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**mr john grundy: the new patron  
of the association**

newsletter of the australian intervarsity choral societies association

# FLUCTUATING FORTUNES:

## How do choirs survive?

This year began with no fewer than five intervarsity festivals or minifests, actively being planned, run or wound down. So it would seem that university choirs in general feel that they are doing well. This contrasts with the near demise of the Flinders University Choral Society and perhaps highlights the contradictions which undergraduate choirs around the country face through the years.

In the past groups such as the University of NSW Choral Society (UNCS) and the James Cook University of Northern Queensland Choral Society (JCUNQCS) have ceased to be, while the Macquarie Singers (at Sydney's Macquarie University) and Collegium Musicum (at the University of NSW) have come into being. Furthermore, choirs from other Tertiary Institutions are currently involved in affiliating with AICSA.

Despite these fluctuations in fortune, the choirs which make up AICSA seem to be enjoying something little short of a boom period in terms of intervarsity festivals. The 38th IVCF held in Adelaide in 1986, despite some serious setbacks early in the planning stages, was both a financial success and a lot of fun. The choice of programmes (Vaughan Williams' *Mass in G Minor* for the first concert and various choruses from Opera and Musicals) proved a felicitous choice for both audiences and choristers, despite criticisms from various quarters. The 39th IVCF (Sydney 1988) was also a financial and artistic success--not a small achievement in the highly-strung atmosphere of Bicentennial "Celebrations"! Melbourne Minifest ("Femmefest") and Adelaide Summerfest were also successful in different ways, and, of course, plans are well underway for the 40th IVCF (Canberra 1989) and the 41st IVCF (Perth 1990) both of which feature exciting choral music and look set to be, as IV always is, fantastic fun.

Allowing for the extremely summary nature of this treatment of recent Intersvarsity events, it seems that there is a lot of choral activity, one way or another, in campuses around the country. Intersvarsity Festivals require much planning, sometimes over many years, and involve budgets which have approached the hundred-thousand dollar mark. A host society needs to be able to divert organisational and fundraising activity from the society committee to that of the IV and choir members are called upon to give much more of their time, and money, in support of this major event. Each society will face different problems and will have different opportunities when planning their IV

or minifest, but it seems that whatever the case, a precondition is that the host society have the resources to mount a festival, as well as continue with their often already busy concert and social schedules.

So how do choirs survive, both when organising an IV and when simply involved in their own affairs? What challenges do they face within their own University environment? What effect will the Federal government's changing policies on funding to Tertiary Institutions have on undergraduate choirs? How do university choirs fit into the musical life in each of their home cities, and how does the Intersvarsity movement stand as a National musical activity?

What effect should answers to these, and similar questions, have on the plans for IVs in the future? Is the role of this Association sufficiently clear at present to allow choirs to take full advantage of opportunities for funding, for cooperation with bodies like the ABC, the Australia Council, and State Government arts funding bodies? What role could, or should, corporate funding play in the Intersvarsity movement?

**So who cares about choral music in Australia?**

These are questions which are important for us to consider since Government policy, regarding the Arts and Education, is directly relevant to each choir in Australia. The question could be put: Who cares about choral music in Australia and how can we organise ourselves effectively to promote the music we enjoy singing?

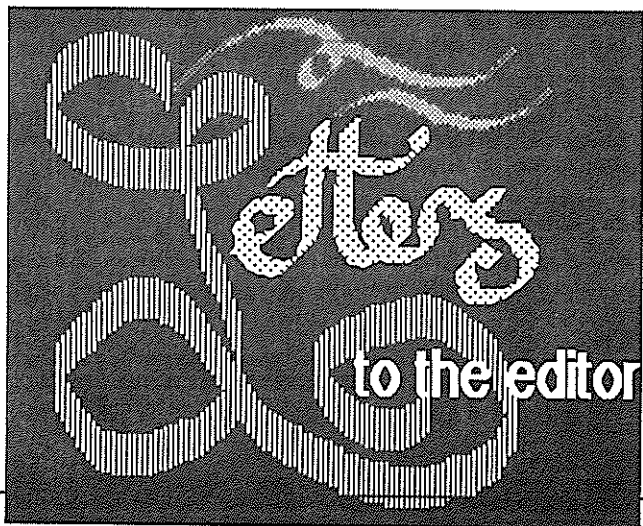
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One way to approach these rather general questions is to examine how each society functions as a music-making entity. The standing of an undergraduate choir depends upon such variables as the quality of musical direction, the ability of the committee to organise and promote the choir, competition from other groups--whether other campus societies or other choirs outside the university--the size of the choir and availability of venues for rehearsal and performance and the degree of support each choir receives from its Student Union or University administration, especially in the form of funding. How does each choir see itself regarding these criteria? Are there other, perhaps more important considerations?

The situations in Melbourne and Sydney, for instance, are very different. Unlike MUCS and MonUCS, SUMS is the only large undergraduate choir in Sydney affiliated with the Association. It is probably true to say that SUMS faces less competition from other choirs in Sydney than either of these Melbourne Choral Societies face from other choirs in their city. On the other hand, SUMS seems to receive less financial support from the University Administration than MUCS or MonUCS and also is bound by different rules regarding membership and the composition of committees. What effects do these different conditions have on the planning of society concerts and festivals?

I feel that it is essential that we all try to answer these questions, and find out how each choir is different from its fellow Association affiliates, as well as working to continue our cooperation within the Association. The Association represents our way of staying in touch and singing together and *Erato* is perhaps the most effective way to exchange information and ideas, suggestions and views which effect us all in one way or another.

The subjects which I have touched upon here are only the beginning if we are to survive and develop as significant contributors to the musical life of our universities, our own cities and Australia. We will never be fully in control of our fluctuating fortunes, but we can make every effort to be aware of the dangers and opportunities which face us all. The first step is communication.



Dear Stephen,

I would like to reinforce the suggestion, in the editorial to *Erato* 56, that more space be allocated for letters to the editor by taking this opportunity to air a grievance pertaining to Melbourne Minifest.

The committee has worked, and is working, very hard to bring this festival together and to ensure its success. Many obstacles have



been overcome: this is not a new experience for festival committees, yet we have had less than eleven months preparation time. Registration forms due on December 1, 1988, have yielded less than a handful from interstate. This can hardly be from any lack of information given on our part. All interstate choral societies have been sent identical information as has been distributed in Melbourne, plus immediate updates following any changes of plans. More than 100% effort has been made to ensure its dissemination to choristers after the finish of the academic year. However, the huge discrepancy between local and interstate interest in the festival remains startling. By the time of publication of this issue of *Erato* Minifest will have been and gone, in spite of any depressing lack of interstate support.

Therefore, all affiliated societies need to support each other in these endeavours. I am not specifically referring to submitting forms, but more of the vocalising of support and helping to disseminate information in respective societies; two requirements which are essential for initial success of festivals, let alone continued goodwill and interaction between societies.

Best wishes to all societies during 1989.

Helen Penrose  
Camp and Fundraising  
Officer,  
Melbourne Minifest.  
(28 December, 1988)

(I think it is true to say that Helen's disappointment with the interstate response to Melbourne Minifest is one which many of us who have been involved with planning choral festivals would have shared to some extent. Everyone hopes that their festival will attract a good deal of interest and a healthy attendance from other choirs. However, one of the major factors which must be taken into account, a factor which Helen has not discussed, is the cost of interstate travel for students. With only six months separating Melbourne Minifest from Sydney IV in 1988 and Canberra IV in 1989, it is difficult for many students, myself included, to save enough money for interstate travel, registration fees and spending money. Workers, who do not necessarily face the same financial constraints may find it difficult to obtain time off work in order to attend more than one festival a year. We all enjoy attending large festivals--the choral buzz is quite unbeatable--but smaller festivals offer a different, and no less enjoyable experience to participants. Ed.)

Letters on any subject relating to any aspect of choral music will be published in *Erato*. Keep them brief and intelligible and address them to:

THE EDITOR, ERATO  
BOX 150 HOLME BUILDING  
UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY  
NSW 2006.

## SCUNA

c/- A.N.U. Arts Centre  
PO Box 4  
Canberra City, ACT 2601



Hello to everyone in 1989. I hope you finished off '88 in great style. A lot seems to have happened since the last edition of Erato. Bach's *Jesu Meine Freude* came together nicely in time for our second semester concert on October 14 and the whole programme which included some Seventeenth Century motets and madrigals, Kodaly's *Jesus and the Traders* and *Es Ist Ein Ros* by Distler, went rather smoothly. The concert was held in the beautiful acoustic environment of the Great Hall, University House, where the audience can look at a huge mural if they get tired of looking at our angelic faces.

For a break from Wednesday night rehearsals, we had a dinner the week after the concert which included the AGM. The important business was attended to first, and then we had the meeting and "elected" a few people for

## society

## NEWS

this year's committee. They are

President--Rick Sondalini  
Secretary--Katya  
Treasurer--James "\$\$" Crawford  
Half-a-librarian--Brian Leaver (exTUMS)  
Another-half--Damian Vednik  
Publicity Officer--C'est moi  
Morals Officer--Ingrid McKenzie  
Camp Officer/Concert Manager--Liz Moore  
Extra Member--James Carter  
IPP--Lan Wang

It is amazing how painless an AGM can be after a few bottles of alcoholic beverage to go with the important business. The meeting was rounded off with a lengthy report by the Morals Officer on the scandalous behaviour of certain members during 1988.

As 1988 entered its closing stages, we started preparing for the Christmas Concert, which was on December 9 at University House again. The main work was Charpentier's *Midnight Mass*, with some motets and carols and the Distler *Es Ist Ein Ros*. After a huge supper during the interval, the audience joined us in the garden for some carols by candlelight. Aaaaahhh!! We received a fairly positive review in the *Canberra Times*, although they didn't review the supper.

The year drew to a close with a smidgion of carol singing

to raise funds for IV (in Canberra this year, remember?) and a few SCUNAE joined in a performance of the Charpentier *Midnight Mass* at, you guessed it, a midnight mass on Christmas Eve. Beautiful.

Expecting you all this year at IV,

Peter Manson.

## TUMS

c/- Union Building  
GPO Box 252c  
Hobart, TAS 7001



Greetings from the sunny south.

