

Early days of recorder teaching in South Australian schools: A personal history

Jane Southcott

Monash University

Abstract

As a primary school student in the 1960s I learnt the recorder. This paper explores how the recorder became a staple of Australian primary school music programs. At that time recorders were comparatively recently revived Renaissance musical instruments that were adopted by music educators as a way for children and their teachers to engage in instrumental music making in classes. The inclusion of recorders in school music lessons was not always as successful as hoped but a lucky few had recorder teachers who were expert musicians like my teacher. This personal history explores the arrival and presence of the recorder in school music in South Australia. Data were gathered from primary and secondary documentary sources, personal recall and an interview with my recorder teacher, Cecily Wood. This research considers a commonplace occurrence in the lives of many Australian children and by focusing on a taken-for-granted practice in school music, adds to the historical record and to our understanding of what we do and why we do it.

Key words: primary school music; recorder playing in schools; instrumental music learning; history of the commonplace; Cecily Wood

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Introduction

In 1964 I was in Grade 5 in an Adelaide primary school and my whole class was learning the recorder from Mrs Wood. We were learning from *The School Recorder Book 1* revised edition (Priestley & Fowler, 1962). I began on descant, progressed to tenor in Grade 6 (large hands) (see Figure 1) and began clarinet in Year 7.

I am not unusual as this is the pathway that many people take to instrumental study, but I always wondered how the recorder had entered my schooling and set me on a path towards tertiary music study. Nearly three decades later I interviewed my teacher Cecily Wood about how she came to be teaching the recorder in Adelaide in the 1960s. This paper explores how this

came to be and this research resonates with the experiences of many children and their teachers across Australia. As a historian I am interested in the commonplace by which I mean those well-established and ubiquitous activities that we take for granted. Learning and playing the recorder was and continues to be a commonplace occurrence in Australian primary schools. The recorder is now a staple of western class music but this was not always the case. It was not until the 1930s that the resurrected instrument began to appear in English classrooms. We take for granted the presence of the recorder in our classrooms, but the question is how did a nearly extinct renaissance musical instrument end up in the hands of thousands of primary school children in the 20th century?

The revival of the recorder

The recorder began to emerge from its long eclipse in the early twentieth century. In 1901, Dr. Joseph Bridges (the brother of the composer Sir Frederick Bridge) gave a talk to the Chester Musical Association. He described the instruments as “flutes, played downwards from the mouth” that were well known in the time of Shakespeare. Bridges recounted that an old box, recently opened in the rooms of the Chester Archaeological Society contained a set of recorders (soprano in F, alto in D, tenor in C, and bass in lower F). When played the instruments sounded insipid and interest in them was deemed to be merely antiquarian (Recorders, 1901, p. 81). The instrument was revived and championed by Arnold Dolmetsch (1858-1940) (Williams, 2005) who in 1905 “perfected the first modern recorder to baroque specifications” (Campbell, 1981, p. 7).

By the 1930s information about the recorder had reached Australia. In 1933 the South Australian daily newspaper *The Advertiser*, reported a festival of Ancient Music that mentioned Arnold Dolmetsch (1858-1940) who had discovered an immense collection of 16th and 17th century musical instruments in the British Museum in 1889. The 1933 report outlined the workshops and concerts proffered by Dolmetsch and his family in Haslemere, Surrey, England which included a consort of recorders (A.H.T., 1933, p. 9). Arnold Dolmetsch pioneered the revival of early music and instruments such as the recorder, lute, theorbo, cithern, medieval harp, shawm, viol, and spinet. Collecting old treatises on playing, he led his whole family to be virtuoso performers and artisans capable of constructing the instruments. As early as 1933 Dolmetsch recorders were available for purchase in Adelaide at the Stradivarius Music Shop 213 Victoria Square (Advertisement, 1933). Barbara Carroll, a school music teacher and Lecturer in Music at Mercer House Training College, Melbourne (absorbed into Victoria College in 1975), confirmed that in the 1930s,



