
**CELEBRATING OUR PIONEERS – SELECTED CASE STUDIES OF EARLY
QUEENSLAND’S PIANO TEACHERS**

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The phenomenon of the portfolio piano teacher has a distinguished history, with many great musicians of the past belonging to this community. While our contemporary environment poses specific challenges, it is also true that some aspects are consistent across recent centuries. However, as the contribution of historical counterparts in Australia is relatively under-researched, it is difficult to fully appreciate this continuity of practice in our local context. Furthermore, the development of music in colonial and early twentieth century Queensland is only now attracting the attention it deserves, but even so our pioneering teachers’ professional profiles remain largely unexplored.

This focus of this paper is selected case studies of portfolio career musicians from Queensland’s past. Within their context, they were acclaimed as fine performers and inspiring mentors, and they also advocated for broader issues within the community, including encouragement of composition and general music education. Henrietta Mallalieu (1842-1938) was colonial Brisbane’s most eminent pianist and its first female professional organist, and a much sought-after teacher in both studio and school contexts. She also mentored Percy Brier (1885-1970), who had a similar profile and notably played leadership roles in various professional organisations. Alongside each of these prominent figures stand numerous other respected pianist-teachers who likewise were resourceful community-minded musicians, as evidenced in their diverse cultural contributions and longstanding periods of service. By celebrating the work of various portfolio piano teachers from Queensland’s past, this paper will demonstrate that the themes of resilience, creativity and skilfulness have characterised the profession across the generations.

The musical profession is sometimes described as being a large family. Just as it is possible to trace one’s personal genealogy in terms of parents, grandparents, siblings and children, we could each construct a map of our pedagogical influences and through our students, also our legacy. The family analogy however has limitations in music, as none of us have had a single strand of formative influences. Our outlook as a musician is inevitably shaped by an extraordinary web of relationships, including those outside the formal teacher-student paradigm. But as I have found in my own family research, learning about one’s forbears across the generations can indeed build a better understanding of ourselves.

At the moment I am translating the memoirs of my German great-grandfather, and often I spot personality traits and viewpoints that I also see in myself. In preparing this paper, similar insights have emerged about our professional precursors, who would however never have described themselves as having a ‘portfolio career’. With a focus on the first century of European settlement in Queensland, from the mid-1800s to World War Two, I will discuss some case studies of pioneering musicians who were not only piano teachers but also well-rounded musicians with diverse skill sets. Their stories constantly inspire me, and their achievements exhibit many aspects that we should still value today.

This paper draws upon my longstanding fascination with Queensland's music history, and in particular the studies I have undertaken of several individual musicians. At a previous APPC in Toowoomba, my paper on Percy Brier (Roennfeldt 2013a) demonstrated why I think we could describe him as a 'complete musician'. My subsequent biography of Henrietta Mallalieu-Willmore (Roennfeldt 2015) celebrated the life of an eminent pianist, organist and teacher whose legacy in the advocacy of women's socio-political rights was also considerable. Both of them figure strongly in the development of chamber music in Queensland as they were also skilled ensemble collaborators, (Roennfeldt 2012, Roennfeldt 2013) as well as being church organists and organisational leaders (Roennfeldt 2015a), fields which I have also investigated.

At present I am undertaking a major study of Brisbane's Albert Hall (1901-1969) under the auspices of a State Library of Queensland fellowship, (Roennfeldt 2018) and in that venue numerous students' recitals took place, including many presented by prominent teachers such as ERB Jordan and Gladys Frost. Prior to this, my survey of professional musical training before the advent of local tertiary institutions (Roennfeldt 2018a) revealed the community's strong respect for credentials gained by advanced studies, but also the longheld desire for the establishment of a state conservatorium in Queensland, which was finally achieved in 1957. (Roennfeldt 2012a)

In recent years at Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University I have had the privilege of mentoring several emerging researchers, in their own pursuit of local music history, including Natalie Scalia whose Honours dissertation brought to light several early Queensland teachers such as Emily Suter. (Scalia 2017) At present, a doctoral candidate whom I supervise is investigating the guitar in early Queensland, and one of the significant figures in this context was Isabella Reeve, whose primary expertise was as a teacher of piano and voice. (Gardiner 2019)

These six musicians, Henrietta Mallalieu-Willmore, Emily Suter, Isabella Reeve, Percy Brier, ERB Jordan and Gladys Frost, have the following features in common:

- they were born during the Victorian era but their careers extended well into the twentieth century,
- all were primarily keyboard players and the piano figured prominently in their teaching practice,
- each performed publicly as pianists but their profiles also diversified into areas such as large ensemble and chamber music, organ and vocal performance, or as published composers, and
- they were collegial in outlook and contributed to the development of professional associations that supported the work of teachers and emerging musicians.

