

Conto



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Intervarsity Choral Societies' Association,
is edited by Robert Kay,
66 Marlow Street
Wembley, W.A. 6014
(09) 387 1108

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of AICSA or its governing body, AIVCO



Editor's longwinded blah

"What do I do with this leftover money, Ma?"

I was going to get stuck into this subject of distribution of I.V. profits in Erato 45, but lack of space in the edition prevented it. I am by no means complaining of a glut of items; it was indeed great to see every society in print.

Still, I think that IV Profits, like AICSA/Minifest Relations, is a subject that should be thrashed out, and it is probably only going to be done by knocking down arguments until a consensus is reached. There is too much ad hocery about AIVCC decisions sometimes. So here is my (I hope) reasoned argument:

IVCF is a product of AICSA, not of an individual society or host city, and as such its monies are ultimately AICSA's. While acknowledging that the people who volunteer their labour to fundraise and organise for an IVCF do so because they are members of the host choir(s), their labour is not the property of their society, and as such cannot be "sold" to the IVCF by their choir. Really the only dichotomy that arises would be between the fundraising of the host choir for its own projects and the fundraising of the IVCF.

To those who feel that their choir as an IVCF Host would be hard done by in the event of their IV's profits not being shared with their choir, I say that constitutionally you are out on a limb. AICSA is unable to make payments ex gratia to its members (that is, to the Choral Societies). Payments for services rendered is another thing, but to count volunteer labour for fundraising as a "service rendered" by the Member Choir is to come back to the argument as to whether one can claim ownership of the choristers' labour.

On the assumption that my reasoning so far is sound, albeit unpalatable to some, I will now draw my conclusions. There is no logic to the Society's argument that since its members volunteered for the fundraising the choir has a right to a share of the profits. To say that is to accept the claim that should a number of volunteers be members of, say, a sporting team raising money, that their team had a claim also. In reality the problem only arises because the Society Committee sees a great deal of effort going, necessarily, into IVCF fundraising and, quite possibly less going into choir fundraising. This is probably no fault of the choir - it is much, much harder to raise funds for general month-to-month Society expenses than to raise funds for the Special One-Off Event represented by a Home IV.

So how about a compromise?

Unless yours is a choir which never does any fundraising for itself (in which case, I'd be buggered if I ever parted with a penny of MY Festival's hard-earned profit: your choir obviously don't need it anyway), there is every chance that some of your Choir's brainwave dollar-making schemes will also be tried by the IVCF Fundraising Officer. First up,

don't blame them for trying a good idea. Just suggest that the choir SHOULD get a piece of the action AS THE EVENT OCCURS.

You could try one of several lines:

1. A straight percentage split of the funds raised, e.g. 50% Choir, 50% IVCF. One thing you would need to make clear is that this would apply to fundraising events that lose money too! You would need to publicise that the choir was also a beneficiary of the fundraising, since IVCF is an AICSA event, while the Choir of course isn't. Some sort of written contract between IVCF and Choir would be necessary.

OR

2. Spell out quite clearly what fundraising ideas are traditionally Choir (carols at shopping centres, say) and bar them to IVCF. This is not as unfair or as difficult to achieve as it may seem.

OR

3. Apply the rational argument that, since IVCF has a target for its fundraising, then so too could the Choir for the period of time involved, based on its perceived needs. Try adding these figures together and make it the combined target. This would certainly negate the need to compete for labour. Anything above the combined target could be split 50/50 or even given to one group only, since it's cream.

I reckon that people volunteer to help fundraise for IVCF because that is what it is, not just because it is another Choir activity. I don't reckon that people fundraise for IVCF with the primary intention of making their choir richer financially.

Anyway, I've never had much respect for those parochial people who will whisk an IV profit into the host choir's coffers and watch another IVCF struggling with a massive debt. While I hate to see financial mismanagement, it is imperative for the Intervarsity Choral movement to be seen willingly helping with every IVCF no matter where its location. Otherwise let's scrap the IVCF rostering and ordering system, since we have no sense of continuity, no pride in our history, and no awareness of our responsibility.

Robert Kay

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✳ DEADLINE for ERATO 47: SEPTEMBER 30, 1985

Adelaide University Choral Society



AS AUDREY'S Birthday becomes but a memory, and the start of second term attacks with a vengeance, all we Agrafucs (for such are the members of the Combined Universities and Graduates Choir called) are working hard on a magnificent spectacle - the Second Term Concert.

But *primo*, a flashback to May, when AUCS performed David Fanshawe's *African 'tus*, and did it well, despite one late entry tasteful fade-in during an "Excerpts" performance as part of a church service. The two concerts were berry nice - nowhere near full houses, but enough people came for us to make a several-hundred dollar profit. (Profit?!? What's that?)

Secundo: Audrey's 25th Birthday Party. As all who were there can tell you, it was a ball. The dinner on Saturday night, with anecdotes from the past organised by Barbie Rennison and MC'd by Cathy Cox, was much fun (even though the woman at the Black Rose (sorry - the Funky Lady!) mutilated every song she attempted to sing) as was the concert of Vivaldi's *Gloria* and "magic moments from the past". The PCP at Barbie's was a riot. It was obvious that certain of those present had been in Hut 4, the skills gained from which they were now demonstrating to the entire company. And no description of the party would be complete without Katie's joke:

Q. How many surrealists does it take to change a light globe?
A. A fish.

Tertio: back to the present: rehearsals for the Second Term Spectacle of Mozart's *Solemn Vespers* and Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* (a stunningly beautiful work) are well under way. Peter Deane of Audrey's Birthday fame is conducting, and the huge choir of 100+ is making some lovely sounds (especially when the tenors are not that tiny bit flat!)

Plans for third term are hazy at best, but we are thinking of non-Bach-and-Handel....centenary concert under Kenneth Lay, leased from FUCS.

See you when and wherever,

Norris Carter

flinders
university



choral
society

DEAR SINGERS,
Yes, we're still alive and kicking (even if our egos are somewhat dinted) and rehearsing madly for our combined concert of Mozart's *Vespere Solemne* and Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* with AUCS and the Graduate Singers to be held on August 2nd. Though still in their embryonic stages, plans are afoot for our third term concert, which will incorporate some of the theatrical talent of the choir into a concert of "FUCS on Broadway" which hopefully will be better suited to our "young and enthusiastic sound".

Love to all from FUCS' erato correspondent, not really an old soprano.

Fay Butler

AICSA Archives

The AICSA archives are held in the National Library - more specifically, the Manuscript/Rare Book section. Although on open access, visitors must get a Reader's Ticket and use the material in the Reading Room. Nothing may be borrowed and, technically, no biro's are allowed.

The Archive covers the records of each I.V.C.F., various Minifests and AICSA documents. Some scores, ERATO and IV recordings are also held.

The material is about half catalogued. Due to staff pressures, material cannot be catalogued beyond a very elementary sorting so it is difficult to locate specific letters, etc., unless you know what folder they are in. This is where the archivist comes in - by having as full and as complete as possible.

All material for the Archive must be processed by the archivist before lodgement in order to avoid duplication, to fully catalogue it, to repair bindings and to insert any explanatory material. The Library will accept whatever we have, although I doubt that FUCS knickers would really be wanted.

Each IV is technically a sub-committee of AICSA and their records are the property of AICSA. It is, of course, understood that IV's are meaningful to each society so it is good policy to lay aside material (of all kinds) in special folders for AICSA and for your own society. A complete goody-bag, and other material, should also be put aside for the Archivist or his nominated stooge.

It is hoped that a complete catalogue and file will be made after Megafest, when I've visited the National Library. Essentially the archivist will not only control the Archive but hopefully liaise with Societies to ensure that a most valuable part of Australia's musical scene is not lost.

In the next ERATO I plan to outline further ideas and give some tips to societies. It may even be possible to publish an abbreviated Guide to Contents.

For your interest, here are some of the items held:

The 1968 Choral Catalogue Forms (my God! the stuff we have)

Scores of Catulli Carmina (Orff), 3 Steps in a Lush Lunar Foxtrot (Fox), De Profundis (de Lallande), Festival Jubilate (Nickson) and others.

Recordings of IV's number 12-16, 18-20, 23, 25-30, 33 & 34.

ERATO - about two thirds of them

28th I.V.C.F. files - correspondence, minutes, budgets, etc.

Uncatalogued material - correspondence, clippings, programs - going back to the earliest Festivals. (This material is arranged in one folder for each festival).

Noel Wilmott
AICSA Archivist

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U.W.A. Undergrad Choral Society

HELLO ALL.

What a time we've had since I last wrote "Dear Erato". *Belshazzar's Feast* was a Grande Affaire, though I can do without too many huge concerts like that where I get lost in the crowd. But yes, it was an experience, and Roy Rimmer (conductor) was dynamic and absolutely capable.

The Bach and Schutz Celebration Recital in May turned out to be lots of talking by Prof. Tunley and lots of quiet fidgeting by bored choristers. Our *Cantata Domino* was, naturally, full of joie de vivre and was received well. Collegium Musicum did some more Schutz and even some Bach, surprisingly enough, then we all charged like bulls through JSB's *Lobet den Herrn*, led by an inspiringly determined Richard Gill, and apparently all finished at the same time and on the right notes, because the audience clapped.

