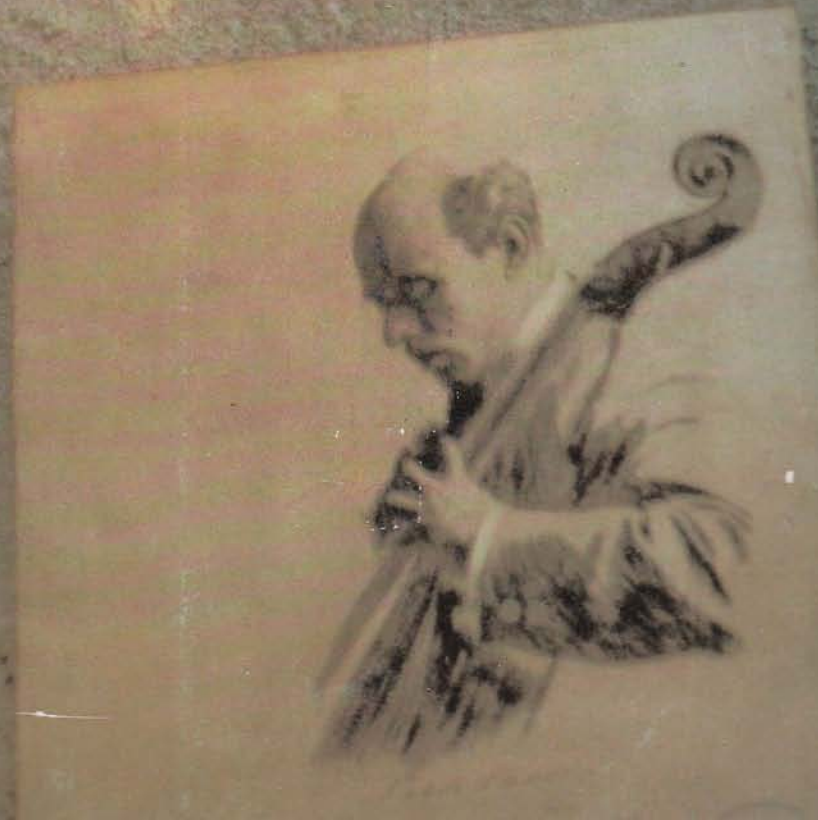


**Pablo  
Casals  
International  
Cello  
Centre**





*Above: Cowan coaches an orchestra rehearsal at Pro Corda, a vacation school for young string players in Britain (1976). Below: Michael Freudenberg receives Cowan's advice on a tricky passage*

With her education from Tovey, Feuermann and Edwin Fischer, Cowan felt that post-war playing was corrupt. Her daughter Lucy confirms that she had a moral fervour in condemning players who she thought valued projection and technique too highly. She hated the glossy recording industry and aimed always at solving problems musically. 'She was wild about self-control,' remembers Doane. 'She forced us to articulate what we were trying to make happen,' and she would also impress upon her students the significance of what she was trying to explain by saying something like: 'You have to listen to me not because of who I am but because I am standing on the shoulders of giants.'

'She believed in teaching where she was,' says Wilson. 'She gave her very best to local children and never tried to get the best around her.' Perhaps this is why she was not as well known as she deserved to be.

In addition to teaching at Cello Centre, Cowan coached chamber music sessions at Pro Corda, a school for young string players during vacations. Its former director Pamela Spofforth vividly remembers her as a great personality and a remarkable and charismatic character and feels that she should have had a manager. 'Jane used to do masterclasses with my violin pupils playing concertos. They were remarkable but hardly anybody knew about them, so very few people came.' Spofforth

remembers her strong ideas about style. 'Bad editions were anathema to her, particularly Haydn and Schubert. She used to re-edit them using stamp paper.'

Her former students make passing references to her terrifying and sometimes unreasonable rages. Lucy remembers overhearing a really fierce argument her mother had with an 18-year-old student. Cowan was complaining that you couldn't be a great composer without a spiritual dimension to your make-up. 'But what about Delius, who was an atheist?' asked the student. 'That exactly proves my point,' replied Cowan triumphantly. Spirituality was very important to her. 'She could see how music made people happy and she had a child-like view,' remembers Lucy. 'She really got annoyed if music wasn't doing its job, believing that music ought to make people happy. In order to do that you've got to devote all your faculties.' Tragically the last years before her death in 1996 were taken over by Alzheimer's disease.

Cowan undoubtedly used all her faculties in her teaching and playing. Her dedication and powerful intellect as well as her musicianship can be heard in the memories of her students and seen in her writings, such as the workbook she put together for the young Isserlis which amply demonstrates the extraordinary depth of her exploration of musical interpretation. She makes reference to paintings from the 15th to 20th centuries, 12th-century sculptures, poetry and quotes from musical treatises. There is even a photograph of a happy hippopotamus surfacing from a river!