The first three were born in the mid-1800s and so were part of the earliest generations of colonial migrants, while the others born in the mid-1880s represent the next wave, which came to maturity around the time of Federation in 1901. Collectively, they and their contemporaries established a musical culture that was vibrant, diverse and enterprising. It is my view that they are worthy of at least national recognition, even if their 'portfolio' careers were almost exclusively pursued within a local context.

When the colony of Queensland separated from New South Wales in 1859, Brisbane had only c.5,000 residents, but the rapidly growing community was already enjoying public performances and domestic music-making. As Deborah Crisp (1995, pp. 29-30) has observed, the piano in Australia at this time was an 'emblem of gentility and culture', and 'piano-playing in the home was a particularly female accomplishment'. Therefore piano teachers were definitely in high demand from the outset. During this period it was customary to advertise one's teaching practice by including references to one's mentors, training institutions or past employers, as can be seen in these newspaper notices:

Mr. Compton, who was for more than three years organist of Her Majesty's Royal Chapel, begs to announce that he gives lessons on the Harmonium and Pianoforte, at his residence, Westerland House, Boundary-street. (*Brisbane Courier* 18 Jun. 1870, p. 1)

Mrs Hermann Knapp, pupil of Charles Hallé. Teacher of music, 8 Roger-street, Leichhardt-street. For terms and references, apply, Messrs Jefferies, Queen-street. (*Brisbane Courier* 17 Aug. 1881, p. 1)

Henrietta Mallalieu, later Mrs Willmore (1842-1938)

When Henrietta Mallalieu and her husband arrived from England in 1864 she had very young children, but soon started performing and teaching. As a largely self-taught musician from a highly musical family in London, she could not initially advertise formal credentials, as other such as those mentioned above were able to. Instead, she had to rely upon published reports of her prowess after her debut performances, for example: '[she is] one of the most accomplished pianistes it has been our good fortune to listen to'. (*Brisbane Courier* 19 Jul. 1866, p. 4) Very soon afterward, when Mallalieu was engaged by Mrs Thomas who ran the Tollerton House Academy for Young Ladies, she was listed as one its 'competent teachers'. (*Brisbane Courier* 8 Dec. 1866, p. 1) This mutual validation assisted the reputation of both individual and institution – 'twas ever thus!

Madame Mallalieu (her usual stage name) quickly became the colony's premier female musician, and was invited to join the staff of Brisbane Girls' Grammar School, established in 1875. Her 'unbending determination', both in the studio and on the platform, to be an exponent of only 'first-class composers' was noted in a rare review of a school concert four years later. (Euterpe 1879) By then, Mallalieu was teaching in both the Girls Grammar School and Mrs O'Connor's School, and also was in demand for private tuition. At various times she also battled the elements to attend premises such as Dr Hobbs' residence in Ann Street for itinerant tuition. During the 1880s Mrs O'Connor moved her school to the neighbouring town of Oxley where it was known as 'Duporth', and Henrietta was still included in the staff list amongst 'some of the principal Brisbane teachers'. (*The Week* 21 Jul. 1888, p. 2)

Even in widowhood and subsequent marriage in 1885 to the organist Walter Graham Willmore, she was never out of the public eye, continuing to perform as solo and chamber pianist until 1922 at the age of 80. For nearly two decades up to 1900 she was also the colony's most notable female church organist and recitalist. Given the lack of surviving evidence including the fact that she did not routinely present recitals from within her private studio, it is difficult to fully assess Henrietta's teaching success. A few notable examples however stand out. Eppie Thompson was most probably the first locally born musician to pursue studies overseas, and significantly her farewell performance in 1875 was presented in collaboration with her teacher and various prominent celebrities. After graduating from London's Royal Academy of Music where she studied both piano and voice, Thompson was soon engaged at Mrs O'Connor's School.

