

President Memoir

**Lyn Carr
1996-1998**

An association member since 1977, I joined Council in 1994 and was elected to the position of President in 1996, the Association's 75th year.

Honoured to join the distinguished, dedicated past presidents who had served so distinctively during the previous 75 years, I resolved to endeavour to further raise the profile and professionalism of the Association. This was a stimulating challenge.

I remember naively formulating a ***Vision for the future*** in 1996, as there did not appear to be one at the time. Many of the innovations therein were addressed successfully or in the pipeline at the conclusion of my term of office. However, the ***Vision*** was placed on the backburner many times for various reasons, one being that regular, important time-consuming Association business took precedence. As well, unplanned diversions, including a number of changes in office staff, emerged along the way. They were testing but always interesting times,

In 1996, the appointment of a new administrative secretary, Jenny Tucker provided the opportunity for much-needed updating and streamlining of office procedures. Jenny was a creative and hard-working Secretary, generating much new business for the Association. This had its downside however, as I remember, that she, myself, and other Council members often took Association work home in an effort to cut paid office hours.

Council meetings were absorbing, sometimes confronting but the business of the day was always carried out with a sense of purpose, humour and camaraderie. In an effort to reduce the length of Council meetings, sub-committees were formed and their meeting reports tabled at the monthly Council meetings for action.

Despite the foresight shown by previous councils in the purchase of the MTAQ premises, the membership was still seen by our Accountants as the Association's greatest asset, the majority of annual income being raised by membership fees. A notable discrepancy in the recorded membership discovered early in 1996, found that there were 150 less financial members than actually recorded on membership reports. This was thought to be a computer error, prompting the purchase of a software package more suited to the needs of the Association. The serious membership drive, which then became a priority, was eventually very productive.

There was a culture at the time that members needed to be offered more services, Council were very aware that this was desirable and many initiatives were put in place. However, with the economic climate of rising costs, it soon became apparent membership fees were inadequate, and that it could be advantageous to look to professional fundraising as a means of helping to bolster Association funds. After further consultation it was decided that this was not an option for a not-for-profit organization.

Towards the end of 1998 we learned of the passing of a Patron of the Association, Mr. Basil Jones. He was a wonderful friend of the Association, my last personal contact with him being at the 1997 end of year celebrations held at the MTAQ Auditorium. Basil Jones enjoyed a long and illustrious

career, occupied a large number of appointments, and was a Director of the Queensland Conservatorium for 21 years.

MTAQ 75TH ANNIVERSARY

In April 1996 A commemorative afternoon tea was held at the Lyrebird Restaurant Queensland Performing Arts Complex

- * Patron, Mr. Basil Jones, the president and current council members, many past presidents, and eighty members and their guests attended, each signed a special book to commemorate the occasion.
- * The afternoon's celebrations included a number of speeches. Mr. Basil Jones was afforded the honour of cutting the 75th Anniversary cake.
- * A special guest Dr. Nancy Weir, who had previously been very active in the Association, gave her usual polished performance together with a running commentary in her own inimitable style. Gloria Ward, the immediate past president, accompanied by Regis Danillon, performed a selection of vocal solos.

The publication "dal segno" containing the memoirs of ten past presidents was launched at the above event.

The publication compiled and edited by Mr. Ian McKinley and sponsored by Ellaways Music, proved to be a wonderful record of a significant portion of the Association's development and achievements up until that time, albeit somewhat condensed.

Elegant MTAQ 75th Anniversary mugs and linen tea towels were produced for sale and were in demand throughout the year.

Four Student Showcase recitals - held at the Queensland Art Gallery between May and July 1996.

Each recital devised to compliment and coincide with Art Exhibitions at the Gallery. Seventy students of members attended an initial audition from which twenty-eight were chosen. Performers received an MTAQ 75th Anniversary Certificate to commemorate the occasion.

A 75th Anniversary Supper Concert - held at the Performing Arts Auditorium in June 1996.

Artists included Diane Selmon and Charles Glenn, Peter Roennfeldt, Kevin Power, Kerry Vann, Henry Howell, Paul Neal, Regis Danillon and Pauline Smith, each artist donated their services for the occasion.

