



## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

### **MARCH 2003 TO MARCH 2004**

2003 has been and enormously successful year for the Armidale Symphony Orchestra. Each concert has been an unqualified artistic success and all have been financial successes. This does not mean that the orchestra is without challenges, but more about this later.

The concerts were:

#### **4 May Conductor: Wendy Huddleston**

Die Lustigen Weiber von Windsor (The Merry Wives of Windsor) Overture. Otto Nicolai.

Concerto for Cello and Orchestra No. 1. Saint-Saens

Soloist Nick Metcalfe.

Symphony No. 2. Villem Kapp

This was the first performance in Australia of the Kapp symphony. This was promoted as a gala event and a champagne gourmet supper was served. The performance of this work created a lot of interest among the Estonian community. Wendy first heard the music on a BBC Music Magazine Disc & subsequently had a letter published in the magazine about the concert.

#### **17 August Conductor: Graham Maddox**

From Bohemia's meadows and forests (a movement of Ma Vlast (My Country)) Smetana

Piano Concerto No. 23 in A major, K. 488. Mozart

Soloist Renate Turrini.

Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68. Brahms

A grant from the Country Arts Support Program administered by Regional Arts NSW was received to fund the appearance of Renate Turrini. The concert was well attended and successful financially and artistically.

#### **16 November St. Mary's Cathedral Conductors: Wendy Huddleston and Bruce Menzies**

Marriage of Figaro Overture Mozart (Bruce conducted)

Concertante for Violin and Viola Mozart (Bruce conducted)

Soloists Errol Russell and Dan Williams.

Requiem Mozart (with Armidale Choral Society) (Wendy conducted)

Soloists: Leanne Kenelley, Rowena Moon, Tom Moran, Leon Warnock

The concert was extremely well attended and successful artistically and financially. Wendy felt that the rehearsal model adopted, with a shared conducting role, was very successful. It could well be the future model for the performance of major works with the Armidale Choral Society.

#### **Woodford and the Plague and the Moonflower**

The ASO was privileged to be involved with this enormous production and musical event. Woodford has placed the ASO on a very different musical map & the reports of the outstanding performance keep flooding in. On behalf of the ASO I would like to thank Bruce for enticing us to give up part of our Christmas holidays to be involved in this magnificent event.

Publicity has worked very well this year. The time we spend in committee meetings planning this and assigning responsibilities for each concert has indeed born fruit. The financial success of our concerts is in no small measure a result of this work.

We now have a web site. Thanks to Colin Sholl for his work with this. The URL is <http://www.armsymph.org/> I would encourage you to look at the site and make suggestions and submit material either through the committee or directly to Colin.

Our new arrangements for final rehearsal afternoon teas has worked very well. This has taken the pressure off members of the orchestra at a time when they need to be focusing purely on the music. We also now have a team of ASO “friends” who are currently very busy getting organised for the interval drinks and refreshments for the next concert, the Last Night of the Proms in Armidale. I would like to thank Helen for motivating and driving these people on. We certainly put on a good public face when we do these things well. The positive atmosphere at the Kapp “gala” was a case in point.

I would like to thank all members of our hard working committee. Meetings are always well attended and lively. The new committee to be elected tonight has many challenges. These include:

*The future security of the orchestra.* It is amazing that the orchestra continues to provide such high quality concerts when it is becoming increasingly difficult to ensure that we have a full complement of players at least at some rehearsals. Our challenge is to build up the orchestra’s identity with local musicians. There are enormous in-roads on the time of musicians now and it is our challenge to create a sense of responsibility for our musicians for what must still remain the jewel in the crown of Armidale’s music. A broadened leadership role in the community for our over worked members is one plan I hope to work on if I am re-elected. We also need to consider the relevance of the orchestra’s activities to people from a variety of musical backgrounds and ages.

*Guest performers, members and soloists.* We have needed to develop a policy for this for some time. Almost each concert that uses a soloist who needs to be paid has us diving for previous minutes and trying to hang our view on a philosophy. The committee has asked me to devise a policy for discussion. While I have not formalized this, I would like to see the orchestra debate a very simple structure involving costed submissions from conductors which are vetted by the committee.

*Relationship with other organisations.* In particular NECOM, AMF and the AYO spring to mind. If we are going to continue our outstanding role in this community, we need to be very firmly focused on where we fit in, just as other organisations are aware of where they fit in with us. This could be one way of achieving goals that may flow from the issues discussed in the future security of our orchestra.

Finally I would like to thank all members of the orchestra. It has been great to become part of the ASO community. We have three outstanding programs for this year which we need to approach with enthusiasm. These are (all listed on the web site)

### **3 pm, 9 May. Lazenby Hall**

#### **The Last Night of the Proms. Conductor David Gee.**

A programme of beautiful, entertaining and rousing music plus champagne/orange juice and lots of fun.

- Overture to Orpheus in the Underworld - Offenbach
- Introduction, Theme and Variations for Clarinet and Orchestra - Rossini
- Symphony No. 5 - Beethoven
- Pomp and Circumstance No. 1 - Elgar
- Plus old favourites.

**14 and 15 August Conductor Bruce Menzies**

Songs from the Shows, with Peter Cousens and the Armidale Musical Society.

**31 October Conductor Peter Maddox.**

Thorn Recorder Concerto. Zana Clarke soloist.

Haydn Symphony No. 1 "The Military"

Brahms Variations on a theme of Haydn.

**David Gee**

**22 March 2004**