This newsletter introduces 2013 and looks back on NECOM’s extraordinary achievements in Term 4, 2012.

From October last year, NECOM stacked up unforgettable performances and achievements. Our inaugural Heritage Homestead Concert Series and biennial New England Sings! were a sell-out, ‘Friends of NECOM’ was launched and our end-of-year Christmas concerts were a knockout!

At the end of each year, we often see some staffing changes and we bid farewell to string teacher Alex Hiew, Inverell co-ordinator Michèle Jedlicka, and Jan Kirk and Heather Maciver from our admin team. On behalf of NECOM, I thank them most sincerely for being such wonderful colleagues and wish them well in their new endeavours.

In addition, Jenny Sholl retired from the NECOM Board in February – thank you Jenny for helping to make NECOM such a successful part of Armidale’s cultural heart and soul.

In 2013 we have welcomed new NECOM staff - string teachers Suzie-May Camm and Alexander Negerevich, Fiona Adams as Inverell Co-ordinator, Anna Lawlor returning from maternity leave, and Deborah Jenner, Finance & Administration Manager.

And for your diary - our 2013 concerts will feature some amazing guests including pianist Konstantin Shamray in early May; ACO2, the Australian Chamber Orchestra’s touring orchestra in September; and the Australian Youth Orchestra String Quartet in October. This is great coup for NECOM so please come along and enjoy the music.

My best wishes to all our music students, families and supporters for a wonderful 2013 of great music making.

Susanne James
Director, NECOM

Russian born Konstantin Shamray burst onto the Australian music scene in August 2008 as winner of the Sydney International Piano Competition. He captured people’s attention as the first in the history of the competition to take out both 1st Prize and Peoples’ Choice Prize along with six other special prizes – an astonishing achievement for a 23 year old.

Since then, he has presented three successful tours in all states of Australia, in New Zealand and Singapore, and has performed at internationally prestigious festivals including Ruhr Klavier Festival, the Bochum Festival and Kissingen Sommer in Germany, and White Nights Festival in St Petersburg. In October 2011 he won the First prize at the Klavier Olympiade in Bad Kissingen, Germany.

He is a recording artist with Naxos and in 2012 recorded a new CD of works by Scriabin, Tchaikovsky and Prokofiev with ABC Classics.

Konstantin needs no introduction to Armidale after his sellout concerts in 2010 and NECOM is looking forward to presenting this sensational young pianist in May.

Bookings will open on Monday 25 March with general admission in Inverell and reserved seating in Armidale, including priority seating for ‘Friends of NECOM’. Tickets are $35, $25 (concession) and $15 (child under 18 years).

KONSTANTIN SHAMRAY RETURNS!
Inverell Town Hall: Wednesday 1 May, 7pm
CB Newling Auditorium, Armidale: Thursday 2 May, 7pm

Welcome to 2013
Stop Press

AMusA Achievements
Congratulations to Armidale Youth Orchestra musicians Jol Choct, Charlotte Low, Georgie Ostenfeld and Jess Wright who all gained their AMusA diplomas late last year.

NECOM Office Revamp
NECOM’s split administration offices will come together in a new office space up on Level 1 towards the end of March while the old office converts to a much needed Ensemble Studio. Our new NECOM Office and entrance hallway will be open after Easter so please come up and visit us in our new ‘home’.

Free Fees
Congratulations to LINDA PAGE who is our winner of the FREE FEES for Term 1, 2013. Linda’s daughter joined Cantilena in 2012.

Thank you Early Birds
Thanks to all parents who completed our new enrolment and fee payment options - your early attention to these changes has helped our administration enormously.

A Japanese White Christmas
Congratulations to NECOM scholarship student Will Smith who recently spent November-January at Meitoku International School in Kochi, Japan’s most southern island. And a cup of tea will never be the same!

Piano Fund Update
The Piano Fund is now at $12,300 helped by a generous donation from supporter Brian Connor – thank you!

ALEXANDER NEGRELEVICH
B.Mus Wisconsin; Dip.Music Freiburg University of Music
Alex has over 30 years of experience as an accomplished violinist and pianist, violin & viola teacher, conductor and composer, with a special interest in chamber music.