York Winter Festival on the June long weekend was wonderful. Most of us drove up (approx. 1 1/2 hrs) on Saturday afternoon to arrive at Tom Marwick's sister's place for spit-roasted lamb, choose a prime piece of floor space for our sleeping bags, and then went to StringyBach's bush dance held in the courtyard of an old farm. Apart from the odd bit of floodlighting and amplification, it was all very rustic; with brassieres burning warmly, lots of food and drink, swirling skirts and jigging bodies, and the occasional horse to talk to. The rest of the choir joined us the next morning, and the PUCS concert (one of 72 concerts in two days!) was Amazing. Due to various things not quite occurring as the Festival had planned, we held our warm-up virtually on the side of the road and had acquired a fair-sized admiring audience before we'd even started. Once Mass had finished (it had only got going because one PUCS member volunteered to play the organ for them) we rushed into the church to set up the concert.

St Patrick's was green inside, but it didn't really matter. The bods were packed in and listened with raptness to our *Brazilian Psalm* and *Misa Criolla*. StringyBach had a bracket and Rick Prakhoff played with his classical guitar, and it was all received with much enthusiasm. What do you do with an audience who go, "It was lovely/great/fantastic/gorgeous/perfect", when you know you made more than a few lovely/great/etc. mistakes? Well, I think the enthusiasm was also due to the delightful novelty of the venue and the festival atmosphere, as well as to PUCS' own evident enjoyment. It doesn't do for choristers to chastise themselves for making mistakes when the fact often is that they were barely noticed by the audience because both parties were Having Fun.

This was demonstrated even more clearly when we were impudent enough to repeat the *Misa Criolla* the next Monday night at StringyBach's homeground, the "Sail & Anchor" in Fremantle. We were relaxed (*speak for yourself - the Conductor*) though barely able to breathe and hold up music at the same time due to the extreme smallness of our corner of the room, and it was exhilarating. I see fun performances and a cheerful (though still professional) feeling on stage as being vital to a young choir's good reputation.

We are currently having a lovely time with *Summertime* and *The Silver Swan*, *Steal Away to Jesus* and Hamilton's *Lux Aeterna*, plus others, for our Unashamedly PUCS show on September 7. We are donating our profits (!) to Community Aid Abroad for use in Africa.

Our second annual winter camp is coming up at the end of July. This seems to have become a new PUCS tradition (*traditions grow FAST round uni choirs!*), at least, I hope it becomes one. I can't see much wrong with going away for a winter weekend to stay in a couple of little log cabins in the forest with some lovely people. Last year we found our entertainment in things like open log fires, port, communal sleeping bags and beds, 2 loaves of toast in the morning, walks in the forest, calling Ingrid "Mum" because half of us were on the booking form as children and were required to have a supervisor, and doing a lap-sit on the concrete in the sunshine while the man inspected the cabin before we went home.

So with these thoughts to warm the cockles of your little hearts, I will say "Bye Bye", and sincerely hope to see all my favourite moggies in Sydney for a mega-good-time.

Jud Horner

Tasmania University Musical Society



HE: "AWFULLY jolly concert, wasn't it? Awfully jolly Thing by that Fellow - What's his name? - something like Doorknob."

SHE: "Doorknob! Whom do you mean! I only know of Beethoven, Mozart, Wagner, Handel -"

HE: "That's it! Handel. I knew it was something you caught hold of!"

(Punch, 1898)

And an awfully jolly concert it was too! (See the Review). TUMS has not attempted anything as large as Handel's *Israel in Egypt* for quite a number of years and it was thoroughly enjoyed by all. As a rule, I.V.s provide the only opportunity for TUMS members to participate in large double chorus works.

Speaking (writing) of I.V.s, the 36th IVCF has done wonders for TUMS membership which has escalated into the seventies! We hope we can keep the momentum - going for the rest of the year.

Well, one concert down and two to go. Rehearsals for our "Evening with Sir Arthur Sullivan" concert begin on July 1st. This is going to be a costumed extravaganza in Hobart's Town Hall - a departure from usual TUMS concerts.

As for other news - a number of small engagements have crept TUMS' way: an ABC hymn recording session on radio, a performance of light hearted songs for the ladies of the C.W.A. at their annual national conference ...

The T.U.M.S. Annual Ball will be inaugurated in September - the first of many!

And finally, a small group within T.U.M.S. scooped the open choral section of the Hobart Eistedford last month!

That's all folks - short and sweet.

See you all at Megaaafestttt!

The Committee

BULLSHEET #2

THE HYMNUS PARADISI OF HERBERT HOWELLS

Herbert Howells, (1892-1983), resolved to be a composer on hearing the first performance of the *Fantasia* on a theme of Thomas Tallis by Vaughan-Williams in 1910. He studied with Charles Stanford and Charles Wood at the Royal College of Music before joining the staff there in 1920. His early works were mainly orchestral and bore the influence of Vaughan-Williams, with whom he maintained a lasting friendship. After World War Two, he concentrated on church music, becoming England's foremost liturgical composer. It is through such small anthems as *A Spotless Rose* and *Sing Lullaby* that he is best known.

The *Hymnus Paradisi* was written in 1938, in memory of his only son, Michael, who died aged nine from spinal meningitis. From this work he recieved 'release and consolation' from a great personal tragedy, just as Dvorak did through his *Stabat Mater*. Vaughan-Williams persuaded him to release the *Hymnus* - 'a personal, almost secret document' - for performance in 1950 at the Three Choirs Festival, although a 1936 *Requiem* which provided the germinal ideas for the *Hymnus* was only released in 1980.

The work is headed by two lines from Prudentius (4th Century A.D.):

Nunc suscipe, terra, fovendum,
gremioque hunc concipi molli.

(Take him, earth, for cherishing,
to thy tender breast receive him)

He subsequently set this text in 1963 to commemorate John F. Kennedy.

Howells uses an eclectic text drawn from the latin *Requiem*, the Anglican Burial Service, Psalms 23 and 121 and the Salisbury Diurnal. It is scored for tenor and soprano soli, chorus in split parts and orchestra. One of the most beautiful of twentieth-century choral scores, the piece is rhythmically dynamic and the modal-harmonic language is at all times firmly controlled and directed.

It is a work of light perpetual, illuminating the text with a musical fabric of extraordinary beauty and incandescence. Generally restrained, it does burst forth occasionally, as in the dazzling *Sanctus* and in the last movement, which depicts the eternal "home of unfading splendour" with music of great power and beauty.

There are a few works I expect to have an opportunity to sing only once in my life. Vaughan-Williams *The Pilgrim's Progress* was one. The *Hymnus Paradisi* is another.

Noel Wilmott
Convenor, 37th I.V.C.F.

SINCE MY last progress report on the 1986 Brisbane IV, the Committee has been deeply embroiled in negotiations. Much has still to be settled but we are making progress.

We are delighted that David Kram has agreed to be the festival's conductor. Mr Kram is a resident conductor with the Australian Opera and has worked extensively in the major European opera houses and in America. He is keenly interested in choral music. Qums worked with him in a Christmas concert in 1983 and was, as they say, favourably impressed.

We cannot be absolutely certain about the music yet, but we're hoping that the main work will be the beautiful *Hymnus Paradisi* by Herbert Howells. Verdi's *Four Sacred Pieces* will provide some contrast and we intend to program a short Australian work to finish the program. Noel Wilmott (our Convenor) is writing a separate article about the *Hymnus* so I won't steal his thunder but it is a truly fine piece and I'm sure you will enjoy the program.

The bad news is that our famous Concert Hall will not be available during the Festival because the organ will be being installed. We have booked Mayne Hall (in the University of Queensland) instead which has the dual advantages of being cheap and possessing good acoustics!!

This will be ^{my} last Bullsheet. I've had to resign as Liaison Officer as I expect to move interstate before long. I have no doubt that someone will be found to write Bullsheet No.3 and I intend to be back in Brisbane for the Festival.

See you there

Gavin Lamont
(recently ex-)Liaison Officer.

SCUNA



CANBERRA, Sunday June 23. SCUNA has been faring well since last report. May 3rd saw the presentation of "1685 And All That" - a musical celebration of the genius of J.S. Bach, G.F. Handel and D. Scarlatti - to a full house in St Andrew's Church. Due to the non-arrival of some of the required music, Scarlatti was celebrated in organ music alone by the capable hands and feet of Mr Peter Young. For more on the concert, see Val Thomson's review.

ANU was twice again fortunate to have superb musical decoration at graduation ceremonies provided by SCUNA - an easy way to perform (if only briefly) to a full concert hall (at the School of Music). 'Tis a pity the response from the audience was so weak...

SCUNA has suffered from the dreaded post-first-term-concert-dieback, but has some new faces as well. The programme for the August 3rd concert is one of 16th C. French, Italian and English music and 20th C. music of the same countries which draws on those ideas.

At last count, the SCUNA contingent for Sydney Minifest was 17... See you there

Mike Strasser

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Minifests and IVCFs

DEAR ERATO,

26-6-85

As Convenor of the 1985 Choral Minifest I read with interest James Harland's letter in Erato 45. I understand that this discussion about the status and role of Minifests in the Intervarsity Choral scene was prompted in part by the rejection of a planned Minifest in Melbourne in 1986 by the last AIVCC meeting.

I would like to add to the discussion by explaining why we decided to have a minifest in Sydney this year.

The Sydney Minifest was suggested in late 1983 by members of the SUMS Committee. We had completed a very successful year; our major concert, *Handel's Israel in Egypt* had been conducted by Peter Seymour, and had attracted a large choir and an excellent audience. We wanted to build on this experience. We had the numbers and the expertise, and Peter was very keen to work with us again.

So one of our motives was the challenge.

The other was, of course, the fun.

With 20 months between Hobart IV and Brisbane IV we anticipated the need to get together with our beloved interstate choristers, and to show them a good time, Sydney Style.