Similarly, Mallalieu-Willmore mentored Evangeline Ohman (1867-1933) on both piano and organ. She also appeared often in concerts during the late 1800s, where it was often commented that she 'reflected great credit on both herself and [her] teacher'. (*Brisbane Courier* 20 Aug. 1888, p. 4) With the advent of tours by visiting examiners from the Associated Boards of the Royal Schools [College and Academy] of Music, and the Trinity College of Music London, from the 1890s onwards local students and their teachers could aspire to the gaining of credentials that formalised their attainments. One of Mallalieu-Willmore's first students to gain success by this means was Olivia Friström (1888-1970), who in 1902 gave a debut recital of repertoire 'bristling with difficulties' which she approached with 'not only surprising technical skill, but a delicate and expressionful touch'. (*Brisbane Courier* 5 Nov. 1902, p. 11) She later moved to New Zealand and settled in the USA where she was an active teacher for the rest of her life.

Finally, the career of Mary Cochran (1862-1937) shows the strong foundations she gained in Brisbane under Mallalieu-Willmore's guidance. She published several

pedagogical volumes: *A sight reading pianoforte tutor* (1914), *The ultimate principles of pianoforte teaching and playing* (1929) and *The Cochran games method* (1929), and was an early appointment to the staff of the State Conservatorium of New South Wales in Sydney in 1916. Therefore, in addition to training pianists who could deliver impressive performances, Madame Mallalieu was clearly a role model by cultivating the art of teaching in those she mentored. Although she did not personally have the opportunity to obtain formal qualifications, she supported this aspiration within her students, and continued to support them in their later careers in various ways.

Emily Suter (1858-1940)

Another migrant arriving in her early 20s was Emily Suter, who was born in Birmingham and pursued a career in Brisbane for more than half a century. On her death in 1940 she was described as the 'mother of piano teaching in Queensland'. (*Courier-Mail* 21 Jun. 1940, p. 12) While she was not very prominent as a performer in her own right, Suter articulated clear views on musical training for both one's general development and as a public artform. After first teaching at a boys' school in Nundah, she then maintained a private studio in the city. She also advocated strongly for music as an essential subject in the public primary school system, not as something outside the basic curriculum. (Suter 1934)

In recognition of her advocacy for the introduction of the Trinity College of Music examinations to Queensland, and 'staunch support for so many years', (*Daily Standard* 18 Nov. 1931, p. 9) that institution honoured her with the award in 1931 of an honorary fellowship diploma (FTCL). In 1938 at the age of 80, again in recognition of her longstanding contribution, she was also presented to visiting composer Granville Bantock, the college's chairman at the time. Suter's students figure prominently in the early examination results published in the late 1890s, and she was willing to engage in the debate about their ultimate worth. In addition to the advantages of goal-setting and the provision of a clear structure, Suter noted an improvement in the provision of quality musical resources including published scores in the retail stores, which was of great benefit for examination candidates, their teachers and the wider community. She also stated that since she was visiting London when the scheme was being discussed, she took the opportunity to assert that standards in the colonial examinations should not be less than those expected of candidates in London itself. (Suter 1905)

On other pedagogical issues, Suter was no less forthright. In 1910, the discussion of music's role at the newly founded University of Queensland was underway, including the possibility of joining with the southern universities' examinations system, the precursor of the Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB). Suter insisted that local teachers

should be engaged in the dialogue, so the authorities could also learn 'how not to do it'. (*Telegraph* 1 Aug. 1910, p. 2) Having already deployed her extensive knowledge in lectures presented to the Musicians' Association, a professional body that operated from 1905 until 1909, it was natural that she was a founding member of the Music Teachers' Association of Queensland (MTAQ) in 1921. She also served for two terms as its President, and at the time of her death was still the only woman to have held this position. Additionally, Suter was a member of the Incorporated Society of Musicians of England. With that perspective, and also as the incumbent MTAQ President in 1923, she spoke with considerable authority when the Music Teachers' Registration Bill was being prepared for government consideration, an outcome of one of the founding tenets of the recently formed association. (Suter 1923)

Emily Suter was a private music teacher with a highly public face and voice. While others had a solo performance persona as part of their profile, she was an equally outspoken advocate for music more widely, and one who commanded respect. After her death, she was described as having a 'charming personality, [which] impressed itself upon the hundreds of pupils who had the privilege of studying under her, and in whom she was not only the instructress but also a source of inspiration and this cordial relationship continued throughout life'. (*Telegraph* 20 Jun. 1940, p. 10) This is surely the type of epitaph any piano teacher would wish to have written in their honour.