Alex attended the Sydney Conservatorium High School and went on to study violin as an ABC Training Orchestra scholarship student, and composition at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

After a professional stint with the Australian Opera & Ballet Orchestra, Alex studied overseas in Sienna and Freiburg before moving to the University of Wisconsin USA to study with Sidney Harth (Concertmaster, New York Philharmonic) and Norman Paulu (Leader, Pro Arte Quartet).

Upon his return to Australia, he established a busy career in Qld as a teacher, ensemble coach, orchestral conductor, composer and proprietor of Dorian Music. In 2010 he travelled to Moscow to record his symphony No 1 and string works with the Russian Philharmonic Orchestra.

FIONA ADAMS
BBus, Dip Con Land
Fiona took up the position of Co-ordinator of the NECOM Inverell Campus in January 2013. She attended Inverell High School and went on to earn her Bachelor of Business from Monash University and a Diploma of Conservation and Land Management in 2012. Fiona will be able to bring her substantial experience as a project manager and her skills in administration, finance, marketing and working with community based organisations to the Inverell campus as it enters its next stage of development.

Fiona is well known in the Inverell district through her work with GWYMAK Landcare Network, for which she received a Pride of Workmanship Award from Rotary in 2011 that acknowledges members of the community who display outstanding qualities of leadership, dedication and commitment to service. She has also held many volunteer roles with regional organisations, including Macintyre Development Unit, Inverell Biological Cooperative, Inverell Tennis Club and the Tom Roberts Festival Committee.

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SUZIE-MAY CAMMM

BMus UNE; MMus (Composition); Dip Arts (Visual Arts) Ballarat

Suzie-May has over 20 years’ experience as a string specialist and teacher of violin, viola and cello. She is a highly regarded conductor of orchestras and string ensembles and a prolific composer and arranger. She brings to NECOM her passion in string pedagogy specialising in junior and intermediate students alongside her expertise in composition and arrangement for those age levels.

Suzie-May also enjoys a diverse performing career as a classical orchestral and chamber ensemble musician, and a crossover into playing jazz, blues and Cajun music, and more recently Irish and Arabic fiddle.

Suzie-May originally came to Armidale to study violin and composition at the UNE before moving to Victoria where she gained her Diploma in Visual Arts and her Masters in Composition. She was Head of Instrumental Music at Clarendon College, Ballarat before deciding to return to Armidale with her husband Pete and their five children in January this year.

TAMMY KILPATRICK

BMus (Hons), Kodály Cert (Early Childhood)

Tammy studied Voice and Education at the University of Queensland and attained a Bachelor of Music with first class honours. Over the past twelve years she has taught classroom music, directed choral programs and taught private singing, piano and theory.

Tammy’s choral experience is extensive having been a member of the Concentus, VoiceWorks and The Australian Voices as well as Musical Director for The Queensland Youth Choir. These ensembles have exposed her to a wide variety of music and performance opportunities including overseas tours to New Zealand, Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic. Most recently, Tammy attained registration as a do-re-mi teacher having completed both levels of the Australian Kodály Certificate’s Early Childhood specialisation. She is thrilled to be part of the Mini Minstrel’s Teaching Staff.

Jenny Sholl, Director, NECOM Board 2003-2013

Jenny Sholl, a founding member of the NECOM Board and tireless volunteer for many Armidale community organisations including the Armidale Choral Society, Armidale Symphony Orchestra and the CWA, has recently retired from the Board.

Jenny gave outstanding service and support to NECOM, particularly in the establishment of the Con and as a member of Personnel Committee for over a decade – thank you so very much for helping make NECOM what it is today!

How and when did you become involved with NECOM?
10 years ago, Arthur Rickards rang me at about 5.30pm one evening to request that a representative of the Choral Society attend the initial meeting, with reps from all other musical groups in Armidale, to discuss the vision of establishing a Regional Conservatorium. The President at the time was away, and, as the meeting was that evening, I attended!

Were there any challenges for NECOM when it started?
Lots! Burying the image, widely held in Armidale, of the former attempt that was a totally different and failed concept; convincing the established teachers of music that the new concept was not a threat to their livelihoods; getting the funds, attracting talented teaching staff, students and venue to start, and more.

What have you enjoyed about the role as a Board member?
Watching the vision (largely enthused by Arthur) coming to fruition, and seeing the talent and love of music being nurtured in a whole generation of young Armidilians.

Has NECOM achieved what you and the Board expected?
I think much much more has been achieved than any of us, except perhaps Arthur, could have envisaged.