Our Minifest is being billed as "A project of the Sydney University Musical Society", and we see it as an extension of what SUMS has been doing over the last couple of years. I think that the distinction between IV's and Minifests, i.e. that Minifests are not directly supervised or controlled by AICSA, is a very important one.

Individual societies must be free to mount their own concerts, festivals and social events. This is not to say that AICSA's involvement in IV's is unnecessary. I would suggest however that the AICSA Constitution not be altered to embrace Minifests, or Microfests as successfully staged by Adelaide. The next step would be for AICSA to oversee the running of every concert mounted by any of its member societies!!!

Anyway the proof of the pudding is in the raging - we'll see you in August.

Joy Sharpe

EDITOR'S REPLY:

While not suggesting that AICSA should play Big Brother in the matter of concert scheduling, I think there is good argument why AICSA should be a clearing-house as far as timing Minifests and IV's is concerned. After all, it would be nonsensical for AICSA to sit back and say nothing when there is a conflict of interests, however perceived, between an IV and a Minifest. Agreed, individual societies should be able to plan Minifests and similar events, but why not do so with the active approval of the societies you wish to invite rather than undermining (of course not deliberately) other planned projects. IVCF's need to be planned several years in advance, so why not plan your minifests with as much forethought and just check with AICSA that your projected dates don't clash?

From a personal point of view, I confess that attending Minifests is beyond the budget of most of us at remote distances, and this had led me (mea Erato 46 - 6

culpa, mea maxima culpa!) to forget entirely about it - to the extent that I had planned next PUCS concert date slap bang in the middle of Sydney Minifest! Our concert has since been moved to accommodate the two or three PUCS members who can afford to travel to Sydney, but it just goes to show that SUMS, at least, can "oversee the running" of PUCS concerts!

This sort of "give-and-take" is necessary in planning any sort of festival, and AICSA is the logical forum for this to take place.

Records and Cassettes

DEAR ERATO,

22-6-85

We are writing because we are concerned that the editorial in Erato 45 might be taken too seriously. Although Rob makes some valid points, much of what he says is not supported by the facts.

One could justifiably propose "Nothing but the best" as an IV motto. Conductor, music, orchestra, soloists, parties - everything should be the best possible. Participants have come to expect it, committees aim for no less, and, if we ignore Camp Carlton's mushy peas, they achieve it. Whilst it is true that cassette technology has advanced tremendously, the quality of reproduction, even using expensive tapes and Dolby noise reduction, is noticeably less than that available on record. And incidentally, PUCS' experience has been that chromium dioxide tapes and bulk copiers do not go well together.

Rob also states that IV records cost more "than a commercial recording of the same programme". This simply is not true. Commercial records have been \$12-14 for a single L.P. for a couple of years now, a price which compares unfavourably with Sydney IV's \$15 for two records, or Melbourne's \$9 for one. The cost comparison looks even worse when you remember that, to cover the whole IV programme, you would almost invariably have to buy several commercial records. And what about works not yet recorded commercially, such as the *Berger Brazilian Psalm*, *Dollarhide Three Poems of Bertholt Brecht* and *Hamilton Lux Aeterna*?

Production of recordings seems to be one of those jobs which no-one is very keen on doing. This even applies to local societies - MUCS' recording of the second term concert last year was not available till January, whilst PUCS took till March to bring out tapes of their corresponding concert. This and the "we're sick of organising things" syndrome Rob mentions is probably the major reason IV recordings take so long to produce, with the difficulties in record production making only a small additional contribution. In support of this, it is interesting to note that, although they were released simultaneously interstate, those of us lucky enough to be in Melbourne could buy copies of their record several months before the tape was available. If the reason that recordings appear late is that records are difficult to organise, surely Melbourne would have released their tape well before the record.

Going on Perth IV's experience, IV's (especially the smaller ones) just do not have enough clout to have much influence on the record companies. We were in contact with a representative who wanted to help us but couldn't as we could not afford to produce 2x250 records. He stated that he knew of numerous small groups like us who were prevented from producing records by their size. We are not the only ones missing out. Perhaps AICSA could find a company who

would be willing to do a smaller press run for a reasonable fee if they knew that this was an annual order which they would receive every year.

So, the reason that recordings are out late is that making them is not in anyone's portfolio and most people are not very keen on the job, especially after the effort involved in organising an IV. Going for second-best in a cassette would not solve the problem. A problem which Tasmania IV also appear to be suffering. In spite of their having planned from the outset to produce a tape, we have now been waiting for five months. We suggest that the solution would be for future IV committees to include an "IV Memorabilia Officer" who, as well as taking care of T-shirts, badges and so forth, could, with the aid of AICSA, organise a record company well before IV, and then carry through the job after IV.

Yours sincerely,

Jeff Kepert
Ros Lawson

EDITOR'S REPLY:

I cannot agree more strongly with the arguments put forward in your last two paragraphs. However there are three points to your argument I cannot allow to stand without comment.

First, your implication that IV cassette duplication is anything other than of the highest quality. 35th IVCF cassettes were duplicated at "real-time" speed from a digital master recording onto fifty separate hi-fi decks, each separately EQed and controlled. The cassettes used were Ampex Grand Master, arguably the highest quality ferric oxide tapes available. This aside, the job of producing these IV recordings could have been completed within a fortnight of the end of the IV.

The real problem with IV Records is that there are delays possible over which even the most conscientious IV Officer can have little or no control. Firstly, quality of the technician's work. I was in partnership with Jim Bonnefin, another ex-SUMS chorister, for several years in the record-making business. We constantly ran into problems with quality control due to technicians' errors - even to the extent of receiving 31st IVCF records with the hole off-centre! We had no control either over delays caused by record companies "shelving" all the small custom jobs to make way for the latest hit album. This does cause delays of up to four months.

However, on a more positive note, IVCF has had a good working relationship for over a decade now with Jim Bonnefin of Bonn Recording Enterprises of Chatswood NSW, so he would be the logical person to approach on this matter - provided you don't try any rip-offs!



35th IntersVarsity Choral Festival
PERTH 1984

This is a plea for you to send the balance owing on your splendiferous double-cassettes as soon as possible.

Send to 35th IVCF c/o
66 Marlow Street,
Wembley. 6014.

We'd love to close our books!



MONASH UNIVERSITY CHORAL SOCIETY

THIS HALF-YEAR has been one of ups and ups. Things started well in O-Week (as you may have heard): lots of freshers and a brand new conductor! Introducing Mr André de Quadros, late of La Trobe, Salzburg, Vienna, Bombay, Minnesota, etc., etc. He is in fact Indian, and "extremely" talented at all sorts of things, he also knows more rounds than is good for him (and us).

Anyway, our first event of the year was the 1,000-voice, multi-instrumented, mega-cannonaded, Richard Divall-conducted "Victoria Victoria" concert to commemorate the state's 150th birthday. The highlight was the 1812 Overture with 40 second basses and Phil Spector effects - ripping stuff.

At our 1st Term camp at a converted (perverted?) convent outside the city, we held our own uni exams for the degree of B.A. (MonUCS). Once you scored 72 points, you got the degree (as at Monash). One of the best questions was, Finish this poem: "There was a young tenor named Simon...". For those who didn't quite make it to 72 (or those who did), there were supps and honours questions.

Our concert was one of contrasts, ranging from song-bookstuff through string quartets to the Purcell Te Deum for St Cecilia's Day - good, not hard, well-received for its variety: soli, choir, orch, lots of trumpets and drums. The major work was Mozart's Solemn Vespers of the Confessor, a difficult work but very rewarding, with a glorious solo in the middle for soprano with vocal backing and instrumental riffs - real Top 40 stuff. The night was nothing short of a roaring success. Good Variety of programming, fine singing, good acoustics; it was great.

The next big bash is the September concert, with Haydn's Theresa Mass (not your average Haydn mass) and RVW's Dona Nobis Pacem in Robt Blackwood Hall. That is on the 21st, and to keep us amused before then, we are putting on a humorous concert, "Filly Fongs" on July 24th. In the meantime, there has been the odd party or two or five. The MonUCS Soprano Aria for Tenors and Basses was a huge success, this year's competitors far outstripping last year's effort. The Microfest was generally a great hit (isn't this getting platitudinous!).

Likewise all Melbournians had a great time in Adelaide at Easter even tho' I didn't get to have a spa... Everyone can't wait to go to ~~Baby~~ Sydney to see Elijah. This all goes to show, I feel, that people's enthusiasm for i-v events thrives with use. Rather than limit interstate activities "so as not to use it up" we should encourage more such events.

Anyway time to go, my eyes are starting to glaze. Last Saturday's party has taken its toll, and the visit by Cathy R and Ali J from S.A. left us delighted but exhausted (Flat 6 - the new force in riotous living) and next weekend is the MUCS Camp and the NEXT weekend is the MonUCS Camp then our Filly Confert (do drop in). I think I'd better start thinking of some good epitaphs...

Alistair Killick

Ken and the Art of Motor-Cycle Mai

(THE SCENE: Sydney, an outer suburb of San Francisco. GLADYS STARTLINGROPE, convenor, ringmistress and heavily-debauched raconteur of (raconteuse, surely?) of Megastar Economics and Aural Sex Division (a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Mongolian Fuselage Corporation, currently being towed out to sea in the wake of HMAS *Steaming Laundromat*, a biologically-powered alto carrier) takes counsel with a number of her aides, research assistants and mezzo-baritones. They all make comments highly characteristic of themselves, but some of these have been heavily edited or rendered completely inaudible in order to avoid offence, libel suits, etc.).

STARTLINGROPE: What about a tenor-climbing competition??