The Hon. Mrs. Joan Sheldon an invited guest, delivered a short address after which a delicious selection of hot and cold finger food was served on the verandah of the Performing Arts Auditorium overlooking the Brisbane river.

Arco's \$1,000.00 sponsorship ensured that costs were covered. The event was a memorable conclusion to the programmed activities of the Association's 75th milestone.

CAIRNS WORKSHOP & MTAQ REGIONAL BRANCH STATE MEETING 1997

This was primarily organized to assist the Northern Queensland branches whose members often felt isolated. The programme, developed with the assistance of the Cairns Branch, included a variety of valuable workshops relevant to teachers and their students.

Lecturers included Miss Joyce Skelton, Mrs. Suzanne Thompson, Mrs. Ruth Bonetti, Mrs. Glen Carter-Varney, Mrs. Lyn Carr, Dr. Robert Keane and Mr. Henry Howell.

A regional branch state meeting held at that time proved fruitful. As well, delegates and lectures enjoyed a special dinner catered for by Cairns branch members. Northern Queensland hospitality was much appreciated by all who attended.

SPRING SYMPOSIUM “WIDENING HORIZONS” 1998

This period of growth and development culminated with an ambitious large-scale event – “Widening Horizons” An International Spring Symposium held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre from 21st – 25th September 1998. Planned initially to replace the Winter Vacation Course, this event took twelve months of careful planning and fine-tuning to achieve a desirable mix of presenters and topics relevant to the membership.

Delegates came from New Zealand, Thailand, Singapore, Penang and Kuala Lumpur, and Tasmania, joining MTAQ members from Brisbane and MTAQ branches as far away as Cairns, Townsville and Rockhampton.

The programme was stimulating from practical, academic and aesthetic viewpoints. Sessions covered diverse, intriguing areas through wide-ranging subject areas:

A special guest, the brilliant pianist Michael Kieran Harvey presented two lectures and a master-class. The first subject “Playing to Please? Penetrated the motivations behind making and teaching music” probed the question of what composers and performers regarded as important facets of their art forms, how they arrived at the decision to make music their careers, and strategies to develop and nurture musical minds. His second lecture dealt with the notion of a curriculum for music education from a uniquely Australian perspective titled “The End of the Cringe”.

Carl Vine, a prominent Australian composer shared his views and opinions on the future of new music, what has happened in hindsight and the kinds of music would survive the onslaught of commercialisation of the art form.

Professor Malcolm Gillies addressed issues of how best to appreciate early twentieth century music, illustrated with examples suitable for teaching, and offered suggestions on how to enjoy these compositions.

Dr. Susan Wright led group participation in a music/movement improvisation session. Using musical elements combined with creative movement, vocalisation and use of non-traditional objects, creativity was emphasized and compositions discussed.

Gwenda Gilligan presented “Palpitations, People and the Puzzle of Playing Peacefully”. This session related specifically to all aspects of performance anxiety and the many techniques available to obviate and deal with the problem.

Wendy Lorenz compared aspects of style in the Baroque and Romantic eras. The elements of form, texture, harmonic usage, rhythmic practices, articulation, phrasing, and ornamentation were addressed.

Dr. Philip Truman’s paper, read by Mr. Max Olding, dealt with the fascinating subject of Synaesthesia. This was accompanied by slides and musical examples.

Pamela Page presented a bi-media event. This demonstrated in a practical way the phenomenon of Synaesthesia. Using the Liszt Sonata she illustrated each of the many changes of mood throughout the work on fifteen large canvases.

Mark Gibson gave an account of current music technology products and their use in the music studio. He provided strategies to assist teachers to integrate technology into the private music studio and encouraged experimentation. This was a hands-on session.

Rhonda Davidson-Irwin’s session “Music Soothes the Savage Beast” demonstrated many innovative and easily implemented practical ideas to improve music teaching.

Mr. Max Olding focused on the management of sound in his session titled “Linking Tone Production to Interpretation”. He also conducted a very popular master class.

Dr. Peter Roennfeldt presented “Stylistic Dances of the Baroque Era”. Two dancers in colourful period costume enhanced the presentation.