Isabella Reeve née Boyd (c.1860-1945)

This case study is almost an exact parallel of the previous one in terms of the timeframe, but in several key ways they are complementary, rather than being directly similar examples of the career of the studio teacher in early Queensland. Known professionally as Mrs Harry Reeve, she maintained a strong performance profile, in particular through her annual student concerts. This was a local tradition that peaked firstly during the early 1900s and also in the 1920s, both these decades being periods of relative economic and social prosperity. As a promotional vehicle, a teacher could showcase their more accomplished students alongside distinguished associate artists, often in the presence of specially invited dignitaries. They were often presented with great pride in a major city venue, and were routinely reviewed in the local newspapers.

For example, during a 3-year period in the late 1920s, an annual average of 10 student recitals was presented by various teachers in Albert Hall alone, across a 4-week period between mid-November and mid-December. Most of these were piano concerts with instrumentalists or singers as associate artists, while others were joint presentations by two teaching studios, which sometimes resulted in shared piano-voice or piano-string programs. While these performances included aspects akin to an end-of-year awards

night, in order to enhance their appeal an ensemble such as a choir, chamber orchestra or multiple piano group was sometimes formed from within a teacher's student cohort.

In the case of Mrs Reeve however, the element of variety was unparalleled. In 1921, after nearly 20 years of presenting these events, it was stated that 'among the annual students' recitals, none is looked forward to with greater interest than that of Mrs. Harry Reeve, a well-known Brisbane music teacher'. (*Daily Standard* 14 Nov. 1921, p. 3) She taught both piano and voice, and as a performer Mrs Reeve regularly sang vocal solos or delivered elocutionary items in the form of short stories that she termed 'musical monologues'. She was also active for many years as organist of the Wharf Street Congregational Church. But her diversification into plucked string instruments was something unique, and so over the years 'Mrs. Harry Reeve's Mandolin and Banjo Clubs' became a major drawcard. Already in the early 1900s her programs had included choral partsongs, vocal or piano duets, 6- or 8-handed duo piano works, (*Brisbane Courier* 30 Oct. 1903, p. 5) and from at least 1911 some items for 'mandoline' [*sic*]. (*Telegraph* 27 Nov. 1911, p. 4)

The banjo-mandolin-guitar movement was thriving internationally during this period, and Mrs Reeve built up a considerable local following in Brisbane. At its height they numbered more than 30, and presumably her ensemble members were initially her own piano or voice students. (*Brisbane Courier* 26 Oct. 1925, p. 10). While the group was a permanent feature of her annual studio recitals, it also developed an independent profile within the community and was frequently invited to perform at special events.

The review of what appears to have been her final students' recital, presented in 1929 just before she attained the age of 70, provides some perceptive comments about Mrs Reeve's standing in the community:

the diversity of the programme submitted was an indication of the variety of the activities of Mrs. Reeve in the field of music. First and foremost, as an evidence of the close co-operation and good fellowship of the students, there was the work of the mandolin and banjo clubs. The teacher of these instruments has an opportunity of developing ensemble playing which does not fall to the lot of every music teacher. (*Telegraph* 15 Oct. 1929, p. 16)

Also featured in this concert were the customary vocal and elocutionary items, short piano pieces by Smetana, Levitski and Liszt and a Brahms sonata movement played by Howard Berg, a former student of Mrs Reeve. Notably, the large audience included several prominent local musicians and other performing artists, which further confirms her esteemed status amongst colleagues and the wider society.

Percy Brier (1885-1970)

One of the most prominent piano teachers of the next generation was Percy Brier, who was also Mrs Harry Reeve's most successful student. Under her guidance he obtained the 'highest marks won by any Trinity College candidate in Britain or elsewhere in 1900', and subsequently the local committee awarded him a scholarship for study in London. (*Morning Bulletin* [Rockhampton] 21 Oct. 1901, p. 6) His career was both very long and diverse, and perhaps exemplifies to the greatest extent what a 'portfolio teacher' can accomplish, both individually and within the context of organisational structures. As I have already discussed in detail his contributions in my 2013 APPC paper, I will provide here just a brief overview of his major achievements.