What is your favourite memory as a Board member?
Being a very small part of such a unique institution, that I think only Armidale could produce.

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Standing Ovations for New England Sings!

On Sunday 28 October 2012, NECOM’s biennial project New England Sings! performed in Lazenby Hall to packed houses with both concerts ending in rousing standing ovations.

New England Sings! brought close to 2000 performers and audience members to Lazenby Hall – so many that there had to be two concerts to fit everyone in. 18 months in the making, New England Sings! was masterminded by Program Manager Corinne Arter and funded by Arts NSW, ADFAS (Armidale Decorative & Fine Arts Society) and Armidale Central Rotary Club.

This musical showcase featured conductors Lyn Williams OAM, Rowena Tall, Leanne Roobol and Warwick Dunham and premiered two specially commissioned Australian works The Bird King by Dan Walker and Dreamers of the Day by Joe Twist. It brought together 11 primary schools and 10 secondary schools from Armidale and as far afield as Bellingen, Glen Innes, Inverell and Tamworth; The Armidale Youth Orchestra; members of the Armidale Symphony Orchestra, Armidale City Band and Armidale Pipe Band.

New England Sings! is a testament to what can be achieved when so many schools and musical organisations work together, and with the tireless support of the Armidale Music Teachers Association (AMTA) that was the powerhouse behind-the-scenes, it will be a never-forgotten event for hundreds of children and their families.

My students thoroughly enjoyed the whole event. It is interesting how sometimes you think students will like one piece but they like something totally different. My kids loved Deep River. My one bass boy Dallas loved having the opportunity to sing with many basses which was encouraging for him. All in all, an awesome experience for my students. Yet again NECOM has done an amazing job of co-ordinating and managing the whole event. Well done!!!

Miranda McHattan, Music teacher, Inverell HS
I love the idea that ANY CHILD in their school can be part of an extravaganza like that here in Armidale just by being committed and willing to participate. I consider myself and my children incredibly fortunate to be part of the present NECOM at this time in our lives.

Sara McNeall, Music teacher, St. Mary’s Primary School

Thanks for your great organisation and the wonderful learning experience NECOM provided for our students. It is great to work together with other schools in the area and the students really enjoyed it. Thank you again for all your hard work. We really appreciate it.

Sally Spillane, Music teacher, Ben Venue PS

A huge thank you to everyone at NECOM for all their hard work in putting together this fabulous project. We can only imagine how many sleepless nights were had. Our children had an amazing experience and the parents are talking rave reviews. We could not think of a better way to show case the exceptionally high standard of music in the New England. Congratulations NECOM and New England Sings!

Sue Kelly & Lee MacGregor, Teacher & Principal, Armidale City PS

I want to congratulate you on such an amazing concert. It was just wonderful to see such a huge gathering of so many talents. The music was outstanding and the children just amazing! I found myself wishing I could have taken my Mum who loved music so much, she would have been blown away I am sure! It is lovely to know that Dave and I have chosen such a cultured and dedicated community to be a part of as our children grow.

Tania Hardin, Year 5 teacher, PLC Armidale
very busy 2012 for all the AYO groups was brought to a close by the Gala Concert held on Sunday 18 November. The concert was characterised by collaborations, beginning with a strong program from the AYWE (Armidale Youth Wind Ensemble) that was joined by the wind and brass sections of the AYO. The Wind Ensemble program spanned contemporary arrangements (Fair Winds) to the staunchly traditional Washington Post, culminating in an arrangement of Dvorak’s New World Symphony, featuring Angus Smith on soprano saxophone.

The AYSO (Armidale Youth String Orchestra) followed with a lush arrangement of Mussorgsky’s Promenade from Pictures at an Exhibition, led by Jessica Hughes. David Tan led a contemporary work Boomerang and then Jonathan Bruhl took over leadership for Cello Squadron, a whimsical take by Richard Myer on Wagner’s Ride of the Valkyrie.

The string players of the AYO then joined the AYSO for a performance of the challenging Bach Concerto for Double String Orchestra. This finale was a visual and aural delight and a tribute to the success of the NECOM program with the full range of players ageing from 8 to 19 years.

The AYO strings followed with Vivaldi’s Concerto in G minor for two Cellos featuring Year 12 student Charlotte Low and Georgina Ostenfeld. The whole orchestra joined the strings to educate the audience in contemporary music-making with a vibrant rendition of 4’33”.