Mr. Kerin Bailey, a prolific composer/performer of music in the popular contemporary idiom presented a session on repertoire titled “In the Groove –Rhythm and Improvisation”.

A Careers forum, chaired by Mr. Kevin Power was a popular and informative session on the final day.

Delegates enjoyed a Symposium dinner and cruise on the Kookaburra Queen and were entertained by Clare Hansen. Kerin Bailey joined Clare for an impromptu performance delighting those present with clever improvisations to which those present sang along enthusiastically.

Diverse lunchtime concerts were held each day. These were offered free of charge and culminated with a performance by “No Qualms” string quartet during a farewell luncheon on the final day.

The services of Events Solutions, an event management organization were secured to assist Council with marketing, publicity and the organization of this mammoth event. The majority of the planning, organization and running of the event however, was undertaken by a dedicated and enthusiastic committee for the benefit of members and was a time-consuming labour of love.

Whilst the Symposium was an exciting, notable professional step forward for the Association at the time, the event proved to be the greatest disappointment and frustration of my term of office

in that its artistic success was overshadowed by a sizeable financial loss. In retrospect, it seemed the membership were not ready for an event of this calibre.

Ironically, Mrs. Lorraine O'Brien, Treasurer of the Association at the time, observed that if just 16 more full delegates had attended, the Symposium would have broken even. I remember that those who had worked so hard for the Association were particularly discouraged and disappointed that the membership as a whole had not embraced such a memorable occasion, which was by any measure, of international standard.

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS & ACTIVITIES 1996 – 1998

- * Major new administrative procedures were put in place to professionalise systems and streamline the Association's operation. With a further goal to assist a smoother changeover for future Office bearers, Councils, and future changes in office staff.
- * The reorganization of the Office included the purchase of a new faster computer. More effective software regulated and updated membership records and easily produced monthly statistics and reports.
- * The computerization of Association accounts brought the association still further into the electronic age, whilst several large binders streamlined Association activities and made daily records and reports much more easily accessible. An attempt to regularly archive Association records was undertaken by the Administrative Secretary during my term of office.
- * Closer liaison with Branches included the re-introduction of Brisbane funded workshops.
- * In 1998 Brisbane funded two workshop/lectures for all Branches. The workshops were conducted by Australian composer Kerin Bailey and Kevin Power, an AMEB examiner and past president of the Association.
- * Regular surveys were sent to members to ascertain changing needs.
- * A re design and renovation of the auditorium, kitchen and entrance was undertaken, to increase marketability and ambiance. The Auditorium was much in demand as a low- cost, small but mostly adequate performance venue, providing a regular source of extra revenue.
- * The restoration of previously donated library cabinets and relocation of the library to the Auditorium was significant. Librarian, Marie Stephenson lovingly tended the Library for a number of years later joined by Lyn Panetta.
- * The purchase of "An International Directory of Music and Music Education Institutions" compiled and edited by Graham Bartle. To simplify the decision-making process for member applicants who held overseas qualifications.
- * The formation of a planning committee to develop a strategic analysis, and a three, five and ten-year plan for future development of the Association including financial projections for expenditure. Some of the strategic issues were: Membership growth, ongoing relevant professional development of members, involvement and contribution of members, increasing and maintaining a sponsorship base, influence on government and decision making in the arts, community perception of the association and its members, consultation with MTAQ on the design and quality of pedagogical programmes undertaken by various

bodies, improved relationships with MTAQ branches, closer relationships with kindred bodies, and relocation of the MTAQ office.

