell Cowieson. Then the surprise of the first half was Bruce Pearson walking on stage, having left Canada a few hours earlier to go home,

collect his wife then jump on a plane to Scotland, arriving at 7a.m. (if that doesn't show the high regard and esteem Brian was thought of then nothing will), then on to the Usher Hall to rehearse *A Klezmer Carnival* by Philip Sparke.

The first half ended with the jazz band conducted by Stuart French. Soloist Ryan Quigly gave us a fantastic rendition of *A Night in Tunisia*, then Stuart led the band through *Jazz Police* with his usual subtle style.

The second half music was performed by a brass band, again made up from friends, students and members of the Whitburn band. It opened with *Olympic Fanfare and Theme* by James Curnow. Soloist Richard Kidd, from Aberdeen, gave us an incredible account of *Valflicans Dans* by Hugo Alfvén. What an amazing talent this young player is and I am sure he will go the very top. Remember the name! I was sitting next to his very proud mother, Valerie, who I am sure had a tear in her eye at this point.

Charlie Maynes, one of Brian's closest friends, was Compère for the evening. The whole audience had every admiration for the way he got through the concert. An incredibly difficult job and one which Charlie did with professionalism, poise, dignity and obvious love. Half way through the second half Charlie gave a tribute to Brian, taking us from when he started euphonium through to the RSAMD, becoming an instrumental instructor, class teaching at Park Mains High School, where he piloted the *Best in Class* series and revolutionised wind banding in

Scotland, if not Britain and on to becoming Head of Instrumental Music for Lothian Region, dragging the instrumental service into the 21st century, before going on to West Lothian as Arts Manager. Towards the end of the tribute, the band, under the baton of Tony Swainson started up with Tony's own arrangement of *The Northern Lights of Old Aberdeen*. As the band's dynamics got louder and softer so did Charlie and you could feel the emotion emanating from him and from everyone else in the hall.

The West Lothian section of the National Youth Choir of Scotland joined us in a rendition of Tony Swainson's *Eriskay Love Lilt*. It was fantastic to see so many young children taking part and I know Brian would have been delighted to see them all there.

The concert closed with *Alone With my Thoughts* by Andrew Duncan involving the band, choir and singer Colette Ruddy.

Family, friends, colleagues, pupils past and present all attended this concert and I am sure Brian would have been very proud to see so many people there and would have loved every moment of the musical performances.

Charlie Maynes stated that a new arts centre being built in West Lothian should be named after Brian. I defy anyone to disagree with this and I am sure West Lothian will do the right thing. Rest in peace Brian, in the knowledge that your legacy to music will live on.

Stephen Callaghan