TREVOR MORNINGSTAR: (a horribly-talented scribe and conductor) What prizes did you have in mind, dear?

STARTLINGROPE: A fortnight in Tweed Heads with the accompanist of your choice?

GEOFFREY LANGLAND: (an immensely impressive moustache attached to a powerfully-built sunburn) Why not baritones? Baritones are much more fun.

MATTHEW TRIMBOLE: That depends on their lower register, dear.

STARTLINGROPE: How low can you get, Matthew?

TRIMBOLE: Oh very. But only at weekends.

LANGLAND: I think the prize should be...ultimate enlightenment!

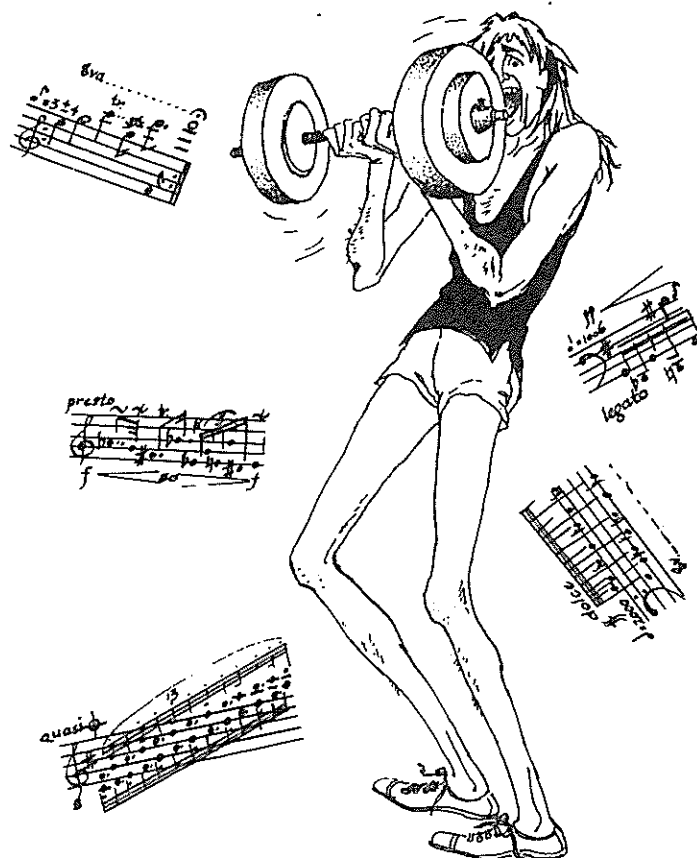
MORNINGSTAR: Is that the same as a fortnight in Tweed Heads?

STARTLINGROPE: Only if you can really respect each other.

(At this point there was a sudden power strike, and the Departmental polaroid declared itself overexposed and subject to overtime bans.

MEANWHILE,... BACK at another quite different situational interface, quietly-bearded supremo BRUCE OBLONG waves his arms madly in all directions as O.R.A.T.O.R.I.O. attempt to sing *Carmina Belshazzar* in a number of keys, while his radiant consort CARISSIMA lurks purposefully in the background trying (and succeeding) to coax polyphonic harmonies out of O.R.A.T.O.R.I.O.'s youngest-ever tenor soloist.)

OBLONG: Just remember that the audience hasn't got the benefit of subtitles. And no singing in

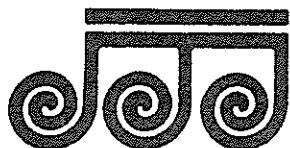


Braille, either.

(Responding powerfully and instantaneously, the choir gathers itself into a screaming holocaust of vocal aerobics that rips the firmament asunder in an E minor chord that lays waste several adjoining suburbs, wafts AUSTRALIA II loose from its moorings and halfway across the main dining hall in Royal Perth Yacht Club and blasts a gaping chasm in the opposite wall of the rehearsal room, through which O.R.A.T.O. R.I.O.'s motorized piano chugs purposefully across the rubble-filled flooring to its accustomed position. Its intrepid PILOT removes his flying goggles and exclaims apologetically:)

PILOT: (Intrepidly, yet apologetically) Sorry about the dramatic entrance, everybody. I was held up in the library.

(Several SOPRANOS faint with excitement and the SOLOISTS forget their lines.)



SYDNEY UNIVERSITY
MUSICAL SOCIETY

SUMS HAS been a scene of much fine singing and frenetic social activity. Our first project for the year was our Lent Term concert, the programme being: Tallis *Te lucis ante terminum* and *Sermone blando Angelus*, Bach cantata *Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir BWV29*, and Handel's *Four Coronation Anthems*. The soli on the Bach were James Bonnefin, Kate Smiley and our own Anne Fish and Mark \$1.20.

Erato 46 - 8

The great sounding Orchestra was culled from the SSO and the Elizabethan Sydney Orchestra. All these forces skillfully conducted by Maestro Ben Macpherson. The choir numbered 100 on the night of the performance, 27th April, and a full house in the Great Hall experienced a fine evening of music making.

The post-Concert party was held at Rosemary Williams place and featured a mix-and-match clothing session before we were persuaded by the police to leave at 3.00am. The party wandered over to Eve Killick's and wound down to one blanket, two pairs of feet and snores reputedly from the Treasurer and the Ovos editor, (Stephen Schafer and Anita Valentine !). With one week's R & R we set out again on the merry rehearsing way.

Maintenance

Part 19B

And what of our other plotlines?

Well may you ask. For the record:

C.O.L.D.T.U.N.A. are still dreaming reminiscent
dreams of recently-concluded glories and plotting
their next triumphant incursion into show bizness.

F.I.A.T.L.U.X. are still practising their communal clarinet and hoping that it still goes toodle-oodle-oodle-oo, or something.

B.I.S.T.R.O.S. are preparing for next year's choralthon and trying to come to terms with their political geography.

M.U.F.S. and their many and diverse cohorts are still wondering about Zaphod the Priest and why anyone would want to sing about him in North Melbourne.

Our Mighty Sage KEN is still playing with the star-board motor on a brand new choral starship that will revolutionise the transport industry, and

The august, serene, totally relaxed and 12 1/2% value-added Dr IRVING B. COWARD beams seraphically over all and sundry and wishes them all an extremely comforting new financial year's everything.

Do these facts have anything to do with each other?

Are we there yet?

Is the POPE a washing machine? .

Who knows, except for....

O.R.A.T.O.R.I.O. - a.k.a. the Organisation of Rabid
Altonative Tenors Orgiastically Rampant in the
Indian Ocean;

C.O.L.D.T.U.N.A. - a.k.a. the Choir Occasionally
Lavishly Depicted on Television, Usually Nationally
Appreciated;


F.I.A.T.L.U.X. - a.k.a. *Flinders Incorporating
Adelaide's Total Lifestyle with Unavoidable Exces-
siveness;*

B.I.S.T.R.O.S. - a.k.a. *Brisbanites In Search of a Totally Relaxed Organisational Structure*;

and of course assorted MUFS, MonMURFS, MEGASTARS and other layabouts. Like...

David Greagg

Our next projected concert is to be presented on Friday July 12th. The main works are Bruckner's *E minor Mass* and motet *Ecce Sacerdos*, Schutz's *Psalm 150* (of Hobart IV fame) and *Herr Jesus Christus* and Monteverdi's *Chime* (?) and *Exultent caeli* (of Melbourne IV fame). These are to be accompanied, where appropriate, by organ, brass and wind. While appearing a daunting programme, rehearsals have been going well and we are hoping for another successful concert and another full house (...for Bruckner??!! asks Eve ?).

After a small rest for the rest of July SUMS will be launched into full time preparations for the choral event of the 1985-6 Financial Year... 

Nobody in Adelaide 'Came Out' to hear the AYO

by ADRIAN KENYON

by ADRIAN KENYON

THERE WAS precious little opportunity to hear any live music during a recent Music Board conference I attended in Adelaide in May. As is usual with these sorts of things, it was a case of talking and listening to other people talk.

However, thanks to the board's generosity we were able to take a break one lunchtime to attend a concert by one of our finest musical ensembles — the Australian Youth Orchestra. And what a memorable hour it turned out to be!

The conference, incidentally, coincided with the Come Out Festival — a gathering of youth groups in all areas of the performing arts.

What made the concert at Adelaide Town Hall such a thrilling event was the playing of 14-year-old violinist Adele Anthony. To be playing with such power and depth of feeling at her age is remarkable and here surely is someone destined for international fame in the years ahead.

Despite the reputation of Adele and the AYO, the audience was disappointingly small in Adelaide, as in fact they were for all the orchestra's concerts in this festival.

In fact, it was so bad that the orchestra had to cancel two of its planned eight concerts for lack of bookings. And percussionist David Pye

— one of the WA contingent I recognised on stage — told me later that the musicians were feeling a little downhearted.

According to AYO administrator Michael Ellwood, the Come Out festival did not live up to its name.

"It's ironic," he said. "When we came for the Festival of Arts we performed for 12,000 and had to turn away 18,000. What has changed in Adelaide since 1982?"

"The AYO filled the Albert Hall in London last year. It has had rhapsodic full houses all over the world and yet in Adelaide we had to cancel ... performances for lack of interest. The bookings we had were only about 40 percent of capacity. It was desperately disappointing."