I hope everyone had a fantastic holiday and is ready for the onslaught of 1989. December was a hectic time for TUMS, in more ways than one. Our first Christmas commitment was the recording of some carols in the brand new ABC studios. These carols were broadcast nationally on ABC radio and internationally on Radio Australia. As if

that weren't enough, mid-December saw a record-breaking number of TUMies hot the streets of Hobart to spread tidings of comfort and joy. This included many exciting moments, such as Christopher McDermott's individual style of conducting [Sorry, Chris--I just type in what they give me!--Ed.], in the Elizabeth Mall, red smoke bombs and jugs of G'n'T at the Brighton Army Camp and free lollies (confiscated by the committee) at Northgate Shopping Centre.

What more could anyone wish for? you ask. Well, being naturally blessed, we had many errant TUMmies return to the fold, albeit temporarily. All our favorites made guest appearances at various gatherings in December and January. David W., Matthew B., Puppy, Penny, Lisa T. and everybody's delight, the wonderful Mr. Brian Leaver.

With a start like that, 1989 promises to be a thrilling year. Our first concert will be held at St. David's Cathedral with a programme of Mozart, Bruckner and the Durufle *Requiem*. We also have the honour (?) of singing lots of horribly patriotic American songs for a Fourth of July Night, Orff's *Carmina Burana* and Vaughan Williams' *Flos Campi* with the ABC and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra. There is vague talk of the faint possibility that we may tentatively discuss having a camp. At least the social calendar will be full of sophisticated, witty and illuminating events, all arranged for the hedonistic pleasure-seekers for which TUMS is famous. So, as I can spare no more time for this epistle, it is with warm wishes for fun and success in the endeavours of all

societies unlucky enough to be situated across the water, that I conclude this first TUMS Eraticle for this year. Until the next instalment...

Sally Leary

## PUCS

c/- Guild of Undergraduates  
University of Western Australia  
Nedlands, WA 6009



PUCS' 1989 committee has oiled the wheels and loosened from the Body Choral the rust accumulated during the Bicentenary. Plans for this year include Vivaldi, Purcell and Norman Luboff's *African Mass* in First Semester (got to get used to that word!), a mid-year visit by Whim'n'Rhythm from Yale (again! Americans "just love Perth") and Orff's *Catulli Carmina* and Ramirez' *Missa Criola* in October. At least that's the plan.

Before Christmas things were hectic. Concerts included our own on December 10, premiering an English cabtata celebrating Martin Luther King--*I Have A Dream*--and a visit by Melbourne Grammar School Orchestra. Other musical demands made upon us included joining Collegium Musicum for Respighi's *Laud to the Nativity* and the University Choral Society for their Family Christmas Concert. PUCS members also worked hard for 41st IV fundraising: selling chocolate, delivering phonebooks and doing the odd bit of singing.

Summer sees PUCS joining the massed choir for the Festival of Perth performances of Berlioz' *Requiem* on March 3 and 4, directed by Louis Fremaux, and also sees the establishment of the ABC's WASO Choir. Roughly twenty current and recent members of PUCS were successful auditionees, nine of these being selected for the 33-voice WASO Singers, the remainder in the 150-voice WASO Chorus. We have yet to see the effect of this upon PUCS, which over the last decade has held its members well, but one change has been forced upon us already, rehearsal night being moved to Monday because of the clash. Wish us luck.

So, with Martin Rowden conducting again, Rick Prakhoff assisting, Tonya Healey accompanying and Geoff Garside and Committee planning another Summer IV, "the Perth Undergraduate Choral Society (according to Music Maker magazine) carries on in its idiosyncratic way, exploring disparate musical styles with gusto".

Robert Kay

## NOT LONG TO GO FOR THE ERATO DEADLINE!

(exciting, isn't it)

## FUCS

c/- AUCS (Clubs Association)  
GPO Box 498  
Adelaide, SA 5001)



Contrary to all our worst fears, FUCS is not an acronym with only archeological significance: the Flinders University Choral Society is alive and functioning. Ian Sepelt received a letter from Catherine Campbell while he was away in Nepal (so this extract has already hit the heights on its way onto the pages of Erato). Dated in mid-December, the letter includes this news:

*Good news--the FUCS concert is Friday. I have to sing the solo in Operator (can my voice take it?) and the alto solo in Java Jive. I s'pose one must start somewhere but I'm still frightfully nervous. We've decided to do it 'cabaret style' and have the audience all at little tables with candles and flowers, etc. We're not expecting too many people so this arrangement is a possibility.*

I'm sure we all hope the concert went well and extend our best wishes to FUCS for what is sure to be a brighter future.

Stephen Schafer

## MonUCS

c/- The Union  
Monash University  
Clayton, VIC 3168



Salutations, fellow choristers, from sunny, Post-Femmefest Melbourne!

For those of you who were there--wasn't it WONDERFUL?!!! (Who will ever forget 'footy speak', 'feefy dollars' and the Polish language?) For those of you who weren't--it was WONDERFUL!!! Many thanks to those who came, to those who helped and especially to our esteemed convenor, Jacqui Harrison--many Hoorahs! Many thanks, too, to those cherubs who provided me with many

naughty things to write about in my gossip column--very encouraging to see!

Currently, MonUCS is in fresher-recruitment mode, hoping to entice some really yummy freshers to the Choral Society through our pizza and wine night, our O-week tent, our segment at the Vice-Chancellor's welcoming speech, our orientation camp--not to mention our stupendous first term concert, *African Sanctus*, which we are performing with MUCS and MCAE Performing Choir. WOW!!! Especially WOW will be the combined camp which all three societies will be attending.

MonUCS is without an accompanist at the moment as the lovely Julie Piggan cannot spare her time any longer. Many thanks to Julie for her patience and talents over the years--she will be sadly missed. We will be auditioning accompanists for the next few weeks.

Our second term concert has already been decided and it is 'rooly excellent'. MonUCS will be performing Mr. Igor Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* and Mr. W.A. Mozart's *Solemn Vespers*. Wonderful music.

In conclusion, I would like to invite everyone down to Melbourne, especially for the *African Sanctus* concert on April 29. Please think of us at the SUMS Ball, which is on the same night as the MonUCS camp (we are having an alternative ball on the Saturday night).

Until next time,  
Love from MonUCS and me,  
Tarja Saastamoinen.

## AUCS

c/- Clubs Association  
GPO Box 498  
Adelaide, SA 5001



Greetings from the southern confines of the country! AUCS is back in '89 with what looks like being its biggest year ever. First, though, a word on how we wrapped up 1988.

October 22 saw our third term concert which was a rather brassy affair featuring works by Schütz, Berger, Purcell, Messiaen and Rutter. Assisting us with these works was the Adelaide University Brass Ensemble, which also provided some music of its own. Once again the choir was conducted by Hilary Weiland, with Ashleigh Tobin contributing his organ-playing skills. [For a review of this concert, see *Concert Reviews* in this issue--ED.]

After a well-deserved recuperation camp in early December (dare I mention the ox-tongue?!!) it was on with the carol-singing at various establishments to raise ever-needed funds. On December 15 a number of us presented a

successful service of lessons and carols at St. Peter's Cathedral under the direction of our part-time assistant conductor Peter Leech with members of the AUBE assisting us once again.

Summerfest '88 rolled into Adelaide after Christmas and its participants provided a substantial audience with an impressive performance of Duruflé's *Requiem*. We were very fortunate to have Hilary Weiland conduct this concert and Englishman Thomas Trotter assist on the organ. The first half of our programme was provided by our organist who dazzled us with masterful performances of some Twentieth Century French organ music. (Is J.S. Bach French?)

1989 is going to be a very big year for AUCS. April 29 sees a performance of Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* with the Tertiary Training Orchestra under the direction of Hilary Weiland. ("Training" is a highly derogatory term which doesn't mean what you probably think it does.) On May 27 we will be repeating last year's third term concert as a fundraising event with members of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra brass section.

We move into the acoustically impossible Festival Theatre on August 11 and 12 to perform Poulenc's Gloria and Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* with the Graduate Singers and the ASO. (Could this be our big break?)

Our final concert for 1989 will occur on October 30 when we will perform Bach's mighty *Mass in B Minor* with the Adelaide Chamber Orchestra conducted by Dr. Richard Marlow, Fellow and Director of Music at Trinity College, Cambridge.

The committee is hard at work organising everyone and everything, with Chris Bridge once again reigning over us as President, as he did in 1988.

Well, that's news for now--here's hoping your singing this year will be as awe-inspiring as I'm sure ours will be! (We really are very modest people).

Cheers,

Peter Kelsall.

## SUMS

Box 32 Holme Building  
University of Sydney  
NSW 2006



SUMS finished the year with a pyrotechnical Carol-fest, provided not by the ABA or Japanese Government but by the raw elements. As Fred Blanks noted in his review of the concert, held in the Great Hall, the weather formed a thrilling, if unexpected counterpoint to the vari-

ous settings of Christmas texts which the choir brought to life under the direction of Ben Macpherson. Peter Young once again joined us at the organ, and thrilled the capacity audience with his audacious extemporisations during the final verse of *Oh, Come All Ye Faithful*, as well as providing music by Bach, Praetorius and others.

Carol singing in the Queen Victoria Building, Mid City Centre and Dymocks Bookshop raised much need funds for the choir as the keen band of choristers gave up lunch-times to calm the savage beastly hordes of Christmas shoppers and do battle with buskers and Muzak.

1988 was easily the busiest year SUMS has had for many years. If the Intervarsity Festival is included, SUMS turned over in excess of one hundred and thirty thousand dollars and showed a net profit for the year. Congratulations to Ian seppelt and the 1988 Committee for this remarkable achievement!

This year began almost before the last one was over. SUMS began with four performances in March of the *Verdi Requiem*, augmenting Sydney Philharmonia, with the SSO conducted by Stuart Challender. Ben and John Grundy prepared the SUMS contingent of eighty and it was a thrilling and exhausting start to the year.

The concert programme for the year is already set. On April 7 SUMS will perform a concert of Romantic and Renaissance music in the Great Hall at Sydney University. Works by Bruckner, Scheidt, Gabrieli, Monteverdi and De Lassus will be given. The Sydney Brass Ensemble, lead by Paul Goodchild and Peter Young, on organ, will join us for an exciting concert.

Our second concert for the year will be Handel's *Alexander's Feast* and the *Chandos Anthem IX (O Praise the Lord with One Consent.)* Ben will again conduct the choir and orchestra in two performances to be given on Friday June 9 and Saturday June 10, in the Great Hall.

Next is a repeat performance of *Songs of Australia* by Martin and Peter Wesley-Smith. We hope to produce a professional recording of this work, and we are preparing an application to the Australia Council for a grant to cover studio costs. This is a very exciting project and we hope it comes to fruition.

The year will end with the annual Carolfest in December (hopefully sans the *son et lumiere* display).