Figure 1: The author playing recorder at school in 1965 (*The Black Watch*).

the recorder and its music was almost unknown in Australia ... In 1936 some Dolmetsch rosewood recorders arrived by sea for a private customer and there was difficulty with the customs officials because nothing on their list tallied with the instruments. Eventually the problem was solved by passing them as ‘tin whistles made of wood’! No greater insult could be offered to the 18th century flute, or ‘flute douce’, which Bach regarded so highly. (Carroll, 1968, p. 31)

At this time English musician, scholar and champion of the recorder, Edgar Hunt, described his early adoption of the instrument,

When I first imagined recorders being played in schools, I thought of well-balanced consorts in public, grammar and high schools, and some in private schools – I did not think that ‘council schools’ would be interested ... In 1935 I had started my first recorder classes at Trinity College of Music ... in 1937 ... [gave] a week’s intensive course to about 30 Bradford school teachers. One of the ‘students’ on this course was Fred Fowler. Edmund Priestley took an interest in what we were doing ... the result is their collaboration in *The School Recorder Book* which Arnold’s of Leeds published in 1937. (Hunt, 1972, p. 137)

The recorder in South Australia

The adoption of the recorder was interrupted by the second World War but soon after the recorder and its music again became available in Adelaide. In 1953 South Australians could purchase the long playing (LP) record *Recorder and Harpsichord Recital* by Carl Dolmetsch and Joseph Saxby at Cawthorne's, 15 Rundle Street, Adelaide (Advertisement, 1953). My recorder teacher, Cecily Wood spoke about how she came to play the recorder (Interview with Cecily Wood, 21 December, 1992).

Wood received the Oboe Scholarship at the Elder Conservatorium in 1948 but did not take up the opportunity due to her marriage. Shortly after she decided to learn the flute. Wood had played early flutes but when she first heard a recorder she decided "that was the instrument for me". She explained,

to woodwind players, taking up the recorder is not hard. In the Dolmetsch box there is a little sheet of paper with Greensleeves on it, a fingering chart for the descant and treble, a little duet and all sorts of things. And that was what most of us taught ourselves from in the first instance. (Interview with Cecily Wood, 21 December, 1992)

Wood and other enthusiasts formed consorts and performed. Wood "used to transcribe music and arrange it and we demonstrated to so many people from 1950 to 1960, it was really a crusade" (Interview with Cecily Wood, 21 December, 1992). Her consort was soon in high demand for schools and social engagements. In 1962 Wood began teaching recorder classes to adults in the Adult Education Department of the University of Adelaide and soon had two large classes. She advocated Dolmetsch recorders as the best available. With ongoing demand for opportunities for learning and playing, in 1966 Wood was instrumental in founding the Society of Recorder Players of South Australia. She received the Order of Australia Medal for service to music and to the Society of Recorder

on 14 June 2010. In 1972 Wood extended her work to retirees via the Council on Ageing and later to disadvantaged children under the auspices of the Red Cross. Wood was extremely busy but still found time to reform the AMEB Recorder syllabus. The journal of the Dolmetsch Foundation, Haslemere ascribed enthusiasm for the recorder in South Australia to "first, the work of Cecily Wood as a teacher, an exponent of the recorder, and the leader of her Recorder Consort, and second, the interest generated by the classes in Recorder Playing conducted each year by the Adult Education Department of the University of Adelaide under Cecily Wood's tutelage" (Dolmetsch Foundation, 1969, p. 8). The Cecily Wood Recorder Medallion: For the most promising Recorder player 16 years or under is awarded annually at the Adelaide Eisteddfod.