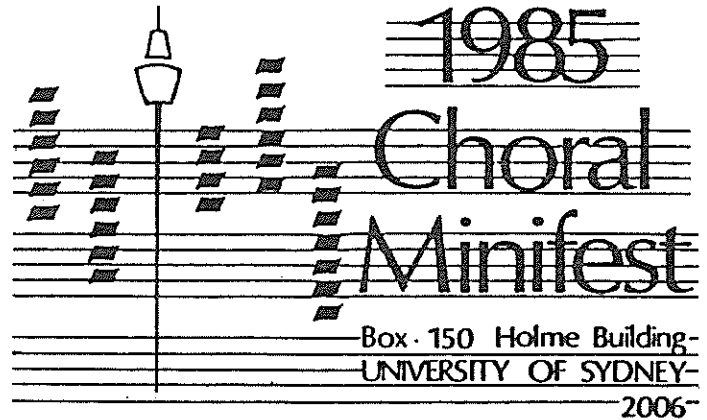
"We feel ashamed of Adelaide for letting us down like this," said 19-year-old orchestra leader Joanna Lewis.

"We worked hard to present an exciting programme. We rehearsed six hours a day and people didn't want to hear us."

This situation wasn't much different from that two years ago when the AYO came to Perth for the 1985 Festival of Perth.

At the time Festival director David Blenkinsop complained bitterly about the lack of response from the Perth public, but it was to little avail. Does anyone know what the answer is?

MUSIC MAKER, JULY/AUGUST



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A CONCERT NOT TO BE MISSED

We hope to see ALL of you there !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Lots of love,

Phillip and Rita



Queensland University Musical Society

HELLO AGAIN from the Deep North. In the last thrilling episode - oops, Eraticle I reported on our Orientation Concert-by-pressure-lamp-light and our singing at the (then) most newsworthy graduation of the year when our fearless leader, Joh, received his Doctorate in Industrial Relations.

Now read on...

First the most important news of the semester. Lots of lovely new members came along to join us when the electricity came back on. We now include lots and lots of altos (hurrah) and many new basses. We have joined the ranks of choral normalcy - we have only six tenors in a choir of over sixty. Best of all, the new members seem to like us and have kept coming week by week (hurrah).

All of this in spite of a somewhat controversial graduation ceremony we were to sing at. Our conductor (and resident composer) Colin Brumby wrote a piece called *Great is truth and mighty above all things*. That seemed a bit of a mouthful so he referred to it as "Gitamaat". The text is based on the apocryphal quotations carved above the entrances to the main building on campus. The conclusion featured two choirs singing "and the people shouted and said", with the various voices interjecting and giving a vivid impression of a shouting crowd. The coda reveals that they were shouting "great is truth and mighty above all things".

Little did we realise how prophetic that text was to be. The controversy surrounding the University's awarding an honorary doctorate to Joh was sharpened by the electricity dispute. Even though our fearless leader managed to get the flu and couldn't come, a large crowd gathered outside the hall to protest. The University's hall has plate glass windows down one side, so the people protesting could see what was happening in the hall and those inside could see the crowd outside. Those outside discovered that if you thump on plate glass you make a lot of noise. Two large panes broke because of the thumping, which let more noise in. And inside the choirs sang over and over "and the people shouted and said".

We were all relieved when it was over. Many of us set off immediately to Toowoomba 140kms west of Brisbane to convalesce (?) at a rehearsal camp for our world premiere concert. Others joined us the next morning.

The camp was notable for a very good attendance, nature study and the number 35. Many of us were delighted on the Sunday morning to discover that at one spot where there was a spectacular view of the valley below, there was a koala up in a tree just level with us and only a few feet away. He (or perhaps he was she) looked at us once then studiously ignored us. Now the Brumby cantata were rehearsing, *The Vision and The Gap*, doesn't mention Alan Cunningham looking at a koala but it does tell that "an eagle hovers in circles", so our nature study on that Sunday morning was complete when we saw living proof of this axiom.

Erato 46 - 10

Next the Eraticle must mention the concert - because it happened next. We started with Dvorak's *Te Deum* which was a good rowdy piece and great fun although at times the score was Brass 1; Choir Nil. By the way, did you spot the deliberate error in the last thrilling Eraticle? Of course Colin Brumby has written a *Te Deum*. After interval there was the World Premiere of *The Vision and The Gap*. Now I don't know what the Erato Critic will tell you, but I thought the piece was super - a typical Brumby piece: tuneful, well placed in the voices and... well, singable. Moreover it sounded good.

The work was almost operatic in conception and called for a costumed performance. If only we had been able to organise it. As it was the bass soloist, Michael Leighton-Jones (of The Scholars fame) arranged on the night to wear a scarlet uniform jacket to sing the part of Governor Macquarie. He convinced the alto soloist, Gloria Eiser, who was singing the part of Mrs Macquarie to join him at the rear of the hall. Before the soloists sing, the choir are the ladies and gentlemen of the colony, waiting for the Governor to arrive and singing to a march tune:

"Sweep down and curtsy,
Sweep down entirely ...
Snap your heels smartly,
Slap your sides clearly ...
His Excellency's here."

And while we thus sang the Governor and his wife processed down the aisle and up to the stage to take their places.

As they decided on this touch of theatre after the last rehearsal, it surprised all of us on stage! But it was just what the piece wanted.

How else can I tell you about the piece? You really need to hear it for yourself. Thanks to the miracles of modern technology ... if you carefully place your copy of Erato in your CD player with this page uppermost ... you can burn holes in this Eraticle! This will not help you to hear *The Vision and the Gap*, but it will give you a vision of a gap!

After that, how can you wait for the next exciting Eraticle from QUMS? You could try distracting yourself by going to Minifest. See you there!

Yours in harmony,

Bill Abrahams



Music Board of the Australia Council

TABLE 1

FUNDING BY STATE ARTS FUNDING AUTHORITIES

	PROFESSIONAL		AMATEUR		% of Total Music Grants
	Grants	Value	Grants	Value	
NSW	1	27,000	11	5,850	1.74
QLD	2	1,100	10	4,000	.22
SA	-	-	6	11,600	.84
TAS	-	-	-	-	-
VIC	-	-	29	101,200	7.0
ACT	-	-	5	11,900	8.94
WA	-	-	5	7,350	1.45
TOTAL	3	28,100	66	141,900	

THERE HAS been a great deal of debate recently about changes in arts funding policy—particularly with regard to the Music and Theatre Boards of the Australia Council.

In their funding allocations both boards did not increase funding to major companies and gave greater support to "community" music and theatre.



The following report outlines sections of a "draft medium-range plan for the development of choral and vocal ensemble music in Australia, as formulated by the Music Board of the Australia Council (20-3-85). Overall implementation of the plan requires an increase of funding through the Music Board of 85% in real terms, and a redistribution of Board funds so that opera receives a smaller share."

PURPOSE "To support the development of a continuum of choral and vocal ensemble activities, beginning with children and working through to community and professional performance of the greatest excellence, and to restore and increase public appreciation, support, and participation."

"The human voice is the primary musical instrument: universally available, inexpensive, portable, wide range of sizes and colours. Concerted vocal music is basic to all musical cultures, and at present is ubiquitous in our own popular music. And yet the choral and vocal ensemble traditions are fading in Australia. The action proposed will reverse this trend and restore vitality to the vocal tradition."

"As a matter of definition, choral and vocal ensemble music for purposes of this plan includes music of excellence in any musical style. It is not confined to 'Classical' music."

STRATEGIES

a) "By encouraging and/or supporting the provision of improved training for singers, teachers, and choral conductors and trainers."

b) "By encouraging and/or supporting increased opportunities for choral and vocal ensemble activities for children and youth, in the schools and in communities, through provision of adequately trained conductors and teachers, and resources of time, facilities, and materials."

c) "By supporting an improvement in the quality and quantity of activity on the community level, and its integration with related youth activities and with the professional level."

d) "By supporting the development of professional opportunities for singers and conductors of vocal ensemble and choral music, and through the achievement of excellence in artistry, presentation, and marketing, to build audiences nationally and internationally."

e) "At all levels, to encourage the commissioning and performance of Australian repertoire."

SINGERS "The emphasis in tertiary vocal training is upon preparation for an operatic career. In some institutions, choral or non-operatic vocal ensemble music is not taken particularly seriously. This is not altogether inappropriate, since in recent years, a career in non-operatic vocal music has been tantamount to impossible in Australia. However, if such a career is now to become possible, there is no longer good reason for the teaching institutions to downgrade this art form. Opportunities for appropriate training should now be provided, and choral and vocal ensemble activities should assume a more important place in the curriculum."

The Board will seek the co-operation of tertiary institutions in the implementation of the plan by:

- "Making participation in choral or vocal ensemble music mandatory for all tertiary music students;"
- "Instituting special course provisions for singers wishing to pursue non-operatic vocal careers."

CONDUCTORS "Community and professional activities are impaired by the lack of properly trained conductors. Most groups owe their existence to a particular conductor who has taken the initiative in forming them." "With inadequately trained conductors, groups are formed and fail, or survive but may be of poor quality and small interest."

The Board will seek "the co-operation of tertiary institutions to provide broad opportunities for the acquisition of basic conducting and training skills" and will "support the provision of opportunities for the conductors of community choirs or vocal ensembles to up-grade their conducting and training skills, knowledge of repertoire etc. Such opportunities could be provided by tertiary institutions as part-time courses or short-term intensive sessions, or by specialised institutions or professional associations."

TEACHERS The Board will "seek the co-operation of teacher training institutions and education departments to improve in-service and pre-service teacher training."

FUNDING "Music Board support has been low, and has gone primarily to large metropolitan choruses."

