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Hedy's Corner

(Contributed by a Colleague)

"Good neighbours all, come join with us in merry dance and sing."

"Let lads and lasses gather round to swell the happy throng."

"To our good friend our Hedy dear all honour would we show,"

"For she is ever kind to us, and that right well we know."

These words were sung by over a hundred friends and past and present pupils under the conductorship of our Hamilton Civic Choir conductor, Guyon Wells, to the well beloved strains of J. S. Bach's "Peasant Cantata", in honour of our dear friend Hedy. Yes, we had a very joyful celebration with Hedy on the 22nd of February, in the Southwell School Hall, Hamilton.

However this birthday was a party with a difference—instead of playing party games, we played music in Hedy's honour. All who have been associated with Hedy over the many years she has been in New Zealand have had their lives deeply enriched through having known and worked with her, and we felt this was a small way for young and old to show our love and affection towards her. As a violinist performing from Radio Auckland in the thirties to the opening performance of the first radio station in Hamilton, from countless charity and other concerts to tutoring at Hamilton Girls High School, and other schools, and being a string tutor at Hamilton Winter Schools of Music—brings us to her main ability: to transfer her love of music to others.

Instead of singing the usual "Happy Birthday" we heralded Hedy in to the above strains, and when our guest of honour was seated, musical items followed, given by many of her pupils. Three young aspiring violinists commenced the programme playing by memory a concerto movement by Seitz, these children, two of them only 10 years old—have been studying the Suzuki violin method with Hedy Biland for the past five years, which is now being pioneered in this country and is having great success.

The Hamilton String Quartet then brought to the ears of the public for the first time a "game"—almost like Ludo, however played with string instruments and bows, instead of counters and dice, to the amusement of everyone. In more serious vein, in her mother-in-law's honour, Rosemarie Biland performed on the piano a piece which she had composed for the occasion. Following this about half of the audience came forward when called upon to form into an orchestra at the spur of the moment, made up of string instruments and recorders. Early 18th century music was played under the baton of the well known Auckland, Ron Dellow, Music Tutor Department of Continuing Education of the University of Auckland.

Musical goings-on carried on till late afternoon, when we had a delicious afternoon tea and a beautifully decorated birthday cake.

Thank you Hedy, for being such a wonderful friend to us all. Also thank you Margaret Crawshaw for making this wonderful afternoon possible.

—Josy Fluhler.