As a pianist Brier performed frequently across more than half a century, both much standard repertoire and also local premières of Beethoven's *Hammerklavier Sonata*, Franck's *Prelude, Choral and Fugue*, and while the composers were still alive, works by Debussy and Ravel. He was a regular ensemble partner, performing much duo piano repertoire, string sonatas and larger chamber works with colleagues, and in that context led the successful Brisbane Chamber Music Society during the 1920s. He was invited by conductor George Sampson to perform the first concerto in the newly opened City Hall in 1930, but unfortunately had to decline the offer due to other commitments, however just that singular acknowledgement signifies Brier's standing as a performer.

Upon returning from overseas in 1906 Brier was involved with the Musicians' Association and later presented some lecture-recitals in that forum, but his major organisational involvement was as a founder of the Music Teachers' Association of Queensland in 1921. With that body he was President for 12 terms, and among his initiatives were the organisation of several series of chamber music and sonata recitals in the 1930s and 1940s, frequent ABC broadcast programs featuring members and students, and also commencing in the late 1920s its annual conferences with visiting experts, performances and opportunities for professional development. After serving as the local secretary for the Trinity College examinations for 10 years, he was encouraged to become the first Queensland-based examiner for the AMEB in 1923, a role which he fulfilled for 40 years, both in Brisbane and on frequent regional tours.

Brier's other interests were as a choral conductor, chiefly with the Brisbane Liedertafel, (later renamed the Apollo Club), and the Queensland State and Municipal Choir, while he also held several church music positions both in the city and suburbs, and for one year at St James' Anglican Church in Sydney. As a composer, he had many works performed including some for large forces, but as was common at the time his published output was largely shorter piano solos and songs. This activity also extended to the Queensland

branch of the Composers' Guild of Australia, of which Brier held leadership positions for most of its two decades of existence up to 1963.

As a studio teacher, Brier had wanted to achieve the goal of 1,000 students, but he claims just to have taught 'merely' 912! Included amongst these are several prominent musicians who later had significant careers, including Mary Childe who was one of Toowoomba's leading piano teachers, Ernest Watson who was active in Brisbane, and Robert Boughen who was for many years St John's Cathedral organist and university lecturer. Some of Brier's alumni also pursued overseas careers, chiefly James Mursill who taught at Columbia University New York, and Ronald Grainer who was later based in the United Kingdom where his commercial music successes included composition of the first 'Dr Who' theme music.

In his prolific autobiographical writings where he chronicled much of early Queensland's musical life, Brier described his additional role as adjudicator as an 'indirect method of teaching'. (Brier P 1973, p. 75) Likewise he saw the MTAQ as a public forum for both professional development and public education, such as the series of complete Mozart piano sonatas which he curated as ABC live broadcasts. At the individual mentoring level, Brier stated that the highest compliment he ever received from a former student was the comment 'don't be surprised if because you have taught me to think I should think differently from you'. (Brier P 1973, p. 42)

Ernest RB Jordan (c.1885-1941)

An exact contemporary of Brier was ERB Jordan, and the careers of both have significant similarities. Coming to prominence very early by taking up a church organist position at the age of 12, Jordan studied piano with the Liedertafel's director William Arthur Caflisch, who also mentored him as an emerging choral accompanist and conductor. Jordan's teaching career also started early, and he contributed to his students' development with the promotion of regular public recitals. At the end of 1908, when Jordan was still only 23, the 10th such program was presented. It featured major solo works by Chopin and Weber, and a large number of pieces for two pianos, with up to four performers at a time. (*Brisbane Courier* 14 Dec. 1908, p. 6) The following year it was noted that these recitals were

becoming quite a feature of the musical life of Brisbane, and they afford an interesting insight into the methods of teaching adopted by one of the piano tutors of our city. They speak of earnest work and careful tuition on the right lines, there being evidence that the pupils are required to be thorough in their studies and to build up slowly, but strongly, on sound foundations. (*Brisbane Courier* 5 Apr. 1909, p. 6)

While such comments are rather general in nature, they clearly demonstrate that these public performances were an integral part of Jordan's pedagogical approach, and the diversity and inclusiveness of his programming show a concern for mentoring of students at all levels. He was also interested in audience development, as in one program of 1910 which featured an extended bracket of works by the American Edward MacDowell who had died recently, which was introduced by a brief lecture on the composer. (*Brisbane Courier* 1 Aug. 1910, p. 3)