1982-83 - \$ 64,337 (.68% of total budget)

1983-84 - \$120,445 (1.23% of total budget)

"Funding responsibility for choral and vocal ensemble music is shared between federal and state authorities, and given the magnitude of the needs, such a partnership will continue to be necessary." The Board will therefore "collaborate with state funding authorities in upgrading the standards of community choral and vocal ensemble activities, especially through assisting in the provision of professional conductors or up-grading of skills of resident amateur conductors and increasing access to more diverse repertoire. Priority will be given to supporting improvements to the a capella chorus or ensemble; it is not intended to allocate funds for the provision of orchestra. Although the need for orchestral support is recognised, it is beyond the capacity of the projected budget." They will "encourage and provide limited support to the best quality choirs or vocal ensembles, to tour in order to stimulate local activity."

Expenditure by state arts funding authorities are shown in Table 1.

"Although projected resources will not be adequate to professionalise the large choirs, assistance should be given for the employment of professional conductors and soloists so that they may achieve the best possible standards under the circumstances."

"It is proposed that within this medium range plan resources should be provided for the establishment and maintenance of small professional vocal ensembles." Funds will "be distributed between states roughly according to population, interest, and need, and the quality of proposals advanced."

BUDGET SUMMARY

Community choirs and ensembles	\$280,000
Tertiary and community tours	20,000
Professional vocal ensembles	325,000
International tours	25,000
10 traineeships for conductors/singers	100,000
Youth choir support	70,000
Specialist music courses	15,000
	<hr/>
	835,000

Sydney University Musical Society

conducted by Ben Macpherson.
Kate Smiley (Soprano), Anne Fish
(Alto), James Bonnefin (Tenor),
Mark Dolahenty (Bass).

The capacity audience at SUMS' "Happy 300th Birthday! Bach and Handel" concert in the Great Hall on 'Wet Saturday' 27th April should go a long way to dispelling fears that rain is synonymous with the stay-at-home syndrome.

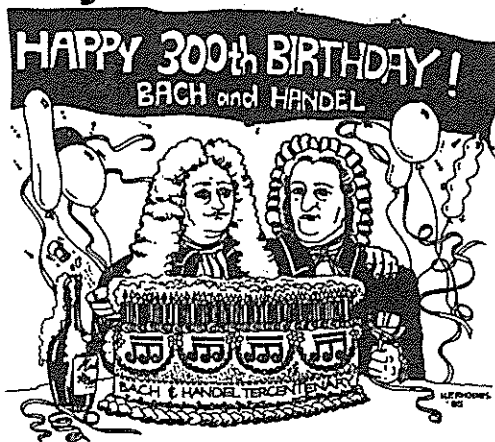
Of greater significance was the observation that SUMS was sporting a choir of almost 100 voices, and the superb sight of this choir brought back happy memories of those halcyon early '70s days when, under Peter Seymour's direction, SUMS was introducing major choral works to Sydney audiences - university choral music is alive and well in Sydney!

The concert had a surprisingly slow start (almost certainly due to late arrivals and the weather), with only eight minutes of music in the first half hour. However, the two short unaccompanied motets by Tallis - who merited inclusion in this programme because 1985 marks the quadracentenary of his death - fully demonstrated the abilities of the choral forces, and provided an excellent aperitif for the two major works.

The choir was joined by the so-called 'SUMS Orchestra' for the rest of the concert - an orchestra that included some of Australia's leading musicians from both the Sydney Symphony and Elizabethan Sydney Orchestras. What a coup! I have no doubt that the stability provided by these players contributed significantly to the confidence of the choir throughout the Bach and Handel works.

The Sinfonia to Bach's Cantata No29, "Wir danken dir, Gott", amply demonstrated the capabilities of the orchestra, and the choir responded admirably in the opening chorale. The soloists, however, did not succeed fully with the follow-through, with only one, Anne Fish (what a great asset she is to the SUMS altos!), managing to sing God's praises with anything like conviction. James Bonnefin gave a competent, professional performance that possibly lacked a little excitement, but I regret the vocal limitations of the other soloists were too well exposed in such telling music.

The second half of the programme consisted of Handel's four Coronation Anthems which, after a fairly modest start in *Zadok the Priest*, provided us with some excellent



choral singing that would have done any choir in Australia proud.

I'm not sure if it was the slowness of the tempo or unsympathetic attention to dynamics, but the expectation of the orchestral introduction to *Zadok* leading into the 'first mighty choral entry' (programme notes) was not realised, and surprisingly, I felt the choir to be overpowered by the orchestra throughout this anthem.

Things were different in *My heart is inditing*. Despite the awkward placement of soloist groups within the choir, the choruses floated magically above the orchestra to provide some truly memorable music. Highlights occurred in the ethereal chorus "Let justice and judgement" from the anthem *Let Thy hand be strengthened*, and the well deserved climax of the concert came with the choruses "Glory and great worship" and "Thou hast prevented Him" from the final anthem *The King shall rejoice*.

The force behind the concert was undoubtedly conductor Ben Macpherson, who I am sure has now established himself as a conductor and choral trainer of significance in Sydney. He portrayed a great understanding of the choral and orchestral requirements, and there was no doubt that the choir had benefited from a demanding rehearsal period, singing works that were well chosen and thoroughly prepared.

David Goodwin

● ODD SPOT

An Englishman fined \$230 for playing his piano at night says he won't pay and will go to jail. "If there is a good piano I am sure the inmates will enjoy my entertainment," he said. He plays mostly Chopin.

A Fair Degree of Success.

SCUNA's first term concert, 1685 and all that, drew a capacity audience at St Andrew's Church on Friday May 3. Under new conductor Mark Hyman the choir of 51, accompanied by orchestra and organ, presented an ambitious programme with a fair degree of success.

As the title suggests, the concert featured works by Bach, Handel and Scarlatti. It opened with Bach's cantata *Du Hirte Israel, höre*, and from the first chorus, which featured some intricate vocal writing, the choir was accurate and flexible, and produced a lovely fresh-voiced sound. These qualities were maintained throughout the evening. The balance was good, despite the dearth of male voices - only a quarter of the choir.

Most of the soloists for the concert were drawn from the choir, a practice which gives choristers valuable experience and which, in music of this period or earlier, can give rise to an appropriate purity and continuity of tone. With so many arias of a sustained and demanding character, however, some singers were overtaxed. The disparity between their performance and that of the vigorous and disciplined choir, supported by the polished - if cold - orchestra was disturbing.

The orchestra was assembled especially for the concert, and played with great accuracy but, I felt, not much responsiveness. Cost always limits the number of orchestral rehearsals: instrumentalists come along at the last minute and never quite match the spirit of the other performers. Still, this was a good group and it achieved, for the most part, an appropriate balance with the singers.

Organist Peter Young gave enjoyable, clear-cut performances of three short Scarlatti sonatas and Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in C minor* (BWV 546). After interval came a second Bach cantata, *Liebster Gott wann werd' ich sterben*, demonstrating much the same strengths and weakness as the opening work. The concert ended with one of Handel's *Chandos Anthems*, *Let God Arise*. To me, this performance was the high point of the evening: the direct and dramatic nature of the work seemed to give confidence to the solo movements, and the choir had more to sing.

I congratulate SCUNA, and look forward to its second term concert on August 3, when we are to hear mostly unaccompanied music.

Val Thomson

Ambitious Handel project uplifting

THE ABC Odeon was the venue on Saturday night for a most ambitious undertaking by the Tasmanian Conservatorium of Music.

The work which brought together the Conservatorium Choral, the Tasmania University Musical Society and the Conservatorium Orchestra under the baton of Edward Talbot was the oratorio *Israel in Egypt* by Georg Friedrich Handel.

To hear Handel's magnificent choruses sung by a large choir can be an uplifting experience and on this occasion the audience was not disappointed. The opportunity to enjoy this music is not a common one and the experience was

enhanced by Edward Talbot's knack of enabling great choral music to speak for itself.

It is remarkable that two choirs could be so well moulded into one chorus without the usual clash of timbre and conflict of diction. There were moments when the diction was lost and there was some difficulty experienced in synchronising the "T" sound, particularly in the fifth chorus.

The choir is to be congratulated on its performance throughout the work and although there were so many good choruses, perhaps special mention should be made of the

fourth chorus in which the "hailstones", "rain" and "fire" were so effective.

In only one section of the work did the choir seem to be stretched beyond its capability, which was in the chorus-duet "*The Lord Is A Man Of War*".

On the whole the orchestra played well, although violin intonation occasionally produced shudders. Julian Bush is to be complimented for his rapid changes between bassoon and contra-bassoon.

The soloists, Penelope Bruce, mezzo soprano, Valerie Pennefather, soprano, and Graeme Wall, tenor, all performed with professional grace and authority. Penelope Bruce was quite outstanding in the air "*The Land Brought Forth*".

— REG CHAPMAN.

Gill gives choir a warmer tone

A HOMAGE to the two great German composers, Heinrich Schutz and J.S. Bach, was performed at the Octagon Theatre on May 27 by the University Collegium Musicum and the University Undergraduate Choir, both conducted by Richard Gill.

The choirs had the task of illustrating Professor David Tunley's lucid and entertaining description of the life and times of the two composers.

For many in the audience it was their first opportunity to see the new dean of the WA Conservatorium in action. A feature of his work is the incisive attack in contrapuntal entries and the flexible shaping of phrases without losing impetus or allowing the textures to become muddled.

The Collegium Musicum is already showing the benefits of his leadership, developing a warmer tone; but balance between the parts is still a problem. There is a distinct disparity in quality between the male and female voices, especially in the upper registers.

PUCS opened the proceedings with *Cantate Domine* by Schutz. This was a lively performance with some lovely shading and exciting climaxes, but the men were patchy in the early stages.