O-Week this year included an appearance at the Chancellor's Welcome during which we sang a variety of pieces both old and new. SUMS hopes to attract and keep as many freshers as possible and a number of social activities have been organised to keep people actively socialising. Wine and Cheese Afternoon, Pre-rehearsal Barbecue and the Eleventy-First SUMS Ball are some highlights. The Ball will be held on Saturday March 18 in the

Holme Refectory. The Ritz Dance Band have again been engaged to provide suitable music and all interstate choristers are cordially invited to enjoy the evening with us. We will be sending leaflets to all societies very soon with the details.

So, in anticipation of a year scarcely less exciting than the last, I'll say bye-bye and start sewing my frock for the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras!

Stephen Schafer.

President 1989

## QUMS

University of Queensland Union  
University of Queensland  
St Lucia, QLD 4067



Greetings from the Deep North! My last Eraticle detailed grandiose plans on two fronts, both of which have managed to get killed off. The idea of doing *Messiah* was confused when we were offered a half-share (with the Music Department choir) in the ABC performance for 1988. This, although attractive artistically, was not so good in other ways. The Easter performance turned out to be too hard to organise.

Instead, we will be singing *African Sanctus* by Fanshawe, the *Chichester Psalms* by Bernstein and the Bobrowitz and Porter *Creation*, in collaboration with the Queensland Youth Choir in May. This is to be followed by another "Broadway" Concert later in the year, and a concert featuring Vaughan Williams' *Hodie*. There, I've said it. Now watch us do something else. (If *African Sanctus* scores continue to be hard to get...)

The Minifest idea died for a variety of reasons, depending slightly upon whom you ask. One medium-sized factor was the inability to produce a convenor in a hurry, especially in the face of competition from Adelaide. My theory, which is a challenge to any QUMSians reading this, is that the lack of leadership material prepared to show itself from behind cover is partly a product of the present committee, which will go down in history as a hard act to follow.

Sue Dowrie, in particular, who has recently resigned as president of vice, has done a tireless and professional job for a number of terms. Jacqui Higgins is an experienced secretary (terribly sorry, honorary sceretary) who is going to be unavailable. Fortunately she has cleverly covered her posting as a teacher to distant places by sharing the job with John Yesberg, who will only be in distant places during the holidays. Things will get really interesting if Noel gets his pilgrimage to the Mecca of public servants off the ground.



All in all, 1989 will be a year of flux. At least we start the year traditionally, singing to parents of new students on Parents' Day. This is always *Gaudeamus Igitur* and *Statutes of the University of Queensland, Site By-Laws, Statute Forty-Three...* to Anglican chant. The numbers for O week activity rehearsals are double the average. Stay tuned for exciting developments.

Mark Barton

Unfortunately, this coincides with Canberra IV, but it might be suggested to the group that they could reorganise their itinerary to include IV. It would be an exciting arrangement for them--and us, too!

Perhaps other societies who are involved in looking after these two groups would like to write something for the next Erato which will coincide with the visit of 'K-State' in May, or for Erato 59 which will appear in August 1989.

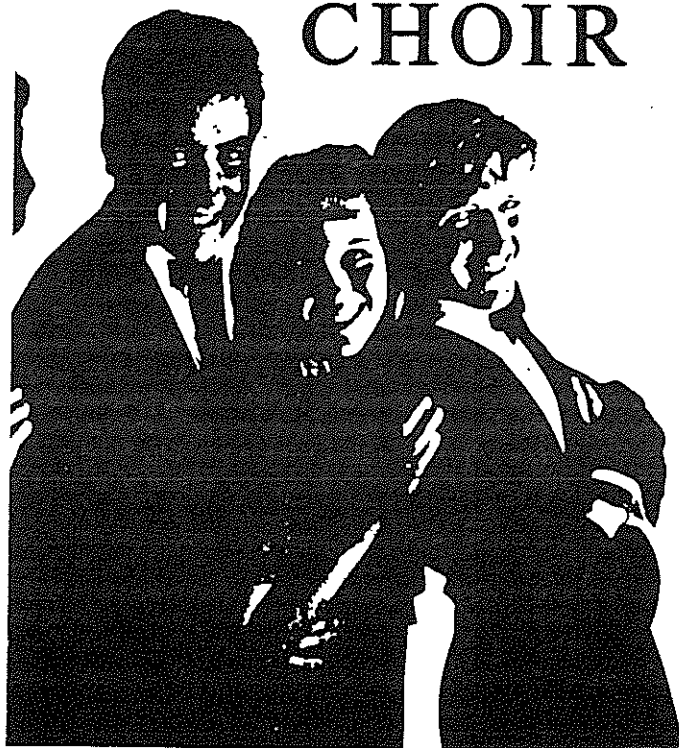
## INVISIBLE CHOIRS

Later this year Australia will be visited by two American choirs, the Kansas State University Choir and Whim 'n' Rhythm.

The Kansas State University Choir (or 'K-State', as they refer to themselves) will arrive in Sydney on Wednesday 17 May and will perform in Sydney, Canberra, Brisbane and Toowoomba. The 'K-State' Choir has travelled around America and to Europe where they have earned enthusiastic reviews for the clarity and energy of their performances. On rather excited reviewer from *Rauchzeichen*, the student paper for the Rudolph Steiner Schools in Vienna (June 25 1985), described their "gayly mixed formation" [sic] while others have less idiosyncratically noted the "abandon which seems to emanate from a genuine happiness at working together towards the outcome and does not in the least seem artificial." (*Demokratisches Volksblatt*, Salzburg, Jan 4 1972).

The choir, which has been conducted by Professor Rodney G. Walker for many years, rehearses weekly and has the status of a much sought-after course at the Kansas State University. A very high technical standard of singing and a wide repertoire are a feature of the choir.

Whim 'n' Rhythm are an all female vocal group who, in earlier incarnations, have visited Australia for the last couple of years. Consisting of female students with an interest in close-harmony, spiritual/gospel/jazz/folk styles, they have been warmly welcomed by Australian choristers in the past and are keenly awaited this time round as well. They will be touring Australia in July.





Like most other non-Sydney choristers, I first encountered John Grundy in rehearsals at the 39th Intervarsity Choral Festival held during August, 1988. I was very impressed with his rehearsal technique as well as his sense of humour, and felt very privileged to be working with him. When I read his biography in the *Songs of Australia* concert programme I thought, "This man has done so much!" He has worked as a choral, orchestral and opera conductor, accompanist, instrumentalist, composer and lecturer. Positions which he has held include Musical Director of the Edinburgh University Musical Society, of the Edinburgh Bach Society and the Scottish Theatre Company and he has worked with the Edinburgh Grand Opera and the Edinburgh Youth Orchestra.

I was interested to learn more about this talented and charming man, and why he came to Australia so when I was in Sydney for a flying visit in November, 1988, I conducted an interview with John, extracts of which appear below. Despite the fact that Sir David Wilcocks had been in Sydney only a few days previously for concerts with the Sydney Philharmonia, and that John was in the middle of a full week of rehearsals and concerts of Martin Wesley-Smith's *Boojum!*, he kindly gave me an hour of his time, for which I would like to formally record my gratitude.

Katie Purvis

KP: John, your biography shows that you were incredibly busy back in Scotland. I wondered what made you leave all that to come to Australia?

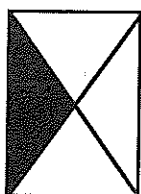
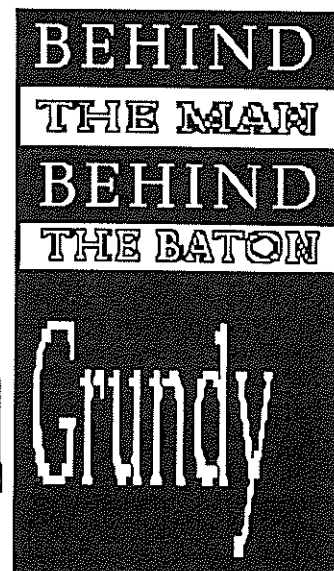
JG: Well, it's difficult to explain that...I'd been active in Scotland for eighteen years and I just thought I'd reached as far as I was going to. It's the "prophet in your own land" business—you don't actually get as much recognition after a certain time in a certain place as you'd like. I thought, "I've contributed as much as I can. It's time to go and contribute somewhere else". And, of course, what's happened is that in the ten months since I arrived in Australia I'm even busier than I was in Scotland, because I've taken on so many other things besides Philharmonia. In the last month it's just exploded into action.

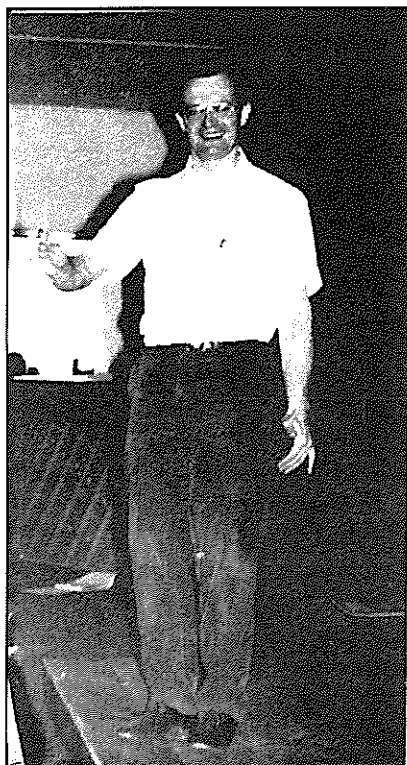
KP: What other things are you involved in besides Philharmonia?

JG: I'm Assisting Advisor to the Elizabethan Philharmonic Orchestra (the Opera House's opera and ballet orchestra) which involves a lot of both orchestral and choral conducting. Negotiations are underway regarding Song Company—I'm taking over as Artistic Advisor—and my freelance conducting career has gone mad. It's blossomed into a lot of concerts. So I'm very busy, which is great.

KP: Have you had much chance to see the Choral scene around Australia? What are your impressions?

JG: I've done preliminary tours of the major cities but I've not actually heard a lot of choral music here yet. I was extremely impressed with the Queensland Youth Choir and I've heard some school choirs in various parts of the country, including Adelaide, and again I've been impressed. I think there are the makings of a good choral tradition in Australia. It's not a very old tradition yet, but I think the standard which will emerge will be very high. So far, it's been very impressive and I'm very keen to hear more and hopefully be even more impressed.