Jordan soon became one of Brisbane's leading choral conductors, directing the Austral Choir for more than 20 years from 1913, and further from 1936 until his death when that ensemble amalgamated with the Brisbane Musical Union to form the Queensland State and Municipal Choir. While his teaching studio was equally devoted to vocal training, which provided mutual benefits for his large ensemble work, Jordan was also constantly breaking new ground in his pedagogical piano repertoire selection and innovative programming. His student recitals continued through the 1920s, with capacity audiences with Albert often being packed 'from end to end'. (*Daily Mail* 1 Sep. 1923, p. 20) Building on his earlier precedents, unusual repertoire was often included, as were concertos by Mendelssohn and large works by Chopin.

After presenting the 49th studio recital at the end of 1929, the series appears to have been suspended, in favour of programs featuring just two selected advanced students, with relatively limited involvement of others. In any case 'the benefits of good sound teaching' (*Telegraph* 11 Sep. 1930, p. 16) were still reported upon as a characteristic of these concerts. Diversity of repertoire remained a hallmark of Jordan's studio, with major standard works alongside less familiar composers, and also inclusion of duo-piano, concertos and some original compositions by both students and teacher. All these were notable aspects of programs presented respectively in 1930 by two of his advanced students, Lilian Irving and Betty Brenan. (*Telegraph* 6 Aug. 1930, p. 9) Jordan's entrepreneurial efforts were henceforth focussed on the Austral Recitals which were presented throughout the 1930s under his direction. While local pianists were regularly included, most notably in the first complete cycle of Beethoven's sonatas during 1931 and 1932, the programs were based around the Austral Choir and eminent visiting artists such as the Sydney String Quartet and the legendary Percy Grainger.

Gladys Frost (1887-1952)

In discussing this final case study, it might appear that the career patterns already discussed are to a large extent merely being replicated. Nevertheless, Gladys Frost is significant in her own right as a major local musician, who maintained both her performance and teaching expertise at a high level over an extended period. Whereas

others gradually reduced their solo recital work in deference to that of their students' performances, she continued to present joint programs in collaboration with eminent colleagues. Significantly, in addition to providing accompaniments for her piano students' concertos and vocal students' songs and arias, Frost also featured herself in major solo items within her studio-based programs. While others tended to separate out their various performance personas, she put herself to the test in demonstrating publicly the nexus between student and teacher. It was stated early in her career that 'Miss Frost leads her pupils along lines that pave the way to the highest musical taste, and she has the not too common gift of passing on her own skill to those in her care'. (*Telegraph* 8 Dec. 1916, p. 9)

Frost also benefited from the training that she received interstate, which by 1900 had become a viable alternative to overseas study for Queenslanders. After initial tuition under SG Benson, a prominent Brisbane musician at the turn of the century, she spent a few years in Melbourne at the Marshall-Hall Conservatorium around 1910, before establishing her own studio back home. She soon started appearing in joint recitals with Lena Hammond, one of Brisbane's well known singers, particularly during the 1920s and early 1930s when these concerts were an annual highlight. Frost's student concerts likewise took place each year, across at least three decades until the early 1940s when they morphed into wartime fundraising events, just like some of the earliest ones which were presented from 1915 onwards.

The variety of repertoire performed is of particular interest. Frost herself played some of Liszt's rhapsodies, the *Hungarian Phantasy* and the *Rigoletto Paraphrase*, also much Chopin and selected pieces by Rachmaninoff and Debussy. In addition to the better known 19th century composers, favourites of the day were also featured including Sinding, MacDowell, Palmgren and Grainger. Concerted works by Mozart, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Weber and Grieg were frequently heard, with Frost providing the orchestral part on a second piano. She also promoted women composers, with works by Cécile Chaminade, Agathe Grøndahl and Teresa Carreño being programmed regularly.