Collegium Musicum's main offering in the first half was Schutz's *German Magnificat* for double choir. If there are any vocal limitations in a choir, this sort of work will show them up; and this happened with some unfortunate exposed high entries for the tenors and basses. The louder passages and the rapid antiphonal effects, on the other hand, came off very well.

Both choirs combined to give a very satisfying performance of Bach's unaccompanied motet *Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden*.

Once again there was superb attack, with clarity maintained throughout the flowing melismatic passages. Lightness of texture was a feature even though there were 115 voices. Dynamics were beautifully controlled especially in the contrasting choral passages.

Because of its dry acoustic properties, the Octagon is notoriously unsympathetic to choral music. It will be very interesting to hear these two choirs in the new auditorium at the Conservatorium, where there is a warm resonance which adds bloom to unaccompanied singing.

— MUSIC MAKER, JULY/AUGUST

A Varied, but Over-Taxing Concert

FLINDERS UNIVERSITY CHORAL SOCIETY presented a concert of folksongs from England, Germany, Hungary and the West Indies, along with the Geographical Fugue by Toch in the acoustically and aesthetically pleasing St John's Church (Halifax St., City).

On the whole the choir gave a vital, interesting concert despite the criticisms to follow. The society has grown this year and is obviously an enthusiastic choir. FUCS is directed by Kenneth Lay, who in this his second year with the group, is developing a degree of flair and confidence unusual in the conductor of an amateur group.

The audience particularly appreciated the Geographical Fugue, (which is spoken music, or *Gesprochene Musik*) and the six West Indian folk songs. These were the undoubted highlights of the choral part of the concert. They were successful because although demanding, their less formal style is suited to FUCS, which is made up of largely inexperienced singers.

The first part of the concert was punctuated by a remarkable performance from a twelve-year-old violinist. While not technically great, Diego Hernandez is a showman with awesome confidence and presence. His performance of *Gavotte* (Thomas), *Ave Maria* (Schubert), and *Capriccio* (Vivaldi) was a pleasant interlude in the concert.

Whilst the young and enthusias-

tic sound created by FUCS worked for the West Indian songs, problems of tone, intonation and breath control tended to dominate the performances of the Brahms, Vaughan Williams and Bartok arrangements. This was most obvious in the Four Slavic Folksongs of Bartok where a semi-chorus (SAB) of the less-experienced singers were more exposed than was the full chorus. Here persistent breathy tone (worst in the soprano section), total lack of dynamic variation, and the abominable intonation of the basses spoiled a sensitively directed performance of these splendid songs.

This is really very worrying since most of these singers have been around the choral society circuit for some years now. Could it be that the inappropriate choice of too difficult music, by not only FUCS but also other choral societies, causes singers to develop a "throaty" bellowing sound? Surely the aims of University Choral Societies should be to develop and extend, not to frustrate with overhard music, and to have the side-effect of badly affecting basically good singing voices.

To be totally frank, this concert would have been stunning had all the music been in a more accessible style such as the West Indian folksongs were. Instead it left me feeling that this was only a patchy concert, basically good but with several distress-

ing moments. It can only be hoped that in the future FUCS (and other choral societies) will choose less formal music to attempt to extend and develop their repertoire.

A. James Scott

A Unique Cultural Opportunity.

CONCERT REVIEWS

KATIE PURVIS reviews the MonUCS SOPRANO ARIA PRIZE for Tenors and Basses.

It was with some degree of surprise that MonUCS came to realise, after the 2nd Soprano Aria Prize, that they appear to have a new tradition on their hands. The Soprano Aria Prize (SAP) was the brainchild of Denise Lawry, former MonUCS President, who had the idea one night at coffee after rehearsal, when she heard a couple of tenors trying to outdo each other in falsetto around the piano.

The inaugural SAP was held in the Abbey Theatre, Prahran in May 1984, and boasted nine entrants and a guest appearance by MUFS (Melbourne Uni Falsetto Singers). The winner was Miss Tessy Tura (aka Bill Collopy, MonUCS), whose rendition of G & S's *Kind Sir You Cannot Have The Heart* brought a standing ovation and encore. Runner-up was Lucia di Lamington (Stephen Shafer, SUMS) who, while claiming to perform *Visi d'arte* from *Tosca*, actually gave a stunning performance of *Hey Big Spender* in Italian and imitation leather. Winner of the wooden spoon was Geoff Dawson (SUMS) who sang *Pie Jesu* from Faure's *Requiem* like a 45rpm record played at 33. I can't remember if he was carried off or not...

This year the SAP was scheduled as part of the post-Hobart IV celebrations at Easter. MonUCS felt the contest might benefit from a more intimate atmosphere than the Abbey, so it was held at a private home with a large room suitable for such an occasion.

This year the judges were: Mr André de Quadros (MonUCS conductor), Mr Jno. Argyle (MUCS conductor), Miss Evelyn Killick (SUMS prez), Mr "Bazza" Gratton (AICSA prez), and Ms Ali Jonas (token soprano).

By the time the competition was due to start, the room was so packed there were people hanging from the rafters (well, almost). Organization of the evening was in the hands of Denise Lawry and Katie Purvis (mistresses of ceremonies) and Simon Johnson, who sat up front with his computer and punched in each contestant's vital statistics i.e. presentation, interpretation, intonation and technical proficiency.

He kept the audience up to date throughout the evening with progress scores, selected comments from the judging sheets, and isolated evidence of the judges' biases. There were seven contestants this year, all totally different and all vastly entertaining:

Norris Carter (AUCS): Charming arrayed in red dress, feather boa and beret, Norris was widely agreed to be the cutest contestant, as well as being by far the youngest. He sang Sigmund Romberg's *Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life*.

David Greagg (MUFS): David provided the most original act of the evening, performing Wagner's *Ring Cycle* in approximately 5 minutes.

Richard Barrett (AUCS): Definitely the most outrageous act, Richard began his performance dressed as a nun (déjà vu?) singing *Climb Every Mountain* and finished up stripping off through tasteful black

underwear (seen the night before on Eve Killick), to green edible undies all the while singing *If They Could See Me Now*. I believe the undies were consumed later in the evening.

Ronald B. McCoy (MonUCS): Dr Ron's rendition of *Dido's Lament* left not a dry eye in the house, despite the attempted upstaging by a black dog.

Lance Marshall (MUCS): Doing a superb imitation of a seedy second-rate nightclub performer, Lance performed Cole Porter's *My Heart Belongs to Daddy*.

Mark Dolahenty (SUMS): The incomparable Dame Joyce Slumberland treated us to an entertaining performance of Act I of *La Traviata*.

Andrew Young (FAUCS): Andrew's production of that old standard *I Give My Heart* was utterly hilarious and prompted one judge to advise, "Don't get talked into entering competitions when you're pissed".

The winner of the 1985 SAP was Mark Dolahenty; the runner-up was Dr Ron. Wooden Spoon went to Andrew Young (a most popular decision). Thanks must go to the judges, the statistician, and the two wonderful guests, Miss Tessy Tura and Ms Barbie Rennison (a real soprano). Thanks also to everyone who attended.

Popular opinion seems to dictate that there will be another SAP next year - we'll be in touch.

Apt historic flavor to Uni concert

Concert

By JOHN COLWILL

THE Queensland University Musical Society contributed to the university's 75th anniversary celebrations in Mayne Hall last night with a work commissioned from Colin Brumby with text by Thomas Shapcott.

Dr Brumby, musical director of the society since 1977, conducted this overly long work for chorus and orchestra, which received healthy applause from a disappointingly sparse audience.

The piece, entitled *The Vision and The Gap* is in five sections and is based on the life of the explorer Allan Cunningham.

It calls for a quaint touch of the theatrical with the Governor and Mrs Macquarie's *Promenade* and Logan's crass moment of drunkenness.

Soloists for the evening were Gloria Eiser and Michael Leighton Jones, both in fine voice, together with Ross Mayhew and Jenny Dawson.

Brumby's strengths lie in choral writing, and the chorus acquit-

ted itself well in unaccompanied passages drawing inspiration from the Australian landscape.

Much less successful was Dr Brumby's *Guitar Concerto*, recently commissioned by last night's soloist Jan Carter.

The work was pleasant listening although of three long and similar movements, making little demand on listener or soloist who nevertheless seemed too often at odds with the orchestral accompaniment.

The program opened with Brumby conducting the Queensland Theatre Orchestra and QUMS in Dvorak's *Te Deum*, a curious work in which, in last night's performance the brass and timpani overshadowed the chorus and strings.

— THE COURIER-MAIL
THURSDAY, MAY 23, 1985

Music critics don't always satisfy everybody! The interesting thing here is that both John Colwill and Iain MacPhail are ex-QUMS... ➡➡➡

ENTERPRISING...BUT LET'S HEAR MORE OF THE CHOIR

Queensland University Musical Society
University of Queensland 75th Anniversary.
Mayne Hall Wed. May 22

The QUMS concert last Wednesday had as its main work the premiere of Colin Brumby's *The Vision and The Gap*. This work was commissioned by QUMS to mark Queensland University's 75th Anniversary, and as a result the concert was a notable "occasion" in its own right.

The University's celebrations had previously been marred by the decision to confer upon the Premier an honorary doctorate of Law. The violent demonstration during the Graduation ceremony (two windows were broken) had caused people to stay away in droves from subsequent events - for example, the planned ball was cancelled. It was therefore pleasing to see that this concert attracted a good audience of over 250.

Colin Brumby has been conducting QUMS since 1977, and a similar (but not quite so long-standing) stability in the hierarchy of the QUMS committee makes for an extremely professional presentation. For example, the programmes were really excellent, with full descriptions of the works and solo performers, full text and translations where applicable.