In 1965 Carl Dolmetsch (1911-1997) toured Australia with harpsichordist Joseph Saxby. Virtuoso recorder player Dolmetsch was described as the "internationally recognised ... leading authority on the interpretation of early music" (Carl Dolmetsch Australian Tour, 1965). As well as the early music repertoire (including Purcell, Locke, Gibbons, Couperin, and Telemann), modern works were included such as a short piece for soprano recorder *The White Throated Warbler* by Australian composer Nigel Butterley and Jig from a Suite for Recorder by Anthony Hopkins, then resident in Australia. A reviewer described it as "a unique and satisfying recital ... anyone in the audience who had themselves ever played the recorder must have been fascinated by the ease and certainty with which this quite difficult music was played" (Hoffman, 1965, p. 15). I had already been playing the recorder for a year when I attended this recital (see Figure 2).

The recorder in Australian schools

In 1956 the Melbourne UNESCO Seminar was a watershed in Australian music education that brought together national leaders in the field and reported current practices across the



Figure 2: Carl Dolmetsch and Joseph Saxby (*Carl Dolmetsch Australian Tour, 1965*).

nation (Southcott, 2009). The report of the group discussions stated that,

As a class activity, recorder playing has become an established part of many schemes of school music, and its value in facilitating sight reading and stimulating appreciation is widely acknowledged. The recorder, however, is not merely a 'teaching aid'; it is a genuine instrument with a worthy literature to which some of the greatest composers, from the 16th century to the present day, have contributed. This literature is wide in scope, covering music for the full range of recorders both as sole instruments and in ensemble. (Weeden, 1957, p. 11)

These assertions were supported by Bernard Shore, H. M. Chief Inspector of Music in Schools, United Kingdom Ministry of Education who, reporting on music in Great Britain, asserted that "The instrument is an honourable one in its

own right, but not necessarily an end in itself" (Shore, 1957, p. 20). Melbourne teacher Barbara Carroll spoke about the value of recorder playing, introducing the instrument, its availability, and the advantages of its inclusion in a school music program (Carroll, 1957). In the third issue of the *Australian Journal of Music Education*, Carroll repeated and expanded her views (Carroll, 1968). By the time of the UNESCO seminar, the recorder was evidently well established in Australia. Thirty years earlier the

first experimental work was done in a girls' school in Perth W. A. Bakelite descant recorders were procured and groups of children of various ages began to learn to read music and to play together. The enthusiasm engendered and the rapid rate of musical progress was convincing proof that the recorder had an important part to play in school music development. Since then, as we know, the interest in school recorder work has been promulgated by music educationists in all the states. (Carroll, 1968, p. 29)

Graham Bartle (1968) provided an overview of the primary school music syllabi in the Australian states and noted that the,

only instrument taught at all extensively in government primary schools is the recorder. Some schools have both beginners and advanced groups and some own full consorts. While this instrument is both taught and used in normal class work in many schools, it is confined to out-of-school hours in others. The recorder's popularity as a school instrument has grown tremendously over the past eight to ten years. It seems to have completely outstripped the fife. (p. 77)

In his seminal history of *The Recorder and its Music* Hunt noted the considerable variation in public funding allocated to music education in the education authorities in the various Australian States but that "percussion and recorder band instruments, chime bars, Carl Orff instruments and so on, not to mention brass and military band and orchestral instruments" were commonly found (Hunt, 1967, p. 21). From his earliest

experiments, Orff had included recorders in his instrumentarium (Hall, 1960; Silsbury, 1968; Southcott & Cosaitis, 2012). In 1965 I played the tenor recorder in Orff's *The Christmas Story* (Orff & Keetman, 1962) which was performed as the end-of-year upper primary concert. I will admit to playing the bourdon but longing for the melody.

