

GORDON DOUGLAS B.A.Mod.(Music), H.Dip. Ed., L.T.C.L.

Born in Dublin 1955, Gordon Douglas, was interested in a wide range of subjects during his early education and his third level education began in 1974 with Agricultural Science at UCD! However, in parallel to this, he began taking his music education more seriously; and after one year of 'science versus organ studies', he switched to TCD in 1975 to pursue Geography, Psychology and Music as part of a 'General Studies' package. Not content with a 3 year pass degree, he embarked yet again in 1976 on the then rigorous, 'new' 4 year degree course in pure music, in which he graduated with honours in 1980. In parallel to this he also furthered his keyboard studies with Peter Sweeney, Professor of Organ at DIT College of Music. He followed this in 1981 with a H. Dip Ed. from TCD and his special project was the 'Making of simple musical instruments and its contribution to music education'.

This was no idle post graduate exercise, but the foundations of a life-long interest and passion for introducing young people to music via such unusual avenues. In September 1981 after completing his higher diploma and year's teaching practice at Newpark school, he began teaching piano part time at St Andrews College and it was there that he founded the '**St. Andrew's Ragharmonia**' which comprised of students from the Junior School making music on home-made instruments . RTE producer Joe O' Donnell was quick to seize on the subject and in May 1982 he filmed a documentary aptly named '**Ragharmonia**' which was to be Ireland's entry to the European Broadcasting Union of children's documentaries. Featuring a selection of pupils from **St. Andrews College, Newpark Comprehensive School** and **Glengara Park School**, and shot on all 3 locations, the 30 minute film '*topped the popularity lists*' at its initial screening in Mainz, Germany. It got the highest exchange rating and has since been shown in 8 European countries and Japan, in addition to RTE.

This initial, international TV coverage was the beginning of a legacy of appearances which include **Music for Fun** at NCH, '**Wavin Pipe Band**' on Late-Late Toy Show (RTE 1 TV), and numerous other occasions, radio and TV, including the BBC.

Since then Gordon has had a wide variety of music teaching experiences and active posts including primary, post primary (with 2 full time positions) , third level, teacher training college, adult education, special education and community arts projects, to name just a few areas.

In 1998, following on from his earlier experimentation, he founded '**The Plumber's guide to World Music**'. a spectacular hands-on creative music making programme for the middle to upper classes of primary schools. So successful was this formula that, since then, it has visited over **50** primary schools around the country and places as far away as the Beara Peninsula, West Cork and the International School in Brussels!

In November of 2000 his earlier mentioned science study came back to haunt him when he and his newly founded '**Plumbers Sinfonia**' were invited to join the Irish delegation at the '**Physics on Stage**' Festival in Cern, Geneva. They demonstrated the intrinsic connection between physics and music on stage in front of an audience of over 400 scientists and the return Dublin lecture-performance literally *ended* RTE Network 2 news at DIT, Kevin St.

Since 1990, in parallel to his somewhat more unorthodox work, Gordon has managed an expanding private practice in piano and music theory working from his home teaching studio . However, in addition to this, life seemed to turn full circle when, in September 2010, some 29 years later, he rejoined St. Andrew's College Junior School as part-time piano teacher!