

## Some Funding by the Friends

The Friends were lucky enough to receive a £15,000 donation in the autumn and the committee has been considering how best to use this money in support of the Orchestras. In spite of all the uncertainty about funding we think that the biggest threat to the continuation of the youth orchestras is the shortage of string players coming through from the primary schools. We need about 10 violin players per year leaving primary school at grade 4 standard and a further 10 at grade 3 and at the moment we're not getting them in those numbers. In consultation with Southampton Music Services we have agreed to fund a term's membership of Acorn strings, in the hope that this will encourage a few more to join and to keep progressing. We are also trying out some extra funding for schools where there is at least some interest in producing string players. There's provision through the In2music programme for people to start, but with this extra funding we hope that a few more people can be fast tracked so that they reach a higher, and to them more satisfying, standard before leaving primary school.

### Committee members, other posts and directors 2013-14

POSITION	NAME
Chair	Tim Edmonds <a href="mailto:tim77.edmonds@ntlworld.com">tim77.edmonds@ntlworld.com</a>
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Committee	Anne Downer (SYO)
	Paula Curry (SYCS)
	Therasa Livingstone (SYS)
	Fleurette Waldron (ex SYO)
	Yoriko Jones (SYCS and Elgar Strings)
Music Library	Sue Edmonds
SYO transport	Peter Gosney
Newsletter	Claire Robinson
Membership	Claire Thompson
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	SYCS Martin Felton <i>manager Sue Edmonds</i> <a href="mailto:suedmonds@ntlworld.com">suedmonds@ntlworld.com</a>
	SYS Christa Porter
	Elgar Zoe hunting
	Acorn Anca Campanie



## The Friends of Southampton Youth Orchestras

Registered Charity No. 283789

[www.fsyo.org.uk](http://www.fsyo.org.uk)

Spring 2014

# SYCS on Wenlock Edge

I really enjoyed playing in smaller groups. We improved lots - it was fun

40 members of SYCS spent a very busy half-term in the wilds of Shropshire. Staying in a haunted Elizabethan manor house they bravely tackled the mud of the Shropshire Way and the battlements of Ludlow Castle, honeymoon retreat of Catherine of Aragon. Music-making of course was high on the agenda and the renowned talent show, this year won by Lawrence 'why are you still in this orchestra' Wareham playing Czardas on the xylophone. The orchestra presented two concerts, one in the amazing round church of St Chad's in Shrewsbury where they were joined by a local upbeat violin folk group Fusion, the second a lunchtime concert stop on the way home, in Cheltenham. Thank you to the Friends for subsidising the trip



'I enjoyed the trip loads! I made lots of new friends and came closer to lots of people. It was very fun'

Such fun

I thought that the trip was amazing..



## Acorn and Elgar Strings Music Making Day

Saturday 25 January saw Acorn and Elgar strings coming together for a music making day at Richard Taunton's 6<sup>th</sup> Form College. During the day the children learnt to play a variety of dances, including improvising their own Tango, they listened to the Southampton Youth Orchestra in rehearsal and took part in two hotly contested quizzes. The day finished with a short concert to family and friends.

*"On Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2014 Acorn and Elgar Strings did a music making day at Richard Taunton Sixth Form College. We practised new pieces and made new friends. We also saw SYO where they played Happy Birthday to me. At the end of the day we gave a concert to show our hard work. Everyone enjoyed the day and are hoping to keep in touch with our new friends."* **Acorn Strings member**

*"Today was fun and challenging even though the pieces were reasonably easy. It was good to have a chance to make music with new people."* **Elgar Strings member**

**String chamber course** Over the February half term, I was very privileged to take part in the String Chamber Day. This consisted of about 30 string players meeting up for two days of intensive yet rewarding playing. With composers ranging from Rossini to Karl Jenkins, there was something for everyone to enjoy. We rehearsed as a large group as well as rehearsing in sectionals. With the help and expertise of specialist string coaches (Emma Clark, John Visanji, Patricia Spodzieja and Kelly Peters) we were able to give a polished performance to our audience at Great Oaks School. Playing with other enthusiastic musicians was truly enjoyable and we all had such a great time. I look forward to next year's event! **Monika**



This was a fantastic opportunity to play with and meet other string players in Southampton. As there are not many chances to do this at the higher levels, this was a good opportunity to perform challenging repertoire with players of a similar standard. It was also a chance to improve our listening and ensemble

skills whilst having fun! The course was directed by Emma Clark and assisted by Patricia, Kelly and Jon, who were all invaluable sources of help when it came to sectionals. Everyone enjoyed working together and playing new repertoire, and being able to perform our pieces at the end was a highlight. The course was spread over two days, so it was intense, but provided an opportunity to meet new string players who we perhaps did not know. The ever-present cake was also gratefully received! I enjoyed it immensely, and hope these opportunities will continue for future players. **Ruth**



**The Pyramid Concert** is on Saturday 29th March at 7:00pm at the Central Hall in St Mary's. Tickets available on the door or in advance from SYO rehearsals or at [www.fsyo.org.uk](http://www.fsyo.org.uk)

## **SYS weekend residency at Fairthorne Manor January 2014.**

This was to be SYS's third trip to Fairthorne Manor and this year we decided to join forces with Twango, the senior guitar ensemble (we have one member in common) run by Christiane Charlton. It was just as well that we did as SYS would not have been a viable group on its own. As it was, we took 10 members made up of 2 basses, 4 cellos, 1 viola and 3 violins with one more violin doing part of the course on guitar and part on violin with myself as the staff member, while Twango brought 12 members and 2 staff.



We joined together for our activities, starting with a very sociable and rather energetic series of games on the Friday evening. Our first game required us to throw and catch tennis balls while learning and then remembering everyone's name. Some people had clearly not had anything much to do with a ball for a very long time, while others (one in particular) were totally awesome in their skills! We then proceeded to explore muscles I had forgotten existed, bouncing from chair to chair in a game loosely related to musical chairs but without the music. On Saturday evening, we enjoyed the customary quiz with one of the younger groups taking notice of the advice to guess if you didn't know and ending up triumphant.

The Fairthorne activities turned out to be abseiling, climbing and archery. This was a rather less muddy programme than last year and we were fortunate to avoid the rain. I was pleased that everyone had a go, even if that just meant climbing the stairs of the abseil tower.

We rehearsed separately and because of SYS's rather bass heavy selection of instruments all the music had to be arranged specially in order to work. I managed to find a mix of pieces covering a range of styles from Vivaldi and Purcell, through Tchaikovsky's Sleeping Beauty Waltz to Joshua fighting the battle of Jericho. We shall revisit some of these pieces next term. We also spent Saturday afternoon exploring some Chamber Music with Zoe kindly dropping in to work with the cellos and basses. We worked very hard and I was delighted with the progress made and the commitment shown.

The week-end finished with a most enjoyable joint concert to parents and we arrived home 24 hours before our next rehearsal!

Many thanks to FSYO for subsidising the trip, helping both to keep the cost down and also enabling us to take sufficient staff to cope with all eventualities. **Christa Porter**