The preparation of teachers in recorder playing

In the 1960s "most Australian teacher trainees were obliged to take the recorder as a compulsory part of the music education subjects" (Ferris, 1998, p. 68). By 1968 thirty per cent of primary schools surveyed by Bartle had introduced "instrumental playing as part of their normal classroom activity ... Recorders and non-melodic percussion are about equal in popularity" (Bartle, 1968, p. 53). There were concerns by music educators that despite the ease of playing the recorder, in the hands of teachers who were novice players there might be problems. Bartle (1968) pointed out that much school recorder playing was of poor tonal quality and it "seems that the recorder is not an easy instrument to play *well* [italics in original]" (p. 77). Brooke-Smith (1968) summed this up well, "It has frequently been said that any fool can play the recorder, whereas the truth is that any fool can play the recorder badly" (p. 6). Brooke-Smith continued to assert that only rarely did he find pleasure in "listening to children producing the most glorious sounds from this beautiful instrument, and when this happens I am only too aware that these performers have had the good fortune to come under the aegis of knowledgeable and proficient teachers" (Brooke-Smith, 1968, p. 6). He was concerned that:

too often our children are being 'taught' by those who themselves are self-taught, by those who are merely a lesson or two ahead of the pupils, or, worst of all, by those who ... have been persuaded to undertake some teaching of the recorder, but whose knowledge of the

instrument and its possibilities is almost non-existent. (Brooke-Smith, 1968, p. 6)

My teacher Wood confirmed that, "A lot of the teachers had really no idea – no embouchure, no idea how to tongue and, of course, all the children were wrongly taught. It was most depressing ... The teachers themselves knew nothing and just kept one lesson ahead ... The way they held the instrument was astonishing" (Interview with Cecily Wood, 21 December, 1992). As an experienced music educator who has worked with pre-service primary generalist teachers, it does not appear that this situation has changed greatly over the subsequent decades. The advice given by early exponents of recorder playing in Australia are still applicable.

The advent of the recorder in primary school curricula

The recorder began to appear in school music syllabi in the mid-1950s. It had been mentioned as a suggestion to "foster children's interest in music" in the Victorian *Course of Study for Primary Schools Music, 1956* but no further information was offered (Education Department, Victoria, 1956, p. 67). In 1963 Appendix B of the *Course of Instruction for Primary Schools Music* (Education Department of South Australia, 1963) explained that the recorder was an:

inexpensive medium for the introduction of instrumental playing. The technical difficulties of this instrument are few, and melodies may be played from staff notation, with beautiful expressive tone after very few lessons. The recorder choir affords experiences in ensemble playing and is useful as an accompaniment to class singing. The teacher of a recorder choir need not be gifted musically. (p. 99)

In 1963 the New South Wales Department of Education sounded a note of warning, stating that it was relatively easy to develop playing technique, but:

Unless teachers are prepared to study these

instruments keenly themselves, and to train their pupils to play with a listening ear and breath control that will combine to produce sound intonation, recorder playing should not be undertaken. (New South Wales Department of Education, 1963, p. 85)

By 1968 the recorder was mentioned in most primary school music curricula (Bartle, 1968).

Availability and quality of instruments

Although Wood began playing Dolmetsch recorders, other instruments were eventually available but there were often problems of quality. She recalled that the Hoehners used at the Teachers' Training College "weren't good instruments. They were terribly out of tune and they would warp. They were rather cheap German instruments and the fingering which was German fingering – straight up and down". If students tried to use English fingering they were "terribly out of tune". I learnt on Adler instruments which Wood described as an "odd lot. The schools did have problems with them. The children would wet them terribly ... I used to have to remove fig pips and raspberry pips from them. The things that were wedged in them!" By the mid-60s Wood was teaching so many classes, particularly older students that she was importing wooden Dolmetsch recorders en masse from Sydney. She considered them "the best around at the time, I would take them in and demonstrate them and, of course, they [her students] all wanted Dolmetsches and I think Dolmetsch did very well out of me" (Interview with Cecily Wood, 21 December, 1992). Carroll (1957) considered it vital that children played good quality recorders. She did not name brands but pointed out that, "Many different types of recorder are to be obtained nowadays and the price and quality vary considerably. Some are consistently good, some vary so that it is possible to pick good