John Grundy, I.V. chorusmaster  
in rehearsal

KP: John, you were invited out to Australia to take the place of the late conductor of Philharmonia, Peter Seymour. Peter had been associated with the choir for many years and saw it develop into a major force on the Sydney music scene, indeed, he was instrumental in this development. Did you have any problems taking over from Peter?

JG: Yes. Ghosts in the choral world are very hard to lay. I think a good choral director like Peter builds up an incredibly special relationship with the people he works with. Some of the people in Philharmonia found it difficult to let go of this wonderful, charismatic figure from the past. Some of them even said after my first rehearsal, "Gosh, isn't he incredibly like Peter Seymour!", which is really not particularly flattering, to be told that you're like your predecessor. That, I think, is wearing off now. After all, you have to respect intensely what he had done in the past and say, "Fine, he's done that--now, we're going to do even more". And I think that he would want it that way, he wouldn't want it to go on the same way.

KP: What are your long term plans for the Philharmonia?

JG: Well, I think that we're going to move into certain slightly different directions now. Philharmonia is now doing so many concerts per year that we simply can't learn the music in time! This year since I arrived on January 26 Philharmonia will have done forty six concerts which is quite exceptional. But 1989 will be the same and the bookings for 1990 are already filling up. So the concept of 'pure choral music' is something that has to be looked at closely. There will, of course, be purely choral concerts, but we already work for virtually every musical organisation in Sydney--Musica Viva, the Sydney Opera House Festival, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra--as well as special bookings like Australia Day and conferences. We're

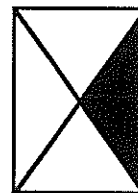
covering everybody's musical needs at the moment which means that we're going to have to expand. A third choir, which we're calling the Cantata Choir, will be formed in addition to the already-existing Motet Choir and the 'big' choir. This choir will be about eighty voices strong and will concentrate on Baroque and Classical music. Being larger than Motet Choir, it should be able to get around some of the acoustic problems which face choirs singing with orchestras in the Opera House Concert Hall.

KP: Lastly, I want to ask you about Intervarsity. What were your impressions of the 39th IVCF in Sydney last year?

JG: Oh, it was marvellous! A great time. I've always maintained links with university choirs, I directed the Edinburgh University Musical Society for a number of years and right up until the time I left I was in charge of the University Singers who are a really splendid choir of about 35 singers. I've always enjoyed the tremendous enthusiasm you can get from student choirs, but I also love the sheer beauty of sound which is quite unique. That was true of Intervarsity last year--I really enjoyed the sound the choir made. I loved the enthusiasm, I loved the people, it was fun, but I think the sound was the great thing. Putting the Intervarsity Choir together with the Philharmonia for the Mahler Eighth was just...beyond my wildest dreams. The two choirs complemented each other to perfection. Philharmonia has an enormous amount of experience and they can really knock the socks of an orchestra. Their enormous power can single-handedly cruise through any symphony orchestra--but they don't make a particularly beautiful sound doing that. But by putting the Intervarsity Choir with that you produced, I think, one of the best choral sounds I've ever heard. The Mahler was really stunning, an overwhelming experience for everyone involved. It was one of the most moving occasions I've ever taken part in. The very first sounds at the first full rehearsals, when we actually got those 490 singers together with orchestra, took my breath away. And still does, even thinking about it now--I think it was just the most staggering sound I've ever heard. Let's not do it again too soon! So Intervarsity was one of the climaxes of the year for me--and the year was an incredibly exciting one for me anyway. The Mahler Eighth was a fabulous occasion, and musically justified all the enjoyment we put into it as well.

KP: Will you consider working with future IVs?

JG: I can't wait for the invitation! Certainly. Yes. I've had an enquiry from Perth IV and, obviously, I will leap at it! [ Good news! John will conduct at Perth IV--ED ]



# forthcoming FESTIVALS

## 40th Inter University Choral Festival Canberra, 1989



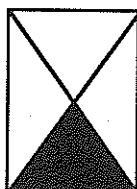
As many readers know, the 40th IVCF is planned for Canberra this year from July 1-15. The Planning Committee/Collective has ensured that the IV will be exciting musically for choral singers by selecting pieces which will make the choir the Star of the Show.

The choir will perform three major choral works accompanied by a seventy piece orchestra drawn from the Canberra Symphony Orchestra. The conductor for rehearsals and concert is Hans Gunter-Mommer, Canberra's leading choral conductor and an orchestral conductor of renown here and abroad.

The programme will be Brahms's *Song of Destiny*, Verdi's *Four Sacred Pieces* and Kodaly's *Missa Brevis*. The *Song of Destiny*, based on Hölderlin's poem contrasting an immortal utopia of tranquil happiness with a mortal world of unceasing struggle doomed to darkness and destruction. The music mirrors the contrast between the exalted harmony of the gods and the horrifying reality of suffering that is human life. The conclusion of the piece is bright and harmonic and peace reigns accompanied by flutes and violins. This piece is exciting for the depth of the musical exploration of the written text by the composer. There is much fine orchestral and vocal scoring in the *Song of Destiny*, which is reminiscent of Brahms's *Deutsches Requiem*. It should be an interesting and demanding piece to sing and a fine beginning to the concert.

The second work before interval is Kodaly's *Missa Brevis*, which some choristers may have performed in its original form with organ. Kodaly also orchestrated the work and has achieved a tremendous emotional subtlety in this realisation. The piece, written during World War II, is an uplifting supplication culminating with the words *Da Pacem* (Grant Peace). [This associates the *Missa Brevis* with other famous choral compositions, from Haydn's *Mass in Time of War* through to Britten's *War Requiem* and Vaughan-Williams *Dona Nobis Pacem*, which many of us have sung in the past.--Ed]

The piece makes use of a variety of choral textures, effective word-painting (for in-



stance, in the setting of *Dona Nobis Pacem* for three soprano voices) and contrasts modal and chromatic harmonies which are enriched by unexpected modulations and cadences. Kodaly's skills as a choral composer and his appreciation of Hungarian choral traditions are manifest in the mastery with which he thematically binds these disparate elements.

After interval the concert continues with Verdi's *Four Sacred Pieces*, the last published works of this composer. The cornerstone of this set is the *Te Deum*, a work of which Verdi thought so highly that he had a score of it buried with his body.

The *Ave Maria* and the *Laudi Alla Virgine Maria* are a cappella works, the first of which is the most idiosyncratic of the four, being based on the *Scala Enigmatica* published in the *Gazetta Musicale*. Verdi wrote to Boito, who had written the libretto for the opera *Otello*, that the *Ave Maria* was his fourth such work. Boito responded that "many Ave Marias are needed so that you can make His Holiness pardon you for the Credo of Iago". (Incidentally, an *Ave Maria* is sung by Desdemona in the fourth act of *Otello*, just prior to her murder. Another occurs as part of Verdi's *Jerusalem*. Does anyone know anything about the remaining setting?--ED.)

The *Laudi Alla Virgine Maria* is scored for women's choir (SSAA) and is a serene angelic composition. The talents of the women who sang in the Mahler *Eighth Symphony* last year will again be called upon for this piece.

The *Te Deum* follows the *Laudi* with male voices in a prayer of deliverance and a confirmation of faith, culminating with full choir in voices of hope singing "Let me never be Confounded."

Each of these four pieces creates a specific musical effect and together they represent the culmination of Verdi's work as a composer for choir. Our performance will no doubt show the skill and versatility of the IV choir as few other works can.

We hope other choirs will find this programme as challenging and exciting as we do. The chance to sing a concert which consists entirely of choral music, on such a magnificent scale, is rare indeed.

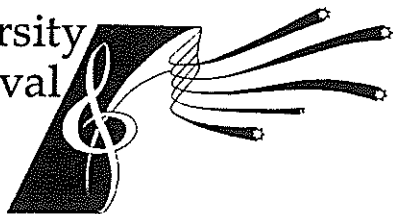
Katya.

just a iiiiiiittle bit longer to go  
until...THE ERATO  
DEADLINE

finished

## FESTIVALS

### 39th Intervarsity Choral Festival Sydney 1988

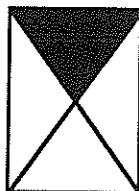


With the Choral Festival Committee still reeling from the impact of Sydney IV (already six months ago!) there is still news to tell. We are currently preparing the accounts for auditing, an arduous task given the scale of the project and the work commitments of those involved. However, these will be finalised before the next IV, where I will give the final report to the Council.

As many of you know, both concerts have been broadcast on ABC Radio since the Festival. *Songs of Australia* was presented on Under Capricorn, a series devoted to Australian music and featured an interview with Martin Wesley-Smith. Our performance was both exuberant and slightly flawed, which is after all only to be expected after a week of solid rehearsals. Certainly we all enjoyed listening to it—though it proves almost impossible to refrain from singing along! The Saturday performance of Mahler's *Eighth Symphony* was broadcast twice on the ABC. Unfortunately, we were not notified of the second broadcast, which took place on Australia Day, though I believe various choristers did pick it up out of the blue, as it were.

We are still negotiating with the ABC for access to tapes for both concerts so that we can produce copies for participating choristers. Unfortunately, due to the number of soloists, other choirs and the status of the conductor (Charles Dutoit) it does seem unlikely that we will be able to get a tape of the Mahler. This would be a great shame, and is something that future IVs would do well to bear in mind. As the Intervarsity Movement comes of age and begins working with bodies like the ABC it should be borne in mind that recording and broadcast rights will often not be held by the Festival itself. Perhaps committees could organise to have a relevant clause inserted in the contracts which they make with organisations like the ABC. However, we are making every possible effort to obtain tapes of our concerts, so stay tuned.

On a more positive note, photos commemorating the Festival are available. Each society will receive order forms and a sample of the photo very soon. To help make matters easy for all concerned we ask that each



society fills in the bulk order form and sends a cheque to cover the total amount. This will help to ensure that everyone who orders and pays for a photo will get one and will make matters infinitely easier for us at this end.

Of course, individuals are perfectly welcome to send their own orders in, but it makes postage and processing much easier if we can do this via societies. The photos will cost about \$8 each.

Sydney IV was given a write up in *Sing Out*, the journal of the Australian Choral Association and the Australian Choral Conductors Association. Katie Purvis wrote the article, which was illustrated by various candid shots of choristers and conductors taken during the Festival. Thank you very much Katie.

