



HITTING A CHORD:
Paul Neenan and Philip McDermott became friends after taking up fiddle lessons at Walton's New School of Music

The Fiddlers

► Philip McDermott lives in Leixlip. He is married with three grown-up children. Aged 62, he is semi-retired and learning the fiddle at Walton's New School of Music.

'Some 41 years ago, I bought a fiddle on impulse. The instrument had always appealed to me, but I didn't have a clue how to play it.

'Four years ago, I decided to approach Walton's and find out about fiddle lessons. I joined seven others on an introductory course.

'I wanted to walk out after the first couple of lessons. I found it hard to get my fingers to do what was necessary.

'I wasn't the youngest there, by any means, but I relied on my willingness to learn.

'I hit it off with another student, Paul. We've become friends. We go for a coffee or a drink after our lesson and swap thoughts.

'We've had a lesson together on Tuesday evenings and it's the most enjoyable hour of my week. I mean, we're never going to play the Albert Hall, but we've great fun.

'I would recommend an evening class to anyone. It's a great way of meeting new people.'

► Paul Neenan lives in Dublin with his wife and two children. A civil servant, Paul is 48.

'I played the piano when I was a child. I liked the instrument, but not my teacher or the way I was taught. I always thought that there had to be more enjoyable ways of learning music.

'I started an introductory course in Walton's in 2001. That's when I met Philip. We hit it off immediately, and now we take partner lessons – the two of us with a teacher. It's great, as we can bounce ideas off each other.

'It's been brilliant to reach inside myself and take up something that I've always been interested in. And I've made a good friend in the process.'