

President Memoir

Paul Neal

2004 – 2005

1. It was a privilege to be able to add to the history of the MTAQ. I was honoured to be nominated as President in 2005, following four years as a Council member and following Di Burt's highly successful two years as president. As a singing teacher I was in the minority, but my council colleagues gave great support and encouragement.
2. In 2001 we inaugurated the first Queensland Vocal Competition, A Sunday in May, to encourage young singers and show them the standards that could be achieved. Since then, the QVC has become a popular fixture with lots of entries and enthusiasm by all concerned, together with a high standard of adjudication and accompanying. Also, the good and willing involvement of Council members and other teachers as volunteers has allowed the day to proceed smoothly and professionally.
We were able to use the studio at 4MBS initially, but as the competition grew on a grand swell of interest, we moved in 2005 to Lourdes Hill College, where we could have two performance rooms running at the same time, to enable the competition to keep to one day.
3. The Queensland Piano Competition continued to flourish with hard work from organisers and volunteers alike. In 2005 we introduced a new open section with a fine Ritmuller piano as first prize.
4. A regular feature of our QPC and QVC from 2005 has been the concert in the Queen Street Mall, where the winners can show the public what an excellent standard has been achieved. There was good public interest and the performances were enjoyed by all, as well as offering further performance opportunities for the singers.
5. During 2005 discussion took place re a possible move being forced on us by the sale of our premises and building. This all came to naught as no suitable offers were received. However, I felt that due to the continuing building and upgrading of the Taringa Shopping Precinct, it is only a matter of time before a move becomes inevitable.
6. There were a number of rewarding workshops and masterclasses in many facets of interest and music making, which were appreciated by those who attended. However, I felt that many teachers did not bother to support these enough by bringing their students considering our wide membership.
7. During this period, the office has had to replace computers, photocopier and air conditioners at considerable expense, which as always underlines the fact that we must continue to seek new members and devise ways and means of reining in expenses wherever possible to remain viable and to do the very best for our members.
8. The branches continued to do good work and remain viable, due to the unstinting hard work of their members, not withstanding the tyranny of distances involved.
9. The Bravura kept up its news and interest value with supporting articles from members and advertising, and went from strength to strength.
10. I can only congratulate the Council over this period for their involvement and support. The sense of professionalism made the MTAQ a vibrant organisation relevant to its community's needs.
11. We were fortunate to have our Patrons Max Olding and Piers Lane involving themselves in fund raising concerts and we appreciated their willingness to give of themselves and their talent in this way.
12. The Nancy Weir piano Scholarships for students residing outside metropolitan Brisbane continued to be of value, but regretfully not enough teachers are willing to let their students participate.

13. As an Association we are fortunate to be able to take advantage of cheaper Teachers' Liability Insurance through brokers, due to the persistence of our secretary. This has been a boon to members, and also, a source of income to the Association through the commission, although understandably some teachers with a limited number of students were unhappy. However, in this world of litigation, it has become imperative to cover oneself.
14. In 2005 there were lots of thoughts given to a function to mark the 85th Anniversary of MTAQ. In 2006 the dinner/concert was a marked success with fine piano, violin, and vocal performances, and with Master of Ceremonies President John Colwill conducting the enjoyable evening.

I felt that the MTAQ has grown in strength and wider public recognition, and is in good shape with a secure future, due to the hard work and enthusiasm of its Council and membership.