The repercussions of the success of the 39th IVCF are being felt both in Sydney and interstate. Although some people in Melbourne had expressed concern regarding interstate interest in Femmefest, those from Sydney who could attend were by and large Sydney IV freshers—who came back raving! SUMS is enjoying working with the Sydney Philharmonia and Sydney Symphony Orchestra again, this time in four performances of the Verdi *Requiem*. Siobhan Lennihan, Intervarsity Concert Manager extra-ordinaire, is now assistant orchestra manager for the SSO (partly on the strength of her impressive performance during IV). These things are more than simply personal—they can benefit every choir in the Association and can help us to develop a higher profile in Australia's musical life. After all, Intervarsity as a national activity is unique in Australia, and is comparable to other large-scale events like the Three Choirs Festival in Britain.

Some choristers have written to us regarding refund of their registration fees since they were unable to attend the festival. We will attend to this as soon as we can. If anyone else has queries regarding things like this, please contact us by writing to Box 150, Holme Building, University of Sydney, NSW 2006. If you like you can ring me on (02) 660 4038 and I'll be glad to help in any way I can.

Stephen Schafer.

MELBOURNE MINIFEST  
A Simple Equation:  
Femmefest=Funfest

It all began one fateful night in sinister suburban Glen Iris. Men dressing up as women. Women dressing up as women. Women dressing up as men dressing up as women. And dancing to ABBA. What was all this lechery and debauched behaviour in aid of? Femmefest! Otherwise

known as Melbourne Minifest '89.

The aforementioned party kicked off the festival. It was a "femme party"--come as your favorite woman/the woman you've always wanted to be, and sure enough a veritable parade of lovelies (from the shy, flower-like debutantes Miles and Kent, Mark \$1.20's convincing Dame Edna, through to a clutch of Lindy Chamberlains) graced the Purvis residence until the small hours.

The next day we all launched off to the Ace Hi Riding Ranch, complete with very tasteful, nay, understated, wagons, chapel, cabins, an O.K. Corral (with real horses) and a plethora of Western Memorabilia. If these details aren't enough to make those who weren't there green with envy, then perhaps the accommodation in the cabins (including own bathroom, own fridge, own sink, own chairs, table and sofa) is!

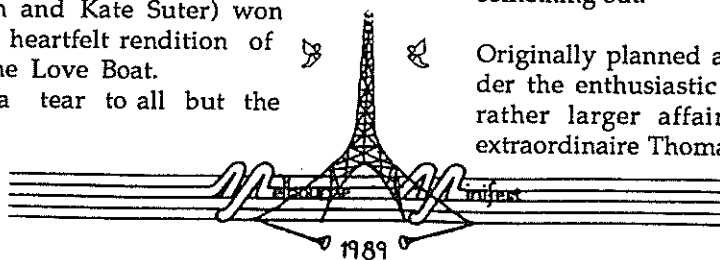
At camp we began to discover just how tricky *Spem in Alium* was, with its eight choirs and 40 parts meaning a maximum of four voices per part (130 choristers attended the festival). However, we managed to overcome inadequacies (all right, my inadequacies, I admit it) by punctuating rehearsals of *Spem* and *Carmina Burana* with an Irish dance starring world-renowned Irish band The Craic (ie. Eddy Bresson, Peter Ascot, Simon Barfoot, Martin Suter, Dee Johnson and Co) as well as the inaugural Harold Holt lookalike competition and of course the revue.

David Woodgate won the revue for a version of Pink Floyd's *Comfortably Numb* and the aforementioned H.H.L.C was triumphantly dominated by the combined talents of ms Eve Killick, Vanessa Craigie, Kate Suter and the ever-loving Simon Johnson. 'Mid picturesque cameos re-enacted from moments of the great man's life (and death), the most memorable moment (apart from seeing Philip Bird's sincere portrayal of Dame Zara) was the winners' hot sex scene in the sand with Simon spreadeagled and flailing helplessly while three persuasive altos had their way with him. [What did that have to do with H.H.????--ED]

From the camp we hauled ourselves back to Melbourne to a week of 35 degree heat and rehearsals at St Barnabas' Church in Balwyn. Rita zoomed choristers around in Sahib, the Femmebus, making sure that they arrived on time to the formal dinner in honour of MUCS' 50th Birthday (hiphipHooray!). This was held at a yumarama Indian Restaurant, and everybody was very sari.

Friday night we returned to tradition and held the Soprano Aria competition (for Tenors and Basses). Ms Sime-lina Barfoot (with grass skirted lovelies Amanda Q Johnson and Kate Suter) won hands down with a heartfelt rendition of the theme from *The Love Boat*.

It truly brought a tear to all but the sternest heart.



Sunday brought the concert and a cool change. *Spem* was performed in the first half, but *Carmina Burana* really brought the house down, and the 500-strong audience's enthusiasm was rewarded with an encore of the finale.

*Carmina* was performed with two pianos and percussion rather than full orchestra and the result was a very dramatic performance from Bruce Petherick and Maree Macmillan, this was reinforced by dramatic lighting, culminating in a blood-red finale with an instant blackout as we sounded the final note! [!!!!!!--ED]

The Post-Concert Party was held at the Melbourne Uni Boathouse by the Yarra, and was one of the kissiest parties I've ever been to. On Monday we tried to entice the interstaters to stay (we even tied Ali to a tree) but slowly they slipped away from our recovery party in the Botty Gardens. And then, as festivals are apt to be, it was all over.

Femmefest was a rampant success and for this we must applaud the brilliant skills of Femme-convenor, Jacqui Harrison and all those multitudes who helped, aided and abetted her in bringing together all of us.

Hiphip&c.,

Kate Corringe-Smith

## SUMMERFEST '88 INC. A Bedtime Story from Adelaide

Summerfest '88 Inc. closed 1988 with a musical flourish whilst 1989 was opened with a percussive bang by Melbourne Minifest. With regards to both--It weas great. We had a ball!

Summerfest'88 Inc. was dreamed up in very late 1987 in the euphoric aftermath of Adelaide IV, with the intention that a post-Sydney IV party could incorporate a little singing. When we started work on the idea we didn't know that Melbourne had already conceived a minifest, so when this came to our notice a few serious discussions took place between A James Scott [Not the James Scott?!?--ED] and Marie Rapp to see if we could work something out.

Originally planned as a modest local affair it grew, under the enthusiastic impetus of Hilary Weiland, into a rather larger affair and included English organist extraordinaire Thomas Trotter who came to Australia es-

pecially for the event. About a dozen interstate visitors joined forty five locals between Dec 26 and 31 to rehearse and perform the Duruflé *Requiem* in St Francis Xavier Cathedral.

During the week we had a total of 17 hours rehearsal (none of it in the morning!) interspersed with footrally, roaring twenties dinnerdance, beachparty, lunches, breakfasts, publicity sings and generally-goodtimes.

The weather was more or less kind, the music fabulous, the conductor fabulous, the musicians fabulous, the concert especially fabulous and the PCP likewise. The New Year's Eve Party was really weird, though.

I think that everyone who sang or listened agreed that it was a first rate concert and we were all very pleased to have the opportunity to work with someone of the international repute of Thomas Trotter.

There are always many people to thank after any such event--so Thank You!

Lots of Luv,

Norris Carter and Jennifer Jones

PS. See you in Canberra.....I swear it's a disease!

# Summerfest '88



## AISCA

## LIBRARIANS

The AISCA Library catalogue contains listings of the holdings of society libraries and is currently being revised for a second edition. Most societies have already sent us updates, but in order to give everyone time to submit details of new purchases we have extended the deadline until March 31 this year.

Please note a change of address: Vanessa Twigg now resides at 22 Horfield Ave., Box Hill North, Vic 3129 and can be reached on (03) 898 2615 (home) whilst Katie can be called on (03) 297735.

In order to help society librarians liaise with each other, here is a list of names and numbers for each society. Maybe now we can *all* get some sleep!

AUCS Nadine Johnston (08) 388 7216

FUCS Catherine Campbell (08) 390 1284

Macquarie University Singers

Jeanette Mills (02) 887 3158(h)

(02) 635 4722(w)

MonUCS Janet McDougall (03) 836 4553

MUCS Michael McLaughlin (03) 419 8992

ProMUQ Max Potters (07) 369 9963 (after 10pm)

PUCS Tim Parrish (09) 457 4774

QUMS Mark Delany (07) 371 5807

SCUNA Liz Moore (062) 92 2751(h)

(062) 71 5749(w)

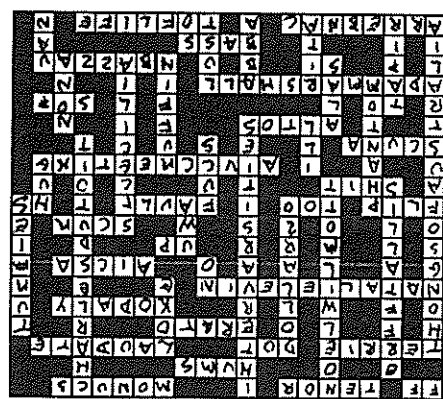
SUMS Joseph Toltz (02) 467 1446

TUMS Irena Jakobs (002) 72 1309

Thank you to all librarians who have helped us to organise the AISCA Library Catalogue. Who knows, we might just stand again next year...

Stephen Schafer  
per Katie Purvis and Vanessa Twigg

ERATO CROSSWORD SOLUTION  
(Don't peek yet or you'll spoil it!)



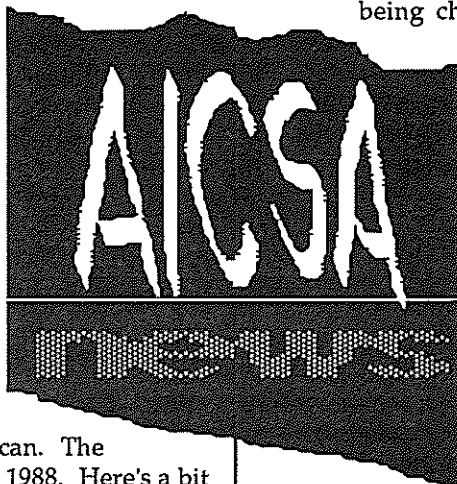
The Australian Intersivity Choral Societies Association is the national body of the university choral movement.

It is administered by an executive of three, includes other office-bearers--Librarians, *Erato* Editor and Archivist--and is responsible to the annual meeting of the Australian Intersivity Choral Council which is generally held during the annual Intersivity Choral Festival. Presidents of each Society and representatives from each Intersivity Festival Committee join with the Association office-bearers in discussing plans for Festivals and issues relevant to each of the choirs.

The task of the executive is specifically to oversee and co-ordinate the running of Intersivity Choral Festivals and, in general, to represent and promote your interests in any way we can. The present executive took office in October 1988. Here's a bit of what has come our way since then.