ones from poor ones of the same make, and others are hardly musical instruments at all, since they cannot be made to play 'in tune'" (Carroll, 1957, p. 42). The Descant was considered most appropriate for children to begin with "as it is reasonably cheap and is of the right size for small hands" (Carroll, 1957, p. 42). She thought that children should next learn the treble and that they found "no difficulty in changing from one to the other ... Because no special embouchure is needed in tone production, recorders are the easiest to manage of all wind instruments" (Carroll, 1957, p. 42). Generally, children bought their own instruments, often through the school (Bartle, 1968).

Correct intonation

Intonation was always a problem and was often ascribed to variable instrument quality and teaching ability. Shore (1957) asserted that recorders "need not be out of tune with one another nor with themselves. Expert teaching is essential" (p. 20). All agreed that producing a sound on the recorder was easy but that the challenges of achieving a good tone and correct intonation should:

not be under-estimated. The recorder player needs to have a well-trained musical ear and good breath control as well as dexterity of fingering. Any one note can be under or over-blown so that there is a variation of almost a semitone. Constant awareness of true pitch is a matter of careful and valuable ear-training for the children. Often the importance of this is overlooked, because it has not been realised that intonation on the recorder has to be learned just as on any string or wind instrument. (Carroll, 1957, p. 42).

Carroll (1968) thought that too often the recorder was blamed for the inabilities of the player. She explained that,

The recorder player has ... the ability to adjust the pitch of notes by several means, such as alternative fingerings, shading of notes by

lowering other fingers over open holes, and by breathing pressure. Tone quality, too, is a matter of musical intention and technique provided that the instrument itself is a good one. It follows then, that for the recorder player as much as for the string player, aural training is of vital importance. (p. 29)

Reasons to teach the recorder in schools

A number of reasons were advanced for the inclusion of the recorder in primary school music lessons. Initial success in playing could lead to “the child wanting to know how to read music and so play tunes of increasing interest and difficulty. The desire to read comes from the child himself, and this eager attitude is the ideal foundation for musical training” (Carroll, 1957, p. 42). Influential in Australia, the English Ministry of Education pamphlet, *Music in Schools* (1960) advocated that the recorder was an invaluable aid to “fluency in pitch reading” and a “child who plays an instrument, whether tubular bells, recorder, pipe, or violin, will probably advance more quickly in pitch reading with it than with his [or her] voice” (*Music in Schools*, 1960, pp. 18-19). Carroll (1968) asserted that “learning the recorder could assist with learning to read music notation fluently ... [and] recorder playing provides a strong motivation for children to learn music notation” (Carroll, 1968, p. 29). This sentiment was echoed by a number of Australian advocates. The recorder was seen as a stepping stone to orchestral and band instruments (Callaway, 1957; Shore, 1957; Carroll, 1968) which was what happened for me.

The recorder could combine with other primary music activities. It added a melodic element to percussion (or rhythm) bands and could assist with sight singing, accompany singers, add descants to melodies and help teach the melody (Shore, 1957; Bartle, 1968). The only problem is that the descant sounds an octave higher than the written music (Middle C = C¹). The tenor is better for leading

children's singing. Children could accompany their folk dancing on the recorder (*Music in Schools*, 1960) as much of the repertoire was within their capabilities. For example, as a teacher in the 1970s I arranged the folk dance Seven Jumps for the recorder ensemble for a school performance (Physical Education Branch of Department of Education, 1957).

