



## ANNUAL REPORT 2017



*The Choir performing in Thomaskirche, Leipzig during the 2017 tour of Europe (C Mostert)*

**434 Brunswick Rd, West Brunswick VIC 3055, ABN: 49 434 510 467**

## THE YEAR IN PROFILE

- 10 years of the Australian Chamber Choir celebrated this year.
- 10 years reflecting the perfection and beauty of the ACC



- A highly successful Melbourne concert series with concerts in Melbourne Scots' Church, Middle Park and Brighton.
- A fantastic review of the Scots' Church concert, *A London Coronation*, in Classic Melbourne at <http://bit.ly/2EyJKzV>.
- Continuing heart-felt congratulations from audience members – some feedback after the Venice concert at Middle Park:

*I have attended all your performances but one over the past eight years and yesterday was the crowning glory. I offer my warmest congrats to you all - Douglas, all the soloists, performers and instrumentalists. By all means bask in the glory of your great work. Yes, I closed my eyes and was transported once more back to St Mark's in Venice. With my own theological background, I greatly enjoy your praise to God.*

*It was a splendid concert. An excellent program that balanced the generations of Andrea and Giovanni Gabