

## **Ken Stott**

### **Music**

**1963-1966**

*Dr Ken Stott is a composer, church organist, pianist and conductor, who lives in Australia. At Bretton Hall, he studied composition under the late Brian Longthorne, and piano under BBC concert pianist Keith Swallow. The following article was written and submitted by Ken in December, 2014.*



Dr. Ken Stott

Since this section of the website is about reminiscences, allow me to indulge in a little nostalgia. I was put in Estate House for my first year, and shared a room with Steve Oxe (Art), Malcolm Bentley (Music) and Jeff Singleton (Music). I have been in touch with both Malcolm and Jeff, but have not managed to contact Steve yet. Jeff Dowson (who has recently published a crime thriller) and Angus McIntosh were also inmates.

Living in such isolation forced me to learn how to bake cakes, without which I would have suffered intense depression, so the smell of baking filled the house each Sunday afternoon.

I remember fondly the Grace Choir, led by Helen Ritchie, the eccentric and universally admired Daphne Bird, and long-suffering music staff, like Brian Longthorne, Gerald Arran and Mr Marsden (I can't recall his first name). Keith Swallow was my piano teacher, and for three years, I had to find a myriad of excuses for not practising, mainly because my love of music paled in comparison to my adoration of soccer and tennis. (I eventually went to Carnegie College to study PE, and spent the first half of my career lecturing in sport and exercise.)

The second year was in Litherop, which was only a couple of leaps and bounds down the steps to the refectory and countless trays of chips, chocolate slice filled with ice cream, and other stodgy delights for a perpetually ravenous student.

Weekdays, though, were merely to fill the time between Saturdays, when I played soccer for the College. I thought I was quite useful then (and went on to join Stockport County), but there were some superb players, one of the best being Barry Place. He was equally at home playing goalkeeper or goal scorer. Summers were quite palatable too, because tennis could be played on weekdays, mainly with the PE lecturer Sam Thornton. I remember Miriam Osborne and Bert Thomas (who left to run a B&B in Blackpool).

The third year was spent living in a farmhouse at Haigh, just down the road. The highlight, I recall, was sitting on the lawn one balmy summer's evening listening to fellow student John Forsyth play classical guitar. What a talent!

So many other tales to tell, but let's leave those for another time. I often wonder what has happened to old friends like Pru Edden, Barbara Fergus and some of those mentioned above.

As for me, I emigrated to Singapore in the 1980s, where I worked in university. I then moved to Australia in 2005 to become Professor and Provost at a university in Queensland. Now I am retired, but you can find out more at my website:

<http://kenstott.wix.com/kenstottmusic>

Old friends can write to me at [kenstott@gmail.com](mailto:kenstott@gmail.com)