It was argued that playing the recorder could enhance children's health, particularly concerning respiratory troubles. Playing the recorder developed “correct breathing technique and diaphragmatic control” (Carroll, 1968, p. 30) as children “soon realise the necessity of taking deep breaths and controlling them in order to play long phrases” (Carroll, 1957, p. 43). Recorder playing, as group music making was also deemed to be socially and educationally important. Different age groups could work co-operatively and enthusiastically together in ensembles and a range of behavioural matters could be resolved – a shy child could gain confidence as mistakes and missed notes would not interrupt the music, children could help each other and the more assertive child would consider playing others to be fun and find “no opportunity for self-display” (Carroll, 1957, p. 43). Working co-operatively together was considered “a valuable and character-building experience that can have far-reaching effects” (Carroll, 1968, p. 30). Ultimately, playing the recorder was deemed to be pleasurable (*Music in Schools*, 1960).

Repertoire and tutors

Music educators made repeated comments about the importance of playing good music. Manifold (1950) pointed out that, “whatever instruments you command, it is never necessary to play bad music. Even for the beginner, with his [or her] one octave and two accidentals, good stuff has been written” (p. 692). The recorders were described as “instruments of ancient and honourable lineage with a large repertory of music properly belonging to them” (*Music in*



Figure 3: Ensemble of percussion and recorder players (*Australian Journal of Music Education*, 1968, p. 2).

Schools, 1960, p. 19). Carroll (1968) cited a “wealth of first-rate music to study ranging from the 16th to the 20th century. It was important that teachers provided suitable music for both solo and group playing” (p. 29). It was essential that the music be carefully sequenced and possessed of melodic and rhythmic interest otherwise there would be a “noticeable falling-off in the quality of the playing or, more probably, protests will be made” (p. 30). As an experienced teacher, Carroll thought that children should be given some decision in what to play and that by the late 1960s obtaining suitable music was no longer a problem as music was “available for recorders combined with various instruments such as guitar, strings, percussion, melodic percussion and, of course, voices” (p. 30). The first issue of the *Australian Journal of Music Education* [AJME] contained a little over two pages of reviews of music for recorders and classroom arrangements demonstrating the expanding resources available for different ability levels. Some of the works were for recorder consorts and others for mixed ensembles of recorders, percussion, tuned instruments from

the Orff Instrumentarium, guitar and piano (see Figure 3).

A range of recorder tutors were available for teachers. Carroll (1968) provided an overview and warned that not all were attractive to children and some were less well sequenced than others. In 1967 *Play the Recorder Book I* by Robert Salkeld (Chappell 55c) was reviewed in the first issue of AJME and was unreservedly recommended. Freda Dinn’s *My Recorder Tune Book* was also available and could “hardly be bettered. However, there are many other good books that serve the same purpose” (Carroll, 1968, p. 30). Generally, children bought their own recorder tutors (Bartle, 1968). In 1963 in South Australia, the *Course of Instruction for Primary Schools Music* listed some of the many well-graded local and international instruction books that were available from which teachers could teach themselves and then their pupils. Recommended were the *Progressive Recorder Method* by Frank Higgins (Allan and Co.), *Learning the Recorder* by Nancy Martin (Rigby), *The School Recorder Book – Parts I and II* by Priestly and Fowler, *Method for the Recorder* by F. J. Giesbert (Schott), and *Pleasure and Practice with the Recorder* (Books 1-6) by Leslie

Winters (E. J. Arnold & Sons) (Education Department of South Australia, 1965). A number of these texts were by local educators, for example Higgins was at that time the head of the music department at Burwood Teachers' College and believed that it was "vitally important that the instrument be played well, and the techniques required to play with the desired clear light tone were explained with great care" (Ferris, 1998, p. 69). Interestingly there was no mention of *We Play Recorders with Desmond Descant's Daily Drills* by Victor McMahon (1967) that was published in association with a series of television lessons that encompassed "a complete method for descant recorder and a companion practice and exercise book to the telecast lessons" (McMahon, 1967, p. 1). McMahon was the Professor of Flute, NSW State Conservatorium of Music and he attributed the impetus for the program and accompanying book to his former pupil Jeffrey Rushton, a member of the Australian Broadcasting Commission's Education Department. In 1965 Rushton spoke about an experimental televised version of this program that was designed for

teachers to use with their classes, thus avoiding the teaching of the instrument by the non-musician and allowing the expert into the classroom (Rushton, 1965).