The concert closed with the more traditional delights of Movement 1 of Schubert’s Unfinished Symphony. Considering there were only three rehearsals after the huge undertaking of New England Sings! in October, this was a strong program.

Our conductors Nick Negerevich, April Kelson and Warwick Dunham need acknowledgement for their consistent musical leadership and creative choices of repertoire. The afternoon finished with a beautiful afternoon tea organised by the AYO committee. A fitting end to an event packed year.

Cathy Archer

Patrick Murphy Cello Masterclass

On the 14th of October 2012, a Masterclass was held for budding young cellists. The Master in this case was the insightful Patrick Murphy. His three students for the class were Izzy Emanuel, Ally Van Duijnhoven and me (Daniel Stanley). Izzy was first up with a piece she had only been playing a couple of weeks and Patrick had some great insight into the style and phasing in the piece. Ally was next with a party piece and Patrick gave advice on how the playfulness could be achieved through different techniques. I played a romantic piece and Patrick was really helpful with ideas on the different moods the piece created and how to develop them. Thanks NECOM and Patrick for the Masterclass opportunity.

Daniel Stanley
Congratulations to all the NECOM staff for a fabulous afternoon of music with Elena and Friends. The lovely ambience at Petersons Winery made this Homestead Concert a very special occasion! Audience member

NECOM’s inaugural Heritage Homestead Series had sell-out concerts and was an absolute hit with all who attended. The series featured beautiful chamber music played by NECOM musicians and guest artists in the New England’s prestigious private homesteads – Chevy Chase, Ohio Homestead in Walcha and The Great Hall of Petersons Winery and Guesthouse, formally the Palmerston Homestead of the Dangar family.

Audiences loved the concept and intimacy of these concerts as they exemplified the true essence of what makes chamber music so special. Who could resist the experience of hearing NECOM’s wonderful staff musicians; Patrick Murphy (cello) and Brieley Cutting (piano) from Queensland; Armidale based pianist Warwick Dunham and harpist Judy Hinch; and Australia’s internationally acclaimed composer Elena Kats Chernin?

I thank the generous hosts who opened their private homes for these concerts (Corinne and Phil Emanuel, Melanie Oppenheimer and Mark Guyot, and Judy Peterson), NECOM staff members, John Hadfield, Eric Ghosh, the Edmonds family, the Community Mutual Group, and especially our audiences for their enthusiastic support of this inaugural series. Not only did these concerts bring joy to all, but the proceeds have gone towards our Piano Fund that will have long lasting benefits well into the future.

Susanne James

ELENA & FRIENDS CONCERT REVIEW

The third Heritage Homestead concert “Elena and Friends” in the Great Hall at Petersons Guesthouse on Sunday 4 November featured well known composer and pianist Elena Kats-Chernin, NECOM staff and guest musicians.

Elena’s much applauded piece Russian Rag for solo piano opened the program and she had the audience in her grasp before she even played a note. Her smile, her story about writing the piece, her energy and enthusiasm immediately engaged us. It is a ragtime piece with a slightly nostalgic feel and beautifully complimented the ambience of the gracious Hall of Petersons Homestead. Elements of jazz inform much of her work and improvisation can happen at any time. At one point during the afternoon she held up the score of her next piece and pointed to a page with markings crossed out, red lines added and altogether “a bit of a mess”. The result was a wonderfully textural, multi-layered work which carried us along with its spontaneity.

Re-inventions (after JS Bach) included the Friends playing violins, viola, cello and flute. The tapestry of sounds from the ensemble was all the richer for the performance in such an intimate setting. The audience enjoyed watching the interaction between the performers making the work come to life in a way that listening to a CD never can.

There were so many “mentionable moments” during the afternoon: the piece composed hastily during interval when Elena decided the second half was not long enough! There was also the deeply moving work which took us into the dark world of Elena’s second son who suffers from mental illness. There were deliciously sweet sounds from the strings (Alex Hiew, April Kelson, Jacqui Epps, Eliza Scott and Charlotte Hayes), Nick Negerevich’s flute had us wanting to dance in Kate Waltz and when Elena brought the concert to a close (full circle as she said) with her ensemble version of Russian Rag, Rob Woodhouse’s clarinet blew us away.

