

# Armidale Symphony Orchestra - President's Report for 2011

I have much pleasure in presenting my report for the year ending 31 December 2011.

We began the year as usual with our involvement in the Armidale Music Foundation's fourteenth annual choral weekend in a performance of Brahms' *German Requiem*.

For our May concert, Wendy Huddleston took on the challenge of conducting the orchestra and the Choral Society in a very successful performance of Haydn's *Creation* with guest soloists Bethany Shepherd, Tom Moran and Mitch Riley.

Continuing our collaboration with other musical groups in Armidale, we combined with the Armidale Drama and Musical Society in August to present two performances of *Another Night at the Opera*, in which Bruce Menzies conducted a selection of well loved choruses, arias, ensembles and orchestral interludes from the world of opera.

Graham Maddox conducted our final concert for the year in which we were pleased to have Richard Pulley return to his home town to perform Brahms' *Violin Concerto in D*. The concert opened with Mozart's overture to *La Clemenza di Tito* and concluded with Beethoven's *Symphony No 7*.

Several members of the orchestra were also involved during May and June in the ADMS production of *The Producers*, for which Graham Maddox was the musical director.

At this point I would like to reflect on some of the changes that have occurred during my term as president of the Orchestra. Perhaps the most significant of these was the conclusion of the amalgamation agreement with NECOM, which has allowed us more effectively to share resources such as percussion instruments and rehearsal space. I need to point out however that there are some issues regarding our financial arrangements with NECOM that are yet to be resolved.

The conversion of the Old Teachers College gymnasium into an orchestral rehearsal space has been very beneficial in providing a secure storage space while allowing chairs and stands to remain set up from week to week thus avoiding the loss of time that would otherwise occur at the beginning and end of rehearsals.

From time to time people have commented to me about the continuing improvement in the standard of the orchestra. This I feel is a tribute to the commitment of long-standing members of the orchestra and the dedication of our regular conductors and section leaders. But it is also due in no small measure to the contribution made by the tutors of NECOM, both by their direct involvement in the orchestra and by the number of young people that are being encouraged under their tutelage.

A major development that will continue to play out over the coming years is the prospect of a dedicated Performing Arts Centre for Armidale. You will all be aware that during 2011 a new committee called the Armidale Dumaresq Civic Precinct committee was formed with representatives from ARPAC (Armidale Regional Performing Arts Centre Inc), the library, the council and the general Armidale community. The aim of this committee is to redevelop the Armidale Town Hall precinct with the construction of a new library and a theatre complex, together with the refurbishment of the Town Hall. I encourage all members of the orchestra to fully support this project.

I would like to thank all the members of the ASO executive for their support, in particular Chris Cunningham and April Kelson, who are stepping down from their respective positions as publicity officer and secretary.

Maurice Anker