My teacher, Wood selected *The School Recorder Book* by Edmund Priestley and Fred Fowler (Priestley & Fowler, 1962) who had attended classes by Edgar Hunt (Hunt, 1972) (see Figure 4). This was the revised version of a text that first appeared in the 1930s (Priestley & Fowler, c1939). The introduction gave a sense of the popularity of playing the recorder, stating that

Today thousands and thousands of children play recorders in schools throughout the world. The recorder has been accepted as a most suitable instrument for music making in schools. It is inexpensive, it is a serious musical instrument with its own repertoire and it combines well with voiced and other musical instruments; it is fairly easy to play and a whole class can learn to play at the same time. (Priestley & Fowler, 1962, p. 3)

The book began with a brief history of the recorder that gave a sense of gravitas to our endeavour, referring to Henry VIII, Shakespeare and Pepys. Ferris (1998) noted that the mention of such illustrious antecedents imbued the recorder with "a kind of passport to respectability" (p. 67). We were informed that the "present revival of recorder making and playing is chiefly due to the work of the late Mr. Arnold Dolmetsch, and we owe him a great debt for his research into the music and instruments of former times" (Priestley & Fowler, 1962, p. 6). This was a revision of the first edition of this work nearly a quarter of a century later (Priestley & Fowler, c1939). Detailed instructions for care of the recorder were included and having been given the authority of history and research, I realised that this was a serious musical instrument.

Conclusion

Historians seek to understand how ideas and practices move from "one context to another, one culture to another, and one generation to

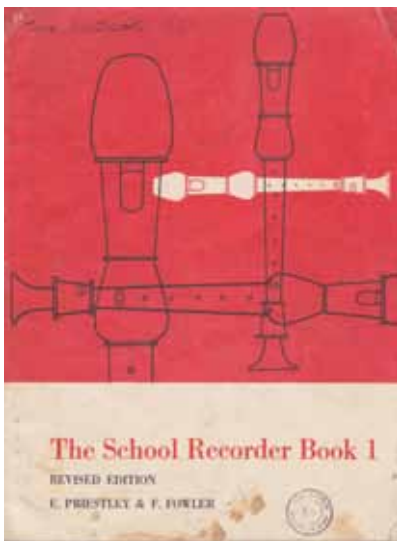


Figure 4: My copy of *The School Recorder Book 1* from Class JS' 1964.

another" (Southcott, 2004, p. 116). As music educators, we should understand the origins of our current practices which may be more complicated than we assume. In the mid-20th century, the recorder, a revived renaissance instrument played by musicians interested in early music, migrated to the primary school as an instrument played in ways never intended by its initial exponents. Thirty children playing descant recorders in unison would have been unthinkable to early music aficionados, but the recorder has become a taken-for-granted element of Australian primary school music programs. Although not as ubiquitous as it was, the "practice of introducing instrumental music through recorder or similar inexpensive options is still alive in some schools" (Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training, 2005, p. 125). Its exponents hoped it would be an influence for reform, offering teachers and children the opportunity to play a real musical instrument. Despite the statements that the recorder was easy to play, the "recorder is not an easy instrument to play well, as the many shrill and discordant recorder groups operating in schools testify" (Ferris, 1998, p. 70). I was lucky in that I had an expert recorder player as my teacher but in many schools, teachers were only a few steps ahead of their students. In an ideal world, all students should have the opportunity to explore music with a skilled and confident musician and educator.

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Dr Jane Southcott is an Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, Monash University, Australia. Jane researches the history of the music curriculum in Australia, America and Europe and community engagement with music and cultural identity focusing on positive ageing. Jane supervises many postgraduate research students. She is President of the Australian and New Zealand Association for Research in Music Education and a member of the editorial boards of international refereed journals.