Vocal repertoire always featured in Frost's concerts, as she also taught many singing students, and during the 1930s this aspect expanded with the inclusion of the choir of the girls' school Somerville House, which she conducted at the time. At one of her final events in 1940, the multi-faceted nature of her direction of these student recitals was applauded, when after 12 accompaniments and 3 choral conducting appearances, not to mention the extensive preparatory work in the studio with the younger performers, Frost concluded the evening with 'a brilliant solo performance' of the Chopin Waltz in A flat. (*Telegraph* 4 Dec. 1940, p. 19)

Conclusions

This brief survey of selected piano teachers who were active in Brisbane up to World War has highlighted some notable trends. In different ways, these piano teachers spread their influence well beyond the private teaching studio, through public performances by themselves and their students, and also through their involvement in organisations and campaigns that advocated for the central role of music within the wider community. They each utilised a diversity of skills and musical interests to show that being a keyboard musician can be much more than just a lonely solo pursuit. They were role models in cultivating both within themselves and through their students the art of accompaniment, ensemble playing, and in several cases also singing and choral participation. Several of them were active composers, and all were interested in recently created music, including that of their compatriots and students.

It is beyond the limits of this discussion to fully explore the role of piano pedagogy within the school system. A notable example from the early decades of colonisation was the strong record of the All Hallows' Convent, where unfortunately the cloistered teachers are virtually anonymous. Also, there were numerous other musicians for whom piano teaching was not their primary focus, such as George Sampson who taught the young Arthur Benjamin while he was a student at the Brisbane Grammar School. But in their own way, the group of six piano teachers discussed here provides a fascinating cross-section of the learning opportunities available in their day, including access to advanced training locally, for some the tertiary study which was then only available elsewhere, and later ongoing professional development.

Given that our circumstances today are rather different to the society of 80 to 150 years ago, I am not suggesting that any of us should aspire to repeat exactly what these pioneers achieved. Obviously we cannot be the first to introduce canonical works such as the Beethoven sonatas, as Madame Mallalieu did in the 1870s, but we should keep abreast of the gradually evolving piano repertoire resource base, including works by Australians, women composers and the many lesser knowns who deserve equal billing. And perhaps we do not have the interest or expertise to form a mandolin group like Mrs Reeve or a choir like ERB Jordan from within our studios, but like all of these teachers did, we should cultivate our students' ensemble skills either by requiring them to play with other pianists or in diverse instrumental combinations and also with singers.

We might not have the drive, or direct access to lobbying avenues in order to advocate for our pedagogical needs at a political level as Emily Suter did, but we can participate in various ways in those organisations which aim to foster high standards and professional recognition. Furthermore, we might not have the capacity as Gladys Frost did, to

continue performing alongside our students, some of whom might have already surpassed our own technical standard. But we should also not shy away from demonstrating the essential practical skills and our own interpretative insights, and so be a constant role model for our students as a creative artist. And while some of us could perhaps aspire to equal or even exceed Percy Brier's goal of teaching 1,000 students over a half-century career or longer, we should also not underestimate the influence we can have upon every aspiring musician we encounter, either as examiner, adjudicator, lecturer or audience member, just like these case studies showed.

Queensland has somewhat suffered in terms of its cultural reputation in comparison to the more populous southern states, but hopefully I have been able to demonstrate that we did indeed have here some leading lights. These pioneering musicians were truly impressive both at the local level and also when compared to their peers in other cities or countries. Each of these six case studies could be considered in retrospect to have been a 'portfolio teacher', since although the piano played a central role, none of them had just a single role or field of endeavour. They were simply well-rounded, energetic and committed musicians. Surely the best piano teachers of today, and of the future, can and should enthusiastically emulate their example.

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Peter Roennfeldt is a well-known keyboard performer and educator, and his piano-related research has been presented at seven APPC conferences since 1995. His current performance specialisation is nineteenth-century ensemble repertoire for piano with strings or voices, and in the past he has been very involved with historical practices of baroque vocal and choral music. In recent years Peter has published three monographs, ten articles and four book chapters on aspects of Queensland's music history and performance traditions, with a focus on the development of educational institutions, culturally significant buildings and the careers of prominent musicians. At present he is the holder of the Letty Katts Award, a research fellowship hosted by the State Library of Queensland. In addition to past membership of the national committee of the APPC and convenor of its 2001 conference in Brisbane, Peter is a former Chair of both the National Council of Tertiary Music Schools and the Australian National Choral Association. He holds degrees in music from the universities of Queensland and Adelaide, and a Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Cincinnati USA where he studied under Béla Siki. For more than thirty years Peter lectured at Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University, where until 2009 he also served for seven years as its Director. He continues this academic association as an Emeritus Professor and supervisor of research students.