Melbourne Minifest is just over. By all reports the concert of January 29 in Robert Blackwood Hall at Monash University, went extremely well. The programme was attractive and challenging (after last minute changes) and featured Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Tallis' *Spem In Alium* and Mihaud's *Scaramouche Suite for Two Pianos*. The camp, too, was apparently very successful. A minor emergency in December caused a few problems: a substantial portion of the camp hire fee (\$5000) was required in advance and was not available. Fortunately, a smaller figure was negotiated. The organising committee is to be congratulated on their management of a highly successful event, particularly Jacqui Harrison who stepped in as convenor at short notice and discharged her job superbly.

Preparations are proceeding well for the 40th Intersivity Choral Festival in Canberra, to be held from July 1 to 15, 1989. A grant of \$7500 has been made by the Capital Arts Patrons' Organisation and so the more ambitious and expensive of the two possible programmes will be performed. The concert will be on Friday, July 14 in Llewellyn Hall and will be conducted by Hans Günter Mommer. Verdi's *Four Sacred Pieces*, the Kodaly *Missa Brevis* and Brahms' *Schicksalsleid* will be performed. We have submitted a grant application to the Australia Council to fund the services of Ben Macpherson as chorusmaster. Ben, as many of you know, has conducted SUMS for five years and conducted the first concert at the 39th Intersivity Choral Festival held last August in Sydney. We will find out the result of this application in April this year.



(As an aside, would organising committees please note that Australia Council grant applications need to be prepared at least eighteen months in advance. Cutting things to the finest, you need a year if your treasurer doesn't mind gambling on the outcome.)

The 41st Intersivity Choral Festival, to be held in Perth, January 1990 is also being planned. A conductor is being chosen and the likely work is Vaughan

Williams' *A Sea Symphony*, which to our knowledge has never been performed at an IV. The committee is negotiating for the use of the Western Australia Symphony Orchestra.

A steering committee has been elected for the 42nd IV (Melbourne 1991). It is Felicity Johnson, Robin Kirkham, Mandy Johnson and "riff raff" [sic]. Rumour has it that the 43rd IV, to be held in Hobart in 1992, is also in its initial planning stages. The provisional timetable for further IV Festivals reads: Brisbane, 1993; Adelaide, 1994; Sydney, 1995, and so on. This roster is,

of course, flexible, and bookings remain tentative until the formation of a steering committee.

Both QUMS and AUCS indicated at the Council meeting in 1988 that they wished to convene a Minifest in 1990 between the 41st and 42nd IVs. We received submissions from both societies and the question was to go to a postal ballot. In November QUMS withdrew their submission and the AUCS submission was accepted unopposed. The proposed work for Adelaide Minifest 1990 is Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* and a likely time for the festival is the AVCC common holiday week in September 1990. We hope that this festival does not impose the same restrictions on choir numbers as did the recent Adelaide Summerfest. The limit is perhaps understandable in the light of considerations of rehearsal times, and so forth, but in general this is not a direction in which this executive wishes societies to move.

The first edition of the Association's Library Catalogue was launched in August 1988 and is a magnificent achievement. Librarians Katie Purvis and Vanessa Twigg are now working on the second edition. They have indicated, however, that they may not be seeking reelection at this year's Council meeting in July. Budding librarians should start thinking about the job now to allow smooth handover of office. Computer access is necessary--either an IBM-PC with hard disk to run dBase III or any other machine if you have the expertise to customise a database and port in the data from ASCII tape. Think about it, and write to Katie or Vanessa who will tell you what it's really like. (Katie Purvis: 1 Dillon Grove, Glen Iris, Vic., 3146. Vanessa Twigg: 22 Horfield Ave., Box Hill North, Vic 3129 phone (03) 898 2615)



The Association's Trust Fund is a matter we will be addressing in the coming months. The Fund is underutilised and presently contains in excess of \$17 000. Until now only small amounts have been allocated to Festivals by trustees David Goodwin (Sydney) and Tim Mason (Perth), with the requirement that 50% of net profit go back to the fund. David and Tim are keen for more use of the Fund and we will negotiate with them for a wider selection of grant/loan categories, at present limited to IVs. To prospective applicants: there is no application form, just write to us enclosing your latest budget.

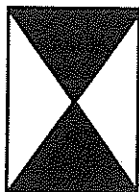
Welcome to Macquarie University Singers, who affiliated in October 1988. Deakin University Choral Society have also just written, expressing interest in affiliation. We aim to expand our association's representation to include choral societies in all tertiary institutions in Australia (and maybe even New Zealand--who knows?!) Now that all Australian University and CAE holidays have been standardised on a semester system it should be possible for many more groups to attend our Intervarsity Festivals. If you know of any group that may be interested in affiliating, please let us know.

The Association's patrons were discussed at the last Council meeting. Both Rodney Eichenburger and Georg Tintner are now resident overseas and, while maintaining a keen interest, have not been closely involved with the IV scene for some years. Accordingly, we approached John Grundy, musical director of Sydney Philharmonia. John was extremely popular as chorusmaster at Sydney IV last year, and this, together with his location and vast musical experience make him ideally suitable to be the Association's patron. In his own words:

*As a relative newcomer still to the Australian musical scene I think that the IVs are one of your great institutions, not only providing performances for people to participate in music of the highest standard, but also in giving them a love of choral music that will hopefully last a lifetime. I would be honoured to be associated with such a movement.*

Finally, an application has been made to the Australia Council to fund *Erato*. If it is successful the money will be used to improve the quality of production of the magazine and to increase its size and circulation. It will also alleviate some of the financial burden on the Association as presently *Erato* consumes about 85% of our budget (ie. everyone's AICSA subscription fees).

So in closing we would like to remind everyone that we are *your* executive, and need your ideas, criticisms, information and comments to make our Association bigger, better and even more beautiful than ever. Please rush them to Box 150, Holme Building, University of Sydney, NSW 2006.



## ASSOCIATION OFFICE BEARERS CAN BE CONTACTED AT THE FOLLOWING ADDRESSES:

(These office-bearers may also be contacted by writing to

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### Vanessa Twigg (Librarian)

22 Horfield Ave, Box Hill North  
Vic 3129  
ph. (03) 898 2615

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THE ERATO DEADLINES FOR THIS YEAR ARE AS FOLLOWS:

## ERATO 58

Published May 1989 DEADLINE: APRIL 30

## ERATO 59

Published August 1989 DEADLINE: JULY 31

## ERATO 60

Published November 1989 DEADLINE: OCTOBER 31

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The opinions expressed in Erato are not necessarily those of the Association or of its governing body the Australian Intersociety Choral Council. The editor takes all care but no responsibility for the accuracy of information appearing in Erato. Readers should rely on their own enquiries when making any decisions touching on their interests.

Items received after the deadline for each issue will not be included in that issue, and, depending on space, may not be held over until the following issue. Updated information or changes to any article may be incorporated up to one week after each deadline.

Articles for the society news section should be roughly 500 words in length. concert reviews should be concise, informative and remain within 500 words. Feature articles should be about 1000 words in length. Letters to the Editor are sought on any topic of interest to readers. It may be necessary to edit material for reasons of space.

ALL ITEMS SHOULD INCLUDE THE NAME, POSTAL ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER OF THE WRITER. To ensure the editor's sanity, please type articles with double spacing or handwrite them VERY NEATLY INDEED.

Photographic material is sought for Erato. Pictures of concerts, conductors, parties, rehearsals, outings, or anything faintly amusing or delicately perverse will be printed in Erato. B&W, or good quality colour, are both acceptable. Please print on the back of each photograph exactly who and/or what it shows. Photos will be returned if you provide a stamped self-addressed envelope.

Societies are requested to provide me with the number of Eratos required for each issue. (This information can be included with the Eraticle for that issue). As we hope to expand the readership of Erato you might like to order extra copies for other groups or individuals who may be interested. I would also like to ask those societies, and IVs, which have not yet sent in clean bromides of their logos to do so with the next Eraticle. No bromide/photostat=No logo in Erato.

If you have any questions or suggestions regarding Erato please feel free to contact me at any time. I'd love to hear from you.

Erato is particularly keen to hear from newly-affiliated societies or from choral groups who are interested in affiliating with AICSA. Call the editor for further information.

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STEPHEN SCHAFER

Editor

# A CHORAL FANFARE

ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY  
CHORAL SOCIETY

Conducted by Hilary Weiland  
with the Adelaide University  
Brass Ensemble

Music by Schütz, Purcell, Berger, Messiaen  
and Rutter.

I have of late become increasingly aware of very poor audience behaviour in Adelaide—that is, lots of chattering during the show. I have theories concerning the cause. But I am pleased to report that AUCS' audience on October 22 was very well behaved.

Congratulating a choir on the quality of its audience is a bit like praising a record for its cover, you'll say. But no, as usual, this was a fine and consistent concert, although not quite attaining the level of magnificence as *Israel in Egypt* earlier in the year.

The concert got off to a good start with Schütz' *Psalm 150*, which sounded as though the singers had taken their warm-up seriously. I am tempted to make some sort of joke about "Lobatine" (Lobet Ihn)—a new shampoo, perhaps, or a hot milk drink; but I won't because, really apart from this, the German pronunciation was pretty good.

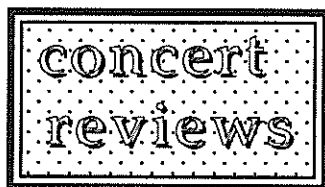
This was followed by a good performance by the Adelaide University Brass Ensemble of *Symphony* from Purcell's *The Faery Queen*. I don't normally say a lot about supporting acts, and I won't here, but I will mention that the programming was excellent. The other AUBE performance, in the second half, of Motet and Pavane by Nelhybel, was similarly well-chosen, well played and enjoyable.

The first half concluded with two more works: Purcell's *Funeral Sentences* and Berger's *Psalm 119*. My comments on both of these is that they lacked confidence to a degree, but were nevertheless sensitive and musical. But the best choral singing of the night was in the second half, in Messiaen's *O Sacrum Convivium*. It sounded effortless, which, although I, don't know the score, I daresay it isn't, and was beautifully sung.

And so to the final blast of the concert: John Rutter's *Gloria*. It's a lot of fun to sing, of course, and this came over. But you can't get a first-rate performance just by belting it out. I think the choir didn't know the notes of the first movement quite as well as they should have, and there was a bit of a problem in the fugue in the third. Apart from these peccadilloes, the piece was sung competently and well. In addition, this work was graced with the best semi-chorus ensemble work of the evening. I mention in particular Lynn Wakefield, a newcomer, I think, to the ranks of AUCS soloists, and one whose high soprano voice I hope to hear more of.

