

Instrument acquisition just a step away



Adelaide's Australian String Quartet has access to a full set of 16th Century string instruments – worth more than \$6.18m – thanks to a philanthropic fundraising project to acquire them started by UKARIA founder Ulrike Klein.

By Elisa Rose

Cultural organisation UKARIA is \$70,000 away from owning a full set of rare quartet instruments after raising more than \$6m for their purchase.

The set of four instruments, made by luthier Giovanni Battista Guadagnini in the 1700s, are worth more than \$6.18m, include two violins, a cello and a viola and is the only set of its kind worldwide.

UKARIA, which has a cultural centre in Mt Barker, currently owns three of the four instruments, purchased with some of the money raised up until now, which included a \$3m donation from UKARIA founder Ulrike Klein.

But the fourth instrument, one of the

two violins, is still owned by Ms Klein who, not wanting to risk missing out on a chance to purchase the rare violin, bought it before the funds were fully raised.

The violin is now awaiting transfer to UKARIA when the final \$70,000 is raised.

Inspiration

All four instruments are currently on loan to Adelaide's Australian String Quartet, which tours the nation and the world, is Australia's only full-time string quartet and was the original inspiration for the idea to purchase the set.

Recognising the difference that high quality instruments made to the quality of sound produced by a quartet, Ms Klein began the philanthropic project to acquire some of the best

instruments in the world for use by professional musicians. Ms Klein said the instruments provided the quartet with the "tools of the trade" to allow them to be musical "ambassadors" to the rest of the country and the world.

Since the project started in 2010, donors from around the country have contributed, including philanthropists Allan and Maria Myers and the James and Diana Ramsay Foundation.

Of the total \$6.1m raised, more than \$2m has been raised within SA, in addition to the 50% contribution made by Ms Klein.

With little over 1% of the full cost left to raise, Ms Klein said she was hopeful the remaining money would be secured soon.

"In the scheme of the whole project ... it's just a very small amount left to raise," she said.

Driver dies at scene