Robyn & Keith Power (Friends of NECOM)
After the uplifting Heritage Homestead Concert Elena & Friends, NECOM launched its philanthropic initiative Friends of NECOM, inviting community members to play a part in helping NECOM provide the best music education and performance programs possible in the New England region. And that’s an exciting and challenging prospect considering the New England covers Armidale and another 100,000 square kilometres!

**Friends of NECOM** was launched by NECOM Chairman Dr Arthur Rickards OAM under the beautiful trees of Petersons Winery and was attended by many audience members and musicians.

The Friends’ first function followed with Christmas Drinks at the home of NECOM Chairman Dr Arthur and Deidre Rickards in early December and hosted by NECOM Board members to thank our sponsors, Friends and staff.

Thank you to all our inaugural Friends of NECOM and we invite all readers to invest in our musical future and become a member now! Information on Membership and an application form are included on the next page of this Newsletter. By joining our Friends, you will not only be a part of our musical activities, but have a wonderful time enjoying beautiful music and great company.

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**INAUGURAL FRIENDS OF NECOM**

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Susanne James, Elena Kats-Chernin, guest artist and composer, attends the Friends Launch.

Chairman Dr Arthur Rickards OAM launches Friends of NECOM at Petersons Winery.

Elena Kats-Chernin, guest artist and composer, attends the Friends Launch.

Arthur Rickards with Bill Noble and Bernie Munro ANZ Bank.

Barbara and Murray Giles.

Rosemary Leitch with Jan Kirk.

Flying Scales Quartet perform for the Friends.

Christmas host Deidre Rickards and John Hadfield.

Susanne James with ADFAS sponsors Libby and Les Davis.

Robyn Hadfield, Corinne Arter, Alex Hiew and John Clifton-Everest at the Friends Christmas Party.
FRIENDS OF NECOM - JOIN US AND INVEST IN A MUSICAL FUTURE

We teach music to children because of its immense capacity and potency to act on the heart, mind, spirit and soul of humanity. Richard Gill, conductor, educator

Our goal ‘To inspire and enrich the lives of children, young people and adults through music learning and performance’ has been at the core of everything we do since NECOM was established in 2003.

There is irrefutable international and Australian research proving the significant and far-reaching benefits that music gives to children, youth and adults, and this is magnified in remote, rural and regional communities. Especially for children, weekly music learning has a significant impact on their overall learning outcomes, self-esteem and personal development.

By becoming a Friend of NECOM, you can invest in our region’s musical resources, children’s education and community music making. Your help will allow us to continue to provide the best music education and performance programs possible in Armidale and across this huge north western region and you can help in a variety of ways:

- Join Friends of NECOM – complete the form below
- Attend our concerts with your friends
- Host a soiree or fundraising event
- Suggest venues for our Homestead Series
- Introduce us to possible sponsors
- Provide philanthropic support
- Lobby local and state politicians

By joining Friends of NECOM, you will receive:
- Priority seat allocation to future concerts eg Konstantin Shamray, ACO2
- Complimentary programs to concerts
- Exclusive post-concert receptions with guest artists
- Invitations to Lectures and Masterclasses by guest artists
- Video Conferenced Open Rehearsals and Masterclasses by international musicians and orchestras
- Quarterly Newsletter take note

To find out more about supporting NECOM programs please contact Susanne James, Director on 02 6773 6139 or director@necom.org.au

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FRIENDS of NECOM

1. Contact Details

Title __________________________ First Name __________________________ Surname __________________________

Name of joint member (if applicable) ___________________________________________________________

Address __________________________________________________________________________________

Email ___________________________________________ Mble ___________________________ Tel: __________

Membership
☐ Individual Donation $95  ☐ Joint Donation(2 members) $175  ☐ I would like to give an additional donation of $ __________________________

(All donations of more than $2.00 are tax deductible)

2. Acknowledgement

Please specify how you would like to be acknowledged in NECOM literature. Alternatively, you may wish to remain anonymous. ___________________________________________

3. Payment Options

The form of my donation will be:
☐ Cheque/money order made out to ‘New England Conservatorium of Music’
☐ Telephone: Credit Card only to (02) 6773 6419
☐ Fax: In person at Armidale Office only
☐ Credit Card only to (02) 6772 7511
☐ Credit Card: ☐ Visa OR ☐ Mastercard