The presence of the text was very useful during the opening work, Dvorak's *Te Deum*. In this the brass and percussion (the Queensland Theatre Orchestra) were so loud that I could not follow the text even with the words in front of me. Fortunately, there were several a capella sections in which the good diction of the choir was readily apparent (even without reference to the programme!). The first movement called for some division from the men, who acquitted themselves well, with excellent internal balance. The concluding "alleluia" was another 'con bello' for the brass and percussion with some choral accompaniment.

Second on the programme was the premiere of Brumby's *Guitar Concerto*. This over-long piece had overstayed its welcome by the end of the first

movement. The second continued the pattern of harmonic progression repeated *ad infinitum* (but slower) with almost inaudible guitar, despite its being miked. The third movement was more attractive and I found myself trying, unsuccessfully, to deduce the time signature. Some of the people on stage didn't succeed either.

It was extremely unfortunate programming to have such a trite work before the main offering. Interval was spent hoping *The Vision and The Gap* would be of more substance. Indeed, as a whole it was much more rewarding, though there were some similarities to the *Guitar Concerto*.

At first sight, the subject of an explorer discovering a "Gap" in a mountain range would not seem able to sustain interest throughout half a concert. However some extremely effective writing for the choir and some good humour made it quite entertaining.

The work is in five sections. In the first, there was some good singing from the ladies voices of the choir, which the men almost managed to match. The a capella sections were once again well sung, with a notable well-controlled diminuendo at the end of the choral section. The second movement ("The Governor's Pleasure") started with an instrumental march: the *Peers' Chorus* from *Iolanthe*. Much amusement was provided by the entrance of the "Governor" and his "wife" (the baritone and alto soloists) down the central aisle. Further amusement was provided by the description of Cunningham (tenor soloist) as "such a thin young man skinny as a bean", which he most decidedly wasn't. (Should this work be performed again in Brisbane, I could suggest an alternative Tenor..) The end of this movement was yet another interminably repeated harmonic progression.

By this time it was almost ten o'clock and I'd almost had enough. Luckily the fourth movement started with 76 Trombones.

The fifth movement featured more

good choral singing. Overall the choir sang splendidly, and gave the impression of being extremely well prepared. If the orchestra had balanced the choir, and had the *Guitar Concerto* not been programmed I think I would have really enjoyed this work.

Congratulations to QUMS for being enterprising enough to commission a new work. Next time let's have just one premiere per composer in a concert. I left feeling regretful I hadn't heard more of the choir, which for such a long concert is a very high accolade.

Neil Mason

PUCS BENDS THE SOUND WAVES AT W.A. YORK WINTER FESTIVAL Sunday June 2

The Perth Undergraduate Choral Society, directed by Robert Kay, filled St Patrick's Catholic Church in York with the strains of Berger's *Brazilian Psalm* and Ramirez' *Misa Criolla*. Throughout the performance the female vocal lines were noticeably more secure than the male, filling the church with a purity of tone rarely heard in other Perth choirs. The male voices, while blending well and providing good support, were more ragged in presentation and lacked the quality and fullness of tone.

Be that as it may, the enthusiasm with which the music was performed delighted a capacity audience. Especially exciting in the *Misa Criolla* were the beautiful harmonies with typical Latin-American flavour produced by the soloists Bryan Connell, Lorentz Lossius and David Hobbs, marred only slightly by some inaccuracies of pitch and forced tone in parts. The rhythms of the mass were enhanced by the accompaniment provided by Stringy-Bach, percussion and harpsichord.

Problems created by the lack of set-up time prior to the concert made it difficult to gain full benefit from the obvious talents of "StringyBach" in a bracket of short Renaissance works. Mandolins were not tuned accurately, which was to the detriment of the final result.

Three solo pieces presented by guitarist Rick Prakhoff were sensitively and accurately played but in the packed church had a thinness of tone which would have benefited from some amplification.

In the overall staging and presentation of this performance, filled with variety and interest, full marks must go to musical director Robert Kay for his infectious enthusiasm, which has obviously rubbed off on members of the choir.

Don Rock

Erato 46 - 1

Music critic under fire

WHETHER or not I agree with John Colwill's report of Colin Brumby's *The Vision and the Gap* (C-M, 23-5-85), is neither here nor there. Thankfully the work will be judged by opinion more informed than Mr Colwill's or mine.

My objection is that The Courier-Mail sees fit to present this potted puerility as art criticism.

The paper does no service to the arts in Queensland by offering this "village weekly" standard of reportage as comment on the premiere of a major work by a leading Australian composer. — Iain Mac Phail, Gold Coast Highway, Palm Beach.

THE COURIER-MAIL May 29 1985

CONCERT REVIEWS

FUTURE LOOKS PROMISING FOR MonUCS
St Mary's, North Melbourne, May 4.

The MonUCS of 1985 is a young choir with a new conductor, the dashing André de Quadros. Their first term concert, featuring the Mozart Solemn Vespers K339, Purcell's *Te Deum* in D and a group of madrigals was therefore an important pointer to MonUCS' future - a future which looks very promising.

While the opening madrigals received solid performances, they were somewhat lacking in subtlety, especially Marenzio's *Io Piango*. The best performance was given to the trite of *All the Birds* by John Bartlet. After a pleasant divertimento from the Monash String Quartet, the choir gave a good account of the Purcell *Te Deum*. The only minor problems were with a couple of shaky soloists (S & T) and trumpets, and with the frequent transition from choir to soloists.

The major work of the evening, the

rather difficult Mozart's Solemn Vespers, was most impressive. The suave passages were sung smoothly, while the angular contrapuntal movements were sung strongly and accurately.

Apart from a slight imbalance of numbers (too few soprs and tenors), MonUCS seems not to have the problems which one might have expected of a fairly inexperienced choir with a new conductor. Not only was their singing enthusiastic, it was also impressively accurate. If MonUCS can carry on from here (sensible programming will be important), they have a rosy future.

Richard Excell

ENTIRE MESSIAH BY CHOIR

St Mary's Star of the Sea,
West Melbourne, May 10.

MUCS' first offering for 1985 was a complete (yes, complete - and the seats were hard) *Messiah*. While it is interesting to hear the items that are usually cut,

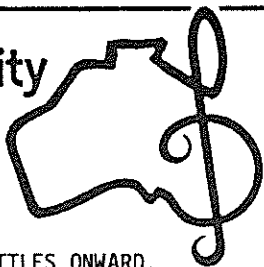
it does make for a long night. It also means that the singers must spread their efforts more thinly. Thus, while the broader homophonic choruses sounded good with a full rich tone the more florid contrapuntal passages (e.g. *And he shall purify*) were at times blurred. The number of faces buried in scores cannot have helped. Among the best choruses were a couple of those often left out (*Let all the Angels of God* and *The Lord gave the Word*), and all those in Part the Third, especially *Since by Man came Death*.

Of the soloists Debbie Mitchell (S) has a nice voice but was rather uneven, Margaret Arnold (A) sang well though not in her best voice, Lloyd Fleming (T) has a striking voice but was at times very shaky and Jerzy Kozlowski (B) was very impressive.

Overall it was a worthwhile concert but one which could have been tightened up.

Richard Excell

Australian Intersociety Choral Societies' Association



THE ADMINISTRATIVE VANGUARD RATTLES ONWARD.

In May we applied to the Music Board of The Australia Council for financial assistance for 37th (Brisbane) IVCF. Then, in June, a Project Officer from the Music Board visited Melbourne and we were able to sit down and discuss the application with her. This was mega-worthwhile and certainly facilitated lots of two-way dialogue of information. Yes, absolutely. Relations between AICSA and the Music Board are on the upward path and our forthcoming visit to their (Sydney) headquarters should further cement this highly desirable situation.

The other exciting news from Technology House (i.e. 49 George St.) is the progress on the bigger, brighter, better-than-ever, all-singing, all-dancing, whiter-than-white Convenor's Handbook, soon to burst upon you under its new title, *The AICSA Manual*! Yes folks, *The AICSA Manual* is, like Guinness, good for you! Calming down a bit, I might add that we are still confident of releasing it, on time, at Sydney Minifest.

36th (Hobart) IVCF was an undoubted success and, apart from nice words of congratulation, I would like to thank them for their prompt submission of a final report and budget for the Australia Council (arithmetical errors notwithstanding). I know from my own experience that post-Festival wrapping-up can be tedious and unrewarding, so full marks TUMS and let's hope this starts a new trend.

Since 37th (Brisbane) IVCF have their own article in this issue, all I'll say is that despite a couple of musico-administrative setbacks they are pressing on confidently - bloodied but unbowed.

Many readers will have heard of the AICSA Choral Composition Competition. This has been suspended for a year while we re-evaluate it. Corporate sponsorship is currently being sought and a revised AICSA C.C.C. will be proposed to the Australian Intersociety Choral Council (AIVCC being AICSA's answer to the Supreme Soviet) in Sydney.

By the way, don't forget that AIVCC is coming up; observers are welcome. Details of time and venue will be in your Minifest (q.v.) FIBS.

And speaking of AIVCC, remember there's *NO REPRESENTATION WITHOUT TAXATION* so please get those affiliation fees to us A.S.A.P. Where does all that money go? Well nearly all of it goes to ERATO, and a little goes on postage and the rest goes on things like the Choral Composition Competition. All worthwhile stuff.

So its goodnight from me...

And it's goodnight from him...

See you in Sydney, Brisbane, etc.

Your everlovin' President,

Bazza Gratton

