

## Beth Hill: In Remembrance



We were saddened to learn of the passing of Beth Hill, one of Voices Foundation's most respected practitioners and someone who played a key part in the development of our approach. Sally Cathcart shares her memories of Beth below:

“Beth Hill was a dear friend and colleague of many of us at Voices Foundation. We were all saddened to hear that the illness that had forced her to retire finally reached its conclusion and that she passed away last week.

Beth trained to become an Advisory Teacher (as Musicianship Practitioners were then called) alongside myself and several others. She quickly proved to be an outstanding Advisory Teacher (AT) with her warmth, smile and openness. She was able to put class teachers immediately at ease with her down-to-earth and realistic understanding of the challenges they faced in the classroom.

As Voices Foundation grew, Beth was appointed a Senior Advisory Teacher. Her role was to give advice and help less experienced ATs. Many remember being struck how apparently effortlessly she quickly established an easy relationship with class teachers. To the new and often struggling ATs she was incredibly generous with her time, giving them wonderful advice with great humour, kindness and really demonstrating a great belief in their potential skill as an AT.

Beth believed whole-heartedly in the power of singing to bring joy and, to that end, was a fierce advocate of the work of the Voices Foundation. She could be very determined when the need arose however and there was a gentle steeliness to her. When work on creating the badly needed new material for classroom teachers stalled, Beth took the initiative and bravely produced the first draft of what later became *Inside Music, Early Years*, the very first book. Voices Foundation has much to thank both Beth and her husband Robert for in this respect.

Beth had a beautiful voice and she loved singing in various choirs. One colleague, on a significant birthday, remembers picking up a voicemail where Beth had taken the time to record a special Happy Birthday. Such was the generosity and thoughtfulness of this lovely lady.

As Beth's condition worsened, she was no longer able to continue her work with Voices Foundation. At the last conference she attended, Beth's singing was undiminished, however, as was her joy in sharing some of her favourite EY songs. I will always remember Beth with a big smile on her face, partly hidden by a chiffon scarf singing *Where is Georgie?* and telling us about the fun she had doing this with her grandson when he was a baby.

Although Beth may no longer be with us, her spirit will continue within Voices Foundation, through her legacy with *Inside Music* and the fact that she embodied everything it stood for.”

*“From the moment I met Beth, many years ago, I realised she was one of those rare people for whom singing with children is the greatest joy imaginable and the most all-absorbing passion and vocation. We worked together for many years, sometimes with the same children at the same school. I learnt a great deal from her. My abiding memory of Beth is one of a person shining with happiness in her work. Her gorgeous voice and insuppressible desire to use it at every opportunity will remain forever in the hearts of the thousands of lives she enhanced.”*

- Suzi Digby, Founder, Voices Foundation