

Timeline of Music and Drama at the Royal High School

The following timeline has been extracted mainly from John Murray 1997 History. John, the consummate music man, would not have missed any opportunities to detail the School's musical journey. Entries from elsewhere are marked accordingly. Examination of the first three histories, 1849, 1911 and 1934 yields few references to Music and the Arts, befitting a school which majored in the classics and sport.

- 1839 John Thomson appointed as the first Reid professor of music at Edinburgh University. Thomson, who left School around 1822, was introduced to music by his father, a minister, and composed psalms and other compositions (1849 History)
- 1856 Curriculum enhancement included Singing **classes**
- 1895 School Choir instituted under one of commercial subjects masters. Practices after School.
- 1895 School song written by Dr Marshall, music by Sir A. C. Mackenzie.
- 1908 First singing master appointed.
- 1923 Study of instrumental music added to curriculum
- 1924 School Orchestra
- 1929 Music Prizes. From 1929 to 1944 Mr James H. Thin presented seven prizes for Music to the Junior School and these were continued by Mr J. Ainslie Thin.
- 1939 James A. Grant Cup Presented by the Grant Club in memory of their Form Master who was Senior English Master. Awarded for Music.
- 1946 Drama Club resuscitated on the return of Mr J E G Burgoyne from active service (SR Christmas 1945)
- 1946/1947 – The School organ is installed, endowed by FP's and PP's, relocated from St Paul's Church in St Leonard Street (1974 History). The appeal was launched in the Christmas 1945 SR. A progress report is in SR Christmas 1946 page 6
- 1948 – 1953 – a flurry of plays, mainly written by current pupils (see reports later)
- 1963 Introduction of woodwind and brass instruction into the Music department (also in 1974 history)
- 1964 Chamber choir performs at the wedding of the daughter of Alec Douglas-Hume, the PM
- 1966 School choir broadcast on both television and radio.
- 1967 The school Organ is dismantled and reinstated in the Barnton Campus
- 1967 BBC Radio Enterprises issue 12" LP of the school choir's broadcast on 5th October. Cheques made payable for 32s 6d to 'RHS Music Fund account' should be sent to ...
- 1969 Choir concert, 14th December (from SR Jan 1970)
- 1970 '...due to the death of Mr Bowie, rehearsals are being kept going by some of the senior boys' - (SR Jul 1970)
- 1974 The Murray (later John Murray) Prize for Music.
- 1975 Initial musical 'twinning' trip to Florence and Munich

1978 KT (Kenneth Thomson, a 4th year pupil) singers founded: Charity carol singing and other performances

1979 School choir and orchestra represent Edinburgh in the 25th anniversary of the Munich link

1980 Musical link with the Theodolinden Gymnasium of Munich established. (1993 AR suggests 1978)

1983 Lecture Theatre converted into a Drama Studio.

1983 First Biennial three week Italy tour – Choir and Orchestra

1984–1987 Building extensions for subjects including Music

1985 Extension to Music Department opened.

1990's Glenn Chandler recollect his schooldays with good memories – he was allowed to write and present a satire – 'That was the term that was' which caused his presence in Rector Ruthven's room...who explained the difference between satire and sheer bad taste.

1993 School gained European Arts Festival Award in recognition of its outstanding good practice in developing a strong European musical dimension.

1995-1996 First reference to Amnesty International – Secret Policeman's Ball

2007 We Will Rock You – Edinburgh Fringe

2008 High School Musical - Edinburgh Fringe

2008 School orchestras and choirs perform in St Mary's catholic cathedral in Edinburgh. Ensembles included Baroque. (David Simpson involved)

2010 Hairspray - Edinburgh Fringe