AUCS' concerts tend to range from the very good to the magnificent lately. This one was probably more towards the 'very good' end of the continuum but did have many magnificent points. Full marks for choice of music and the 'concept' of the concert—"A Choral Fanfare"—, choice of artists—Standish Roberts and the Adelaide University Brass Ensemble—the printed programme and most of the singing, too.

Daryl Colquhoun.



## Full-tonal quality to Christmas choral concert

LAST Friday night in the Hall of University House the ANU Choral Society, directed by Brian Hingerty, presented its annual concert of choral music for Christmas.

Most of the works presented were for a capella choir. Sustained unaccompanied singing becomes more difficult as the number of singers increases, and with the ANU Choral Society at present consisting of more than 30 singers, there were some problems of intonation and of maintaining pitch over the span of longer items. But the choir produced a nice, full-tonal quality, with good dynamic control, and these few discrepancies did not greatly diminish the overall effectiveness of the singing.

The program opened with two advent motets by Spanish composer Franciscus Guerrero, and in both of these there were some initial uncertainties, although the singing settled down as each proceeded. Guerrero was a lesser-known contemporary of Palestrina, and this first group concluded appropriately with a Christmas motet by the great Italian in which the singing displayed greater assurance and was thereby more effective.

Three carols, one written by Martin Shaw and the others arrangements by him of traditional French carols, made a pleasant interlude, and were attractively sung. Between the motets and carols there was an interesting inclusion—an extended setting of the old German carol

*Es ist ein Ros entsprungen* written in 1933 by the German composer Hugo Distler. It was sung well and made a pleasant contrast to the other works.

This substantial first half concluded with a performance of the *Messe de Minuit* by the 17th century French composer Marc-Antoine Charpentier. A midnight Christmas mass, based on French *noels*, it has a popular and lightly attractive basis. Given a well-shaped performance, with some pleasant solo contributions, it provided an attractive finish to the formal part of the program.

After interval, choir and audience joined in the singing of carols.

— W. L. HOFFMANN

### MUSIC

FRED BLANKS

#### CAROLFEST

Sydney University Musical Society  
Conducted by Ben McPherson  
and Katrina Jenns  
Organist, Peter Young  
Great Hall, University of  
Sydney, December 9

LIKE the witches in Macbeth, the Sydney University Musical Society met in thunder, lightning and in rain on Friday. The elements caused the 30th Annual Carolfest to begin very belatedly, and maintained their hostility to the end.

Fortunately the choir of some 80 voices followed the considerate but not permissive conducting of Ben McPherson much more obediently than did the thunder.

Their program, ranging from the traditional and baroque to a melodically compliant carol by Malcolm Williamson and an abrasive one by Peter Maxwell Davies, was varied and ambitious; the results of the ambition were limited only by the unavoidable fact that a choir which is open to everyone has its share of weaknesses—in this case, some tentative high sopranos and the usual thin spots in the tenors.

In the season of goodwill, this hardly blemished a generally attractive concert.

Uni meets again for  
cauldron of carols

# Uni students in concert

A GOLDEN opportunity to hear some of Australia's finest university choristers in action is now available.

The 1989 Choral Minifest opened in Melbourne last Friday.

And for the next 10 days 100 university choristers from all around Australia will rehearse for a huge concert in the Robert Blackwood hall, Monash University, on January 29.

The concert will feature Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* and Thomas Tallis' *Spem in Altum*.

Rehearsals will be held in St Barnabas' Church in Balwyn.

Inter-varsity festivals traditionally occur once or twice every year. The capital cities take turns to host these events.

The majority of performers and organisers



CHORISTERS practise in Balwyn for their big concert. They are (back row from left) Jacqui Harrison, Helen Penrose, Sophie Gordon-Clark, Leonie Doyle, Rita Battaglin, Brian Polli, Richard Gorrings, Catherine Campbell, Thea Meadows, Kate Suter, Eric Polli. Front: Marion Anderson, John Conran and Katie Purvis.

are under 25 years old.

Guest artists at the concert include Merlyn Quaife (soprano), Rodney

Vapp (tenor), Francesco Fabris (baritone), the Melbourne Academy Boys' Choir,

and pianists Maree Macmillan, Bruce Petherick and Ivor Simpson.

The renowned Polish conductor, Jan Politowski, will conduct.

The concert starts at

8 pm on Sunday, January 29.

Tickets are \$13.50 and \$9.59 for concessions.

They are available through Bass.

The performance of *Spem* at Melbourne Minifest was as near perfect as our Intervarsity Choirs could get it, and that is a high standard! Each part had one to three voices, giving each chorister the thrill (or otherwise) of singing a solo part. The spatial arrangement of the choir in a large semicircle around the conductor gave a wonderful stereo effect to the motet as the music swept slowly from one side of the stage to the other as each sub-choir took up its part, and its neighbour drooped out. The work is constructed so that at times all sub-choirs sing at once, sometimes only a pair at a time with permutations on this theme. The performers' only glitch came when choir four missed their cue and thus only two voices were sing when six should have been! Fortunately, choir three came to the rescue, but the incident left choirs one and two slightly off guard, and their entry was a fraction late. Apart from this (and some audience noise during a general rest) the performance was an excellent rendition and true to the intent and design of the composer; in fact better due to the clarity of the higher parts, than the *Pro Cantione* recording.

Orff's *Carmina Burana* comes from a collection of Goliardic Songs found in the Benedictine Abbey at Bären (Germany), hence the latin name 'Songs of Bären'. The Goliards were graduate scholars and unfrocked priests, runaway monks and others who went from one university to another, singing and begging to make a living. Their songs, in lilting latin verse with stressed rhymes, mimic the form of mediaeval hymns (although some songs in *Carmina* are in mediaeval German). They include lusty peapens to love and wine and the wayfarers' life, as well as skillful attacks on the immorality of Churchmen and their way of life (hence 'Ego Sum Abbas Cuckaniensis'...I am the Abbot of Cockaigne, and my assembly is one of drunkards.)

ORATO 57 17 concert reviews

The flavour of *Carmina Burana* is that of the folk tunes of Central Europe, which we of the Post-Reformation West seem to have lost. It contrasts strongly with Orff's other work *Catulli Carmina* (performed by SUMS in July, 1988), with the latter's strong overtones of cynicism and sleaze. Indeed comparing *Carmina Burana* to *Catulli* is like comparing Chaucer to Penthouse. It is no wonder that *Burana* is so much more popular than *Catulli* and more often performed. This is no doubt also due to the lavish orchestration which is a feature of *Burana* and the rich variety of melodies which range from archaic rhythmic chant to

## A FULL-FLAVOURED CONCERT

parodies of Nineteenth Century Operatic styles. Certainly, for me, performing *Carmina Burana* was (direction aside) a more enjoyable experience than *Catulli*.

Melbourne Minifest's realisation of *Carmina Burana* was true to the nature of the work. Although it was performed with only the two grand pianos and full percussion, instead of complete orchestra, this enhanced most of the work and gave it a robust folkish flavour, except in the dance tunes where the strings were missed. The choir was well balanced (helped by SUMS participation!) and the small groups ("Coro Piccolo") gave admirable renditions, particularly the womens; their individual voices standing out rather than sounding too much in unison, enhanced the rusticity of the songs.

The whole performance was a credit to the preparation and direction of Jan Politowski.

Bruce Stafford

MUCS have always been slightly different from the rest of us, but this time things have really left the rails. Instead of an article about what's on this coming year we have a special retro eraticle written by Neils Stienstra, the MUCS President. Have the Melbourne University Choral Society been swept into a time vortex or are things actually going backwards across the border? Who knows. Just hold onto your hats as you read the most improbable epic since Captain MonUCS....

## MUCS: THE FIRST DECADE (1939-1949)

An historical article by Niels Stienstra, based on the 1989 Minifest Dinner Speech in honour of MUCS' Fiftieth Anniversary Year.

There is nothing quite so necessary for a young man as the society of clever women. And one way to mix with a company of brilliant femmes is to join an undergraduate choral society. But this was not always the case. Fifty years ago the following ad appeared in Farrago, the weekly magazine for Melbourne University students:

### MEN'S CHORAL SOCIETY

First practice Friday, 24th, at 1:30pm in Music Room.

Any men interested in singing are welcome.

(Farrago March, 1939)

The next week's Farrago carried this ad:

### WOMEN!

Do you chirp, cheep or trill?

Or do you just make a noise?

In either case, you should be interested in the possibilities for women warblers which are just opening before

you. There is going—we hope—to be a Women's Choral Group this year conducted by Mr. Sutton-Crowe, like the Men's Group only, of course, bigger, better and much brighter. We have already gathered a bevy of enthusiastic singers who generally maintained, just as you do, that they could not sing. So don't expect a group of prima donnas. Enthusiasm is the chief virtue.

A later Farrago reports that the Women's Choral Society held its inaugural meeting on 13 April, 1939, and the same article, entitled "Choral Societies Merge", contains this paragraph:

The Society will be incorporated with the Men's Choral Society as the Melbourne University Choral Society.

The women began rehearsal of a four-part song which would be sung with the men's group:

Mr. Sutton-Crowe is particularly enthusiastic about the women's section and hints darkly at superiority over the male group.

The author does not at present know the precise date of incorporation—that is, MUCS' Birthday—but we may assume that it falls in May of 1939.

The first MUCS President was Mr. R.R.P Barbour, described to the author as a dour, forty year old man of few words and having closely-cropped black hair. At the time, MUCS rehearsed in the Union, a four-storey university building with two theatres, several rooms and catering facilities. Barbour was the Warden of the Union, so it is not surprising that he was reelected unopposed at the annual AGM from 1939 to 1953.

The first MUCS conductor was Mr. Sutton-Crowe (1939-1941), then came Dan Hardy (1942-1948) who left at the end of MUCS' first decade. There is little in the way of written material on the Sutton-Crowe years—the MUCS archives only go back as far as 1943. We do know that MUCS rehearsed on

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Monday evenings and that afterwards choristers were treated to supper by Dr. Johnson, Master of Queens College. After supper, they would retire to Dr. Johnson's study, which was the size of a lounge room. Dr. Johnson was something of an eccentric. A physics graduate from an English University and Master of a staunchly Methodist college, he had a great interest in psychic matters. Conversations in his study sometimes revolved around telepathy and occult experiments where one student would attempt to transmit an image on a card into the mind of another. Dr. Johnson was actively interested in the wellbeing of MUCS and on occasion acted as assistant conductor.