One can see how much she expected from her pupils. She compares portraits by Dürer and Cranach: 'Notice the generosity of line overflowing the border of the Dürer. These painters are contemporaries of Heinrich Isaak but the style is of a much later period in music when characterisation was everything. The Dürer combines Italian grace and German strength. I think what I want you to notice is the generosity, simplicity, concentration and earnestness of expression of one man looking out and the other looking inward.' Dotted among the various fascinating texts are her own laws, which give some small indication of the kind of character she was. 'He who accompanies must have no affectation in playing, for if he does, he will be shot right out of his chair, and his cello and Nürnberger (gold mount and all) will be given to a worthier being forthwith. J.C.C. Law.' □

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I.C.C.

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Pablo Casals

Donald Francis Tovey



“It is an honour for anyone of us to stand on the same platform with him.”

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Preceptors of the Director of Studies.



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Professor Max Rostal and his wife in a lively discussion on legato bowing, and such missing elements, with the Director of Studies, I.C.C.



Konrad Lorenz at the I.C.C. Festival formerly held annually at Schloss Breitenreich and Kloster Wienburg in Upper Austria.



Music from the Merse, a teaching branch of the I.C.C.



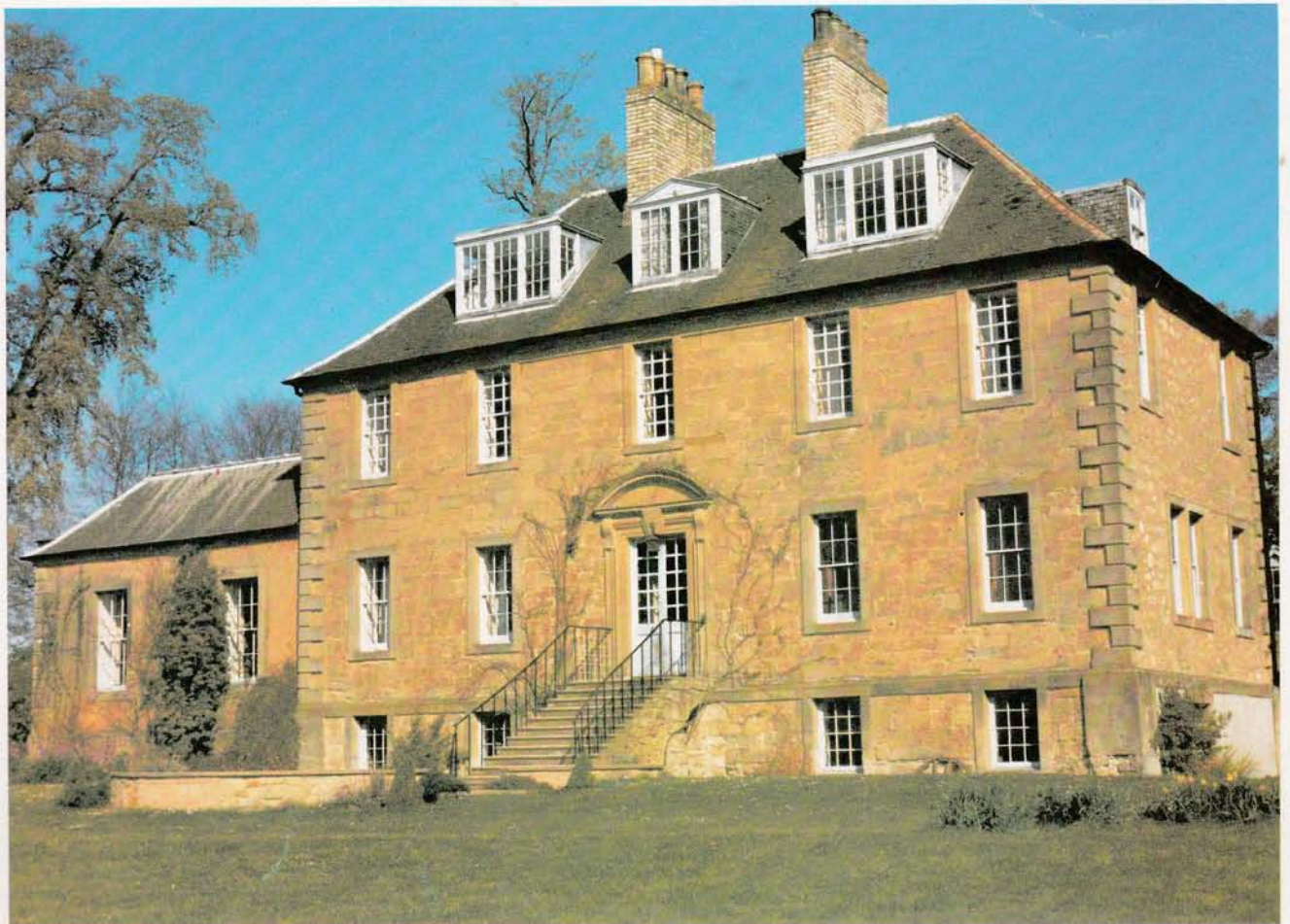
Annual Easter Children's Course at Edrom.



Cellists at Edrom, 1979.

# INTERNATIONAL CELLO CENTRE

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