Cardholder’s Name: __________________________________________ Exp Date: __________

Card Number: __________________________________________

Signature: __________________________________________

Return your application to:
Postal Address NECOM
PO Box 1313, Armidale
NSW 2359
Street Address CB Newling Building
(Old Teachers College).
Armidale

music speaks volumes
After successful pilots in 2011, NECOM established a Music Therapy Program in 2012 with generous support from The Ascent Group, the Armidale City Bowling Club and the Armidale Dumaresq Council. Led by music therapist Natalie Nugent who worked closely with Armidale disability organisations and families, NECOM offered the following:

- The Ascent Group music therapy program: Individual and group work for clients (19–67 years) with a variety of disabilities.
- Pedal Early Childhood Intervention music therapy program: Individual sessions, group music therapy, assessments and consultancy work for children from 0–5 years and their families.
- Growing Through Song: A 6-week songwriting and recording project at Armidale High School Support Unit.
- Consultancy and Transition work in Narrabri, Moree and Glen Innes; Community Living Service (CLS) homes; staff training for The Ascent Group; and transitioning children into NECOM’s Cantilena Choirs

**Music Therapy Programs 2013**

In 2013 NECOM continues to develop its programs and is currently seeking new partners for all its ongoing programs and for a Music Therapy in Aged Care pilot. Programs currently on offer include:

- Private individual consultation & assessment
- Individual 9-week sessions
- Group 9-week sessions
- PEDAL Early intervention programs in Armidale and Uralla

NECOM has places still available in its programs so please contact us to discuss your needs.

For information and enrolment please contact NECOM: Tel (02) 6773 6419 or Email: musictherapy@necom.org.au

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**Music Teacher PD Seminar**

On Friday 2 November 2012, NECOM string teacher Alex Hiew gave an in-depth presentation of her research thesis *The Psychology of Music.*

Congratulations to Alex who was awarded the Doctor of the Musical Arts degree by the University of Cincinnati for her research in December.

NECOM provided this PD workshop free to all Music Educator Members and local instrumental and string teachers.
Inverell Campus: Term 4, 2012

Presentations were given to the Inverell Rotary Club and Inverell East Rotary Club by Michèle Jedlicka, followed by performances by the STARZ Show Choir and instrumental students who gave club members a taste of not only classical but also jazz music.

In November, Inverell drums instructor Colin McKinlay gave a Drums Try-Out Day with several drum kits and a variety of hand drums for people of all ages to have a go! New students enrolled in NECOM’s contemporary music program and the afternoon was filled with the incredible sounds and rhythm of percussion.

After two and a half terms under the guidance of artistic director Ruth Strutt, accompanist Miranda McHattan and movement coordinator Stephanie Marshall, the STARZ show choir gave a final performance of four songs to their family and friends at the NECOM campus in November.

And in December cello teacher Georgie Ostenfeld and her students gave a farewell concert as Georgie leaves for tertiary study in 2013. Georgie will be sorely missed!

And to end the term, Ros Oliver and her Mini Minstrels visited the elderly residents of the McLean Community to sing and dance and show off their music-making talents.

Music arrives at Tingha Public School

After three years of searching for supporters, NECOM’s dream to establish early music programs at Tingha Public School has finally come true!

Two of our 2012 grant proposals were successful and resulted in NECOM receiving generous support from the Becher Foundation and the ‘Seeds of Renewal’ grant program supported by the ANZ Bank and FRRR (Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal). This has allowed us to purchase beautiful classroom instruments and resources, and to engage Inverell Early Music teacher Ros Oliver to give music classes every Tuesday to Kindergarten, Year 1 and 2.

We give our sincere thanks to the Becher Foundation (Susan Varga and Anne Coombs), to Bernie Munro (regional executive ANZ Bank Tamworth) and to the FRRR for their support of this wonderful project.

Farewell & sincere thanks to Michèle

The dictionary describes Co-ordinator as a person who is in charge of planning or facilitating the occurrence of events or the collaboration of people, while the Thesaurus compares it with other words such as manager, planner, controller, arranger.

A Co-ordinator might be someone who spends most of their time at their desk in front of computer and telephone organising all sorts of tasks.

This does not adequately describe Michèle Jedlicka, the part-time Co-ordinator at the Inverell Campus. Michèle has given much of her time and herself to this position and has worked not only to facilitate the activities at the campus but to promote the activities of the campus in the community eg. approaching business owners in the CBD to promote events.

