



Visit October 2007- Pete Beadell

During October 2007, I visited South Africa to work at Groendal Secondary School for two weeks. Lindsay Jobling, a Sounds of Steel tenor pan player and Portsmouth University student came with me, sponsored by Portchester Panyard.

We worked at Groendal Secondary School and at the Frank Pietersen Music Centre on steel pans, with about 80 students and staff. All of the students made rapid progress – daily workshops took place from first thing in the morning until mid-evening, including weekends. As well as the teaching programme, Lindsay worked with several African musicians from the Cape Town townships, including Andile Siyo, Portchester's marimba maker who worked with a number of our students during the July Portchester Arts Festival. Visiting Andile's workshop in Gugulethu was a real highlight of the trip – Lindsay learnt a number of African panjazz tunes with marimbas, saxophone and tenor pan – what an incredibly talented young lady! She earned the respect of all of the African musicians she met and rehearsed with.

Throughout our stay, we visited a number of venues in the Cape Town area, with a view to Portchester and Brookfield's musicians performing there in 2008 with our South African partners. We have now secured performances at the Cape Town Jazz Festival, the V&A Waterfront, Nelson's Creek, Arts Cape, The Frank Pietersen Music Centre and Gugulethu Township and have booked tickets to fly to Cape Town on Thursday 13 March 2008.

Our two week stay came to a close all too soon – the steel band from Groendal Secondary School gave media interviews, played on the radio, and performed at six venues, the final performance being at Nyoni's Kraal, a restaurant and music venue in Cape Town. For me, it was the most exciting two weeks of my life – a really incredible experience.

In Focus.....

Sponsorship/Partnership updates

Laura and Lucy Chappell have managed to secure sponsorship for the project from their local church. Art Asia has agreed to support the project. We have discussed a partnership in which one player from the jazz and steel orchestras, and Indian Tabla maestro Sanju Sahai will represent Art Asia in South Africa, in exchange for performances by The South Africa Panjazz Project in the 2008 Mela festival in Southampton.

Sharon Duke has been successful in getting a coach firm to transport the party travelling to South Africa to and from the airport in March.

Upcoming Fundraising Events

Friday 21st December

Venue – Portchester Community School

Tickets £5.00

Doors open 7.15

Friday 8th February

Venue – Ferneham Hall

Tickets £7.00 – doors open 7.15pm

Featuring:

Sounds of Steel

Portchester Panyard

PanJazz

Brookfield Jazz Orchestra

Tickets for both events available:

Portchester and Brookfield Community School Receptions

Watch this space for details of PanJazz performance at the internationally renowned Concorde Club, Eastleigh.

Fundraising Developments.....



Partner organisations:

U.K. Brookfield Community School. Portchester Community School.
S.A. Groendal Secondary School. Scottsville School. The Frank Pietersen Music Centre. Kayamandi School.

Visit Summer '07 Strengthening Partnerships



Shaun Riches, Ben Riches and Stuart Fowler with singers at the Frank Pietersen Music Centre, Kayamundi, Groendal and Scottsville Schools

First two weeks in August myself and two tutors (Ben Riches and Stuart Fowler) had the incredible experience of working with African learners from Kayamandi, Groendal and Scottsville schools as well as learners from the Frank Pietersen Music Centre.

The visit was to continue the strengthening of the partnership between teaching staff and principles in the schools and music centre and to initiate a combined South African choir plus a jazz programme at the Music Centre. The other vital aspect of the visit was to set up a variety of meetings with key contacts to establish a possible programme of performances at prestigious venues.

Performances which would incorporate the new combined choir, jazz ensemble and Portchester and Brookfield's Pan Jazz Project. Performances that would feature our International Pan jazz Orchestra at The Waterfront (Victoria and Albert), Cape Town Jazz Festival, Arts Cape, Nelson Creek Winelands Estate to name a few places. Vaughan Pietersen (Principal) at the Music Centre, Melvyn Koulsen (principle for Groendal School) and Clive Smith (Principle at Scottsville) helped to set up a very busy and challenging teaching programme.

In terms of performances, the jazz ensemble, newly formed at the Frank Pietersen Centre, performed a 20 minute programme of swing and funk no.s to a highly excited audience. Learners in the ensemble improvising for the first time in a public arena. For the combined choir a series of rehearsals was set up for each school over a period of a week and a half. All learners were keen to learn the songs and showed terrific enthusiasm singing outside of their native language.

Learners at Kayamandi School treated myself, Ben and Stuart to some incredible township singing that was so inspiring and moving it demonstrated the rich potential that this project has in terms of singing and performance opportunities.

All learners worked hard with their singing and never ceased to amaze us at how quickly they learnt melodies and words. All the principles, contact teaching staff, tutors, Groendal School learners and myself were treated to a fantastic concert on our last day in South Africa. It featured the wonderful talents of the Frank Pietersen Centre plus the sensational singing of the Combined Choir. In fact it was the first time all the learners had performed together and this again was such a powerful and worthwhile experience within itself.

I look forward to the return tour in March and the assembling of all our musicians for a truly incredible International experience featuring all our Singers and instrumentalists in this highly exciting Pan Jazz Project. I hope to add more exciting news about developments and rehearsals in the next newsletter instalment.