At a prom concert in 1940 MUCS sang *Jabbit*, an aboriginal lullaby; *Who Stole My Lover?*, an early English ballad and *Linden Lea*. In August, 1941, the choir sang choral excerpts from Mendelssohn's *Elijah* at the Queen's College Chapel. This was Sutton-Crowe's last concert with MUCS.

In 1942 Dan Hardy became MUCS conductor. A chorister describes him as friendly and enthusiastic, short in stature with silver grey hair and receding hairline: "He loved the ladies and the ladies loved him". Hardy was also the conductor of the Melbourne Philharmonic Society, a leading Melbourne choir at the time. So why did he also conduct an unpolished undergraduate choir? He liked the enthusiasm, and it gave him the chance to perform a few of Bach's two hundred or so church cantatas at a time when almost no other group in Melbourne did so. Under Hardy, Bach cantatas were to become annual events in MUCS for the next seven years.

According to the 1943 AGM minutes, the choral society was fast growing with a consistent membership of about seventy. During the year MUCS sang madrigals such as *Come Again Sweet Love* and *Adieu, Sweet Amyrillis* for their first term concert and, in third term, a Bach cantata--*Out Of Darkness*. Social activities for this year included an Annual River Picnic on the Yarra and a weekend in the country at Kyneton. For the next two years the first term madrigals and third term Bach programme was repeated.

Part Two of *MUCS: The First Decade* will appear in Erato 58. If other societies have archival material of interest Erato will gladly publish articles of interest. Please try to include photographs, facsimiles of original programmes, newspaper articles or other visual material, as these are often, in themselves, as interesting as the written or verbal history. Send good quality bromides or very clear photocopies, as original material is often fragile.

All members of SUMS and their guests are cordially invited to attend  
**SUMS ELEVENTY-FIRST  
BALL**

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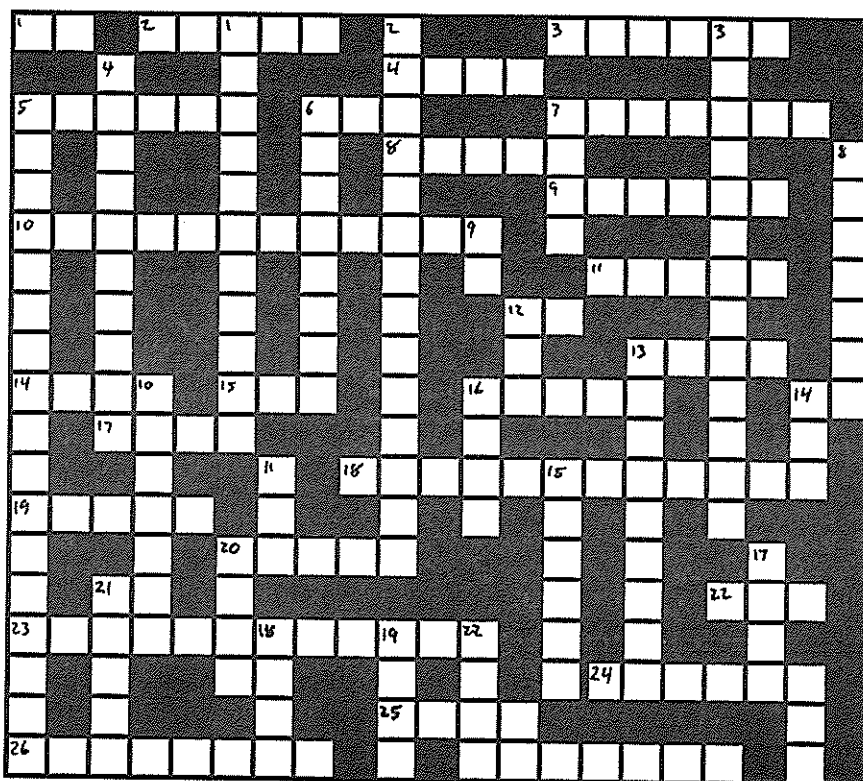
# ERATO CROSSWORD

## ACROSS

## DOWN

1. pp to a bass (no offence!) (2)
2. Eighteen of them pack a minibus. (5)
3. Australia's only purple choral society. (6)
4. Newcastle University Musical Society. (4)
5. Not Bazza's sister, but she's a MacKenzie. (6)
6. Little point from a german death. (3)
7. Tye me down with this old favorite. (7)
8. Everybody Reads And Talks Of this magazine. (5)
9. Compose a Hungarian 'hello'. Sounds Australian! (6)
10. A vile tan line confused a huggable Melbourne beauty. (7,5)
11. Aches are common in the heads of this organisation. (5)
12. They'll try to tell you otherwise, but the only way from Hobart is-. (2)
13. You need a Barf-bag to enjoy this bunch of choral coprophiliacs. (4)
14. The other side of a single. (4)
15. How many cooks spoil the broth? (3)
16. Flauto drops an oh to find a mistake. (5)
17. The only rude word in this crossword. Related to thirteen across, and if you stretch the point to eight down. (4)
18. I seize a vee to make the Never-ending Meeting. (5,7)
19. In NSW you drink from them but in the ACT they sing. (5)
20. No men dominate the loud ones. (5)
21. Do you know how hard it is to think of a clue for 'to', too? (2)
22. Short for a female with a high voice. (3)
23. This big girl don't cry in his boss's wig. (4,8)
24. This Melbourne minibus really hugs corners. Ask Barry, or see for yourself. (5,3)
25. The bottom line for singers. (4)
26. Crazy barn race run backwards to find out where the next one is to be held. (8)

1. No L can lead to this Brisbane tenor (he's no Coward). (4,7)
2. Stir, lan, serve it for mixed-up festivals. (14)
3. Conductor of the roof. (7,6)
4. fff or stall varied for a minifest concert programme. (4,6)
5. Ita Buttrose turns an IV commission into national footwear. (6,2,14)
6. This one's cheap at twice the price. (8)
7. Her first name is Catherine, her second sounds low key. (4)
8. I met sum wild choristers from Tas. (7)
9. When a girl says 'no' she really means-. (2)



10. This guy never did pay his camp fees at Sydney IV, though it's believed he founded a Korean Chorale that sang in the Mahler. (7)
11. Feel this while you scull, it won't make it easier. (3)
12. Alma Mater of PUCS. (3)
13. This saint lost her head to become our patron. (2,7)
14. What every good chorister needs at least once a day. (3)
15. These tots from Melbourne should get sponsored by Buttercup. Don't heat them or eat them—they sing. (6)
16. Thank heavens there are still some keen ones left! (4)

17. World's most prolific composer suffers reversal. (4)
18. Not an Eta eater, but soon to be wed to a bass with funny hair. (4)
19. Swedish favorite foursome. (4)
20. Sounds like a young girl associated with Yorrick. (4)
21. Any of several large chiefly nocturnal hoofed mammals with long snouts found in tropical America and Asia that are related to the horses and rhinoceroses. (5)
22. MonUCS' contribution to campus literature (where did they get the title???) (4,2,4)

(solution on page 12)



“

What is it about Canberra...  
 \*that prompts touring rock singers to pass us by?  
 \*that causes groups of visiting Japanese tourists to leave with as many yen in their pockets as they arrived with?  
 \*that lies in the memory of those who have been here as "Canberra? Oh, yeah...I spent a week there one day..."?

?”



### What does the 40th Intervarsity Choral Festival Committee/Collective have to say for itself?

Okay, it's not a case of bicentennial euphoria, and we *are* talking Canberra here, but who would be so shallow as to hold these things against us?

**WE HAVE THE CAMP:** Beautifully nestled in natural environs, "tastefully decorated in neutral tones", with carpeted rooms and ensuites and an abundance of flora and fauna and other natural entities with which to commune when you're sober.

**WE HAVE THE 40th IVCFC/C:** The last few months have seen the consolidation of some real talent into the vital force behind the Festival--Australia's first truly egalitarian-no-holds-barred-let's-put-this-to-the-vote-IV-Committee/Collective!

Enrico Sondalini IS Fundraiser  
 Ingrid McKenzie IS Concert Manager  
 Mark Chapman IS Treasurer  
 Liz Moore IS Secretary  
 Kate Rockpool IS Librarian  
 Lan Wang IS Billetting and Transport Person  
 Meredith Boroky IS Social Secretary  
 James Crawford IS An Extra Member  
 Katya IS Publicity Person

IV

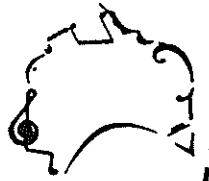
**WE HAVE THE CONDUCTOR:** Hans Gunter Mommer, a real musical genius who refuses to settle for second-best.

**WE HAVE THE WORKS:** (Not One But) *Four Sacred Pieces* by Verdi, Brahms' *Schicksalslied* (try singing that under the influence!) and Kodaly's *Missa Brevis*, among others.

**WE HAVE THE TIME:** July 1 to 15, 1989.

In short, plans for the 40th IVCF here in Canberra are a veritable blueprint for excitement. I wouldn't miss it if I were you!!

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL KATYA ON (062) 48 4436 OR (062) 51 3884. GO ON! DO IT NOW!



Not the Bicentennial...  
 Come to Canberra in 1989, Not-the-bicentennial-year.  
 We promise you:  
 \*No flag-waving crowds  
 \*No fireworks  
 \*No elderly ANZACS  
 \*No Bicentennial Projects  
 \*No ageing monarchs in polyester twin sets unveiling statues of historical personae

”

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**DON'T FORGET. THE DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF ERATO IS APRIL 30. SO GET YOUR ARTICLES IN BEFORE THIS DATE, OR IT'S TOO LATE, BABY.**

## FORTHCOMING FEATURES

### ERATO PROFILE

Ben Macpherson  
on Bruckner, Bach and Beer

### AISCA AFTER THE EIGHTIES

What does the future hold  
for our organisation?

### SIGHTREADING BY THE STARS

### FRESH VOICES

New Members' contributions

### WHATEVER HAPPENED TO--?

## ADVERTISING SPACE

ERATO is expanding both its readership and the services it provides to its readers. We are producing an exciting and informative magazine which reaches many hundreds of eager choristers all around Australia.

Do you know of any organisation, business or group associated with music, publishing or other services relevant to choral life who could benefit by advertising in ERATO?

If you do, or if you have any ideas you would like to talk about, please contact Stephen Schafer (the Editor) by writing to Box 150 Holme Building, University of Sydney, NSW 2006, or ring (02) 660 4038.