Michèle has worked with energy and commitment beyond the confines of this part time position. The committee of the Inverell Campus takes this opportunity to sincerely thank Michèle for her commitment to the position and wish her well in the future.

Bernie Munro, ANZ Bank Tamworth, presents Susanne James with the Seeds of Renewal cheque at the Friends Christmas Drinks.

Susanne James

Jacki Watts
Congratulations to the 11 choristers from NECOM’s acclaimed choirs, Cantilena and New England Singers, who recently represented Armidale in Australia’s prestigious Gondwana Choirs’ National Choral School during the January holidays in Sydney.

Eleanor Logan, Dakota Love, Torsten von Strokirch and 4 sets of siblings - Jonathon and Oliver Bruhl, Izzy and Mia Emanuel, Lucy and Stella Quast, and David and Jess Tan – were successful in winning one of 270 places hotly contested places in this fortnight long choral school.

This is a wonderful achievement as over 400 students from across Australia underwent very demanding auditions to win a place. And as there were only 40 regional NSW students at the School, Armidale was very well represented!

The Gondwana Choirs’ National Choral School is an annual event for Australia’s most talented young singers, composers and conductors, under the guidance of Lyn Williams OAM, Gondwana Choir’s Artistic Director and Founder. Lyn is well known to Armidale as she was the guest conductor for NECOM’s New England Sings! in October last year.

Armidale’s choristers were certainly put through their paces during the School’s demanding, non-stop training that aimed for the highest quality of choral performance. Each day the singers had to keep up with robust physical movement activities, intensive singing and listening, and then memorising a minimum of 6-8 works (some as long as 20 minutes) for concerts at St James Church and the Verbrugghen Hall at the Sydney Conservatorium.

Jess Tan, who sang with the Gondwana Singers says ‘I loved meeting so many people from all over Australia – they were all so passionate about singing.’ Her brother David who sang with Junior Gondwana adds ‘we sang a huge range of different music and learnt lots of new skills, and we had amazing conductors’.

The Beginner Instrumental Program’s Christmas concert has become an important part of the NECOM yearly calendar. It showcases the growing ensemble skills of our youngest players, providing them with a non-threatening environment to develop stage etiquette and confidence. It is also a significant celebration for the young string and wind players who have been selected for graduation to the intermediate orchestral level.

The Christmas concert includes a diverse range of music but naturally carols are well represented. The Coventry Carol, Jingle Bells, We Wish You a Merry Christmas and Good King Wenceslas were among this year’s offerings. These seasonally appropriate, enjoyable and accessible pieces are fairly simple in structure and lend themselves to bringing home many of the teaching points the children have been working on during the year. Some of these include accurate imitation (Cool Crotchet violins), independent part playing (Mini Minims and Cool Crotchet cellos), watching the conductor (one of the most important ensemble skills - Winds), focussed intonation skills (Super Smart Semibreves) and stagecraft and performance experience (Mini Minim violins).

The stirring sounds of the Australian bush, (Heading West by Timo Jarvela) complete with lagerphone accompaniment gave a summery flavour, while the inspiring themes from Dvorak’s New World Symphony provided a colourful contrast to the rest of the program.

What an opportunity for parents and friends to enjoy the eclectic mix of music that echoes around the OTC every Tuesday afternoon.

Susanne James

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What an opportunity for parents and friends to enjoy the eclectic mix of music that echoes around the OTC every Tuesday afternoon.
Christmas Choral Concert 2012

The audience was in for a treat at our Annual Christmas Choral Concert as they heard from the youngest of our Choirs, Mini Singers (directed by Amy Walsh), Cantilena and Cantilena Choral (directed by Rowena Tall), New England Singers (directed by Leanne Roobol).

Mini Singers performed My Dog Jed and A Rhyme for Ham. They have developed their musical skills immensely this year and have become great little performers!

Cantilena soon followed with some stunning works including Star of Bethlehem, Gloria in Excelsis and a very clever piece called Solfege Santa. The Cantilena Choral treated us with Still, Still, Still and In Bethlehem on Christmas Day.

New England Singers then took to the stage. What a sound they made! Under the direction of Leanne Roobol everyone was clearly enjoying the amazing music they were making singing a diverse range of repertoire whilst the story of Christmas was narrated. We were even treated to a cleverly arranged piece, which included a complex African cup game.

