

Reference:

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Re: 34th Intervarsity Choral Festival

I directed a week-long rehearsal camp for the 34th Intervarsity Choral Festival in May 1983, and then conducted the Festival Choir in a concert of polychoral and brass music by Gabrieli, Monteverdi and Schütz at St. Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne on 21 May 1983.

This was by far the most committed and spirited choir I have worked with. The warmth and enthusiasm of the group was magnetic. Singers of great ability and wide experience worked happily side by side with singers of very limited musical background without any of the tensions that are often a feature of such a diverse group. A very challenging programme (some of the pieces were in up to 16 parts and with up to 4 spatially-separated choirs) was comfortably learned and polished to performing standard in only six days.

A timetable of very hard work was integrated with a hectic programme of "high jinks" and merriment. The week had such intensity that it was astonishing everyone had the stamina to survive it. On the other hand, the energy which radiates from Intervarsity Choral Festivals burns on fervently in everyone's hearts. The impact of these Festivals upon the popularity of Choral singing in Australia is considerable. Some IV choristers have gone on to professional choral work; many of the finest choristers I have worked with in other choirs gained their commitment to choral singing chiefly through IV festivals.

The Inter-Varsity Choral Festivals must continue, and must continue to be supported at all costs. Without reservations, I could recommend them for grants of support to any arts-funding bodies, and would be more than happy to discuss this further at any time. Needless to say, were I invited to conduct them again, I would be back like a shot.

With best wishes



Warren Bebbington  
Lecturer in Musicology

7 June 1983