- * A further attempt was made to lobby Government to recognise the accreditation and registration of Private Music Teachers with the help of the Institute of Music Teachers, when it was learned that the Council of Music were considering bypassing Music Teachers' Associations, to achieve the same end.
- * The formation of a Constitution Review Committee for the purpose of considering amendments to the Constitution.
- * The compilation and publication of "Guidelines for Private Music Teachers" which replaced the outdated FAMTA booklet.
- * The introduction of the Quarterly Journal "Bravura" and a yearly planner. A composition by Percy Brier was reproduced as a cover. A member competition was launched to name the publication. Council chose Kim Woon's entry "Bravura". To assist in its despatch, printed envelopes replaced stapled plastic sleeves, greatly reducing the hours of voluntary labour.
- * The 1996 June Winter Vacation Course, was artistically successful and well received by those members who attended, particularly those from the northern branches. However the lack of response from Brisbane members was disappointing, Council decided on a biannual event and a change of venue for the next major professional development event.
- * The name "Calendar of Events" was replaced with "Professional Development Opportunities". Monthly programmes of relevant, balanced and inspirational workshop/lectures/master classes conducted by "leaders in their field" were organized and well attended in 1997. However, attendance started to wane in 1998 and Council were forced to reassess the number of events offered
- * Members were offered two complimentary professional development events each year excluding major events.
- * Workshops and lectures were recorded with the agreement of lecturers and new study tapes became a small but regular source of income.
- * Sponsorship was invited for all major association events including professional development opportunities. Lists of regular and possible future sponsors were compiled.
- * As a service to members, lists of Eisteddfods and available Adjudicators were compiled and published in "Bravura" as were articles on "How to Set up your Private teaching practice including a regular page entitled "Your Business ... Your Studio" giving helpful business information
- * A number of performance opportunities were offered during each year at the Art Gallery, and at the Stamford Plaza Hotel during high tea on Sunday afternoons. With the introduction of two pre-diploma performance opportunities per year, places were booked well in advance. Additionally, the introduction of an Open Performance Day in May 1998, provided opportunity for student performances of all instruments and voice. These were very popular and welcome additions to MTAQ activities at the time
- * The Queensland Piano Competition (previously jointly organized by The Australian Academy of Music and MTAQ) was successfully taken over by MTAQ. This proved to be financially advantageous providing a small source of income. Previously, MTAQ offered \$1000.00 for the major award as well as providing member volunteers on the day which seemed an imbalance.
- * The new Conservatorium at Southbank became the new venue for QPC.
- * Closer liaison with Tertiary Institutions and the creation of "letters of introduction to the Association" sent annually to graduates of each Institution assisted the ongoing membership drive.

- * Closer liaison with National Music Teachers' Associations was sought and affiliation with the Institute of Music Teachers achieved with a view to National accreditation of members.
- * A specialized Musical Instrument Insurance was negotiated as part of a new Public Liability package.
- * The finalization of a 20 year Term Membership put in place in 1986-87. Council chose not to seek further term memberships.
- * Association recognition of long-serving members who attained a continuous membership of 25 yrs.
- * Council members undertook greater responsibility. They attended monthly Council meetings (individual, personalised meeting folders for Council members were introduced) hosted professional development opportunities, and student showcase recitals, attended extra planning meetings, assisted in the organization and running of the annual Queensland Piano Competition, the 75th Anniversary events, the 1996 Winter Vacation Course, the 1997 Cairns workshop, the Spring Symposium in 1998 as well as assisting in the despatch of monthly newsletters and later, "Bravura" the Quarterly Journal.
- * A newly formed council support group of interested members of the Association held regular meetings throughout the year, undertaking a range of duties: as volunteers for library maintenance, office assistants to the Administrative secretary, spring cleaning and beautification of the auditorium, organization of social functions and as overseers/clerical assistants for the Queensland Piano Competition.

The membership of the Association was rich with talented, kind hearted and supportive people. I was very thankful for the opportunity to meet many of them.

I particularly wish to acknowledge past presidents, Miss Joyce Skelton, Mrs. Suzanne Thompson, Mrs. Audrey Bowring, Mrs. Aldyth Ashton, Mr. Kevin Power, and Mr. Bevan Crabtree. Their intimate knowledge of the background of the Association and willingness to offer advice and assistance when required was much appreciated.

As well Mr. Max Olding, who accepted the position of Patron left vacant by the passing of Mr. Basil Jones, was always supportive, particularly in the planning of the Spring Symposium. It was gratifying to be able to call on his experience, knowledge and expertise.

Members of Council from 1996-98 made an invaluable contribution - helping to propel the Association forward in such a professional manner. They deserve the admiration of all and my heartfelt thanks.

During my time as President I gained valuable experience, formed lasting friendships, have many fond, enjoyable memories and pride in a sense of achievement. It was a period of tremendous personal growth - despite the huge demands on my time, body and soul. My best wishes to all.