Mini Singers, Cantilena and New England Singers then joined forces to give the audience an entertaining performance of Rudolf The Red Nose Reindeer, with reindeer antlers and actions that brought the house down!

Our Director, Susanne James gave thanks to our fantastic Choral Directors and accompanists for their amazing work this year, and stated how proud she was of all the choirs, particularly their performances in the New England Sings! concerts.

Video Conferencing at NECOM

Our goal to provide more music education opportunities for remote public schools in our region was supported by the DEC’s gift of top quality Video Conferencing equipment in 2012. We have since conducted VC sessions with Burren Junction PS, Qld’s Griffith University, the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra (AOBO), a staff PD workshop, and violin teacher April Kelson lead the way by establishing VC violin lessons to Bellingen High School in late 2012.

Music lessons have always been ‘face-to-face’ while VC in the 21st century makes it ‘screen-to-screen’ – a VC lesson can theoretically be conducted from any two points on the globe if the technology is there. As easy as it sounds however, VC not only demands advanced problem solving technical skills and a mobile phone when those network gremlins play up, but the development of very specific and new pedagogical skills to manage this new interface between teacher and student.

My sincere thanks to Craig Merrick, VC consultant, and April for helping NECOM pioneer its new Video Conferencing Program.

Susanne James

April Kelson conducts a violin lesson from NECOM Armidale to Bellingen High School

Video Conferencing Lessons: A Challenge and an Opportunity

VC offers a unique set of opportunities, particularly for instrumental lessons to students who could not otherwise have lessons with NECOM teachers, such as the students from Bellingen High School. They use the VC system in the school’s ‘connected classroom’ and the lesson proceeds fairly similarly to a regular, face-to-face lesson. While nothing beats the teacher and student being in the same room together for fun (and the potential consumption of motivational confectionery) we find that VC lessons are a valuable addition to NECOM’s programs.

April Kelson

AOBO violinist Rachel Westwood tutors Eliza Scott and Jess Wright via VC

music speaks volumes
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WHAT’S ON @ NECOM

FEbruary
Mon 4 Feb, 4-6pm  Andreas Bohlan Band Jazz Workshop
Sat 23 & Sun 24 Feb  AYO Music Camp Sawtell

MARCH
Fri 8 March  Eisteddfod entries close
Fri 8-Sun 10 March  Armidale Music Foundation Choral Weekend
Wed 13 March  Yr 10 Music Day
Thurs 14 & Fri 15 March  HSC Music Workshop

APrIL
Sun 7 April, 11am  AYO Garden Party

MAY
Wed 1 May, 7pm  Konstantin Shamray Piano Recital @ Inverell
Thurs 2 May, 7pm  Konstantin Shamray Piano Recital @ Armidale
Sun 12 May, 3pm  ASO Concert
Mon 20 May  Armidale Eisteddfod commences
Sun 26 May, 2pm  Armidale Eisteddfod Championship
Tues 28 May, 6pm  Eisteddfod Choral Night (Lazenby Hall)
Wed 29 May, 7pm  Eisteddfod Composition Night

JUNE
Tues 11 June, 6pm  Eisteddfod Band Night
Sun 16 June, 11am  Beginner String & Winds Concert
Sun 16 June, 2pm  Eisteddfod Gala Concert
Fri 21-Sun 23 June  AYO tour to Warianda & Moree
Wed 26 & Thurs 27 June  Junior Orchestra Workshop

TERM DATES 2013

Term 3 - 15/7/2013 - 21/9/2013  Term 4 - 8/10/2013 – 13/12/2013

THANK YOU TO 2012 SUPPORTERS

Dick McCarthy  President, Armidale Central Rotary
Les Davis  ADFAS Armidale Inc.
Patrick Crick  CEO, Armidale Bowling Club
Phil Wheaton  SEO, Armidale Bowling Club
Councillor Jim Maher  Armidale Dumaresq Council
Gray Malone  Manager, NE Community Mutual
Dane O’Connor  Manager, NE Community Mutual
Bernie Munroe  ANZ Regional Executive NSW North West
Anne Coombs & Susan Varga  Becher Foundation
Councillor Paul Harmon  Inverell Shire Council
Brian Connor  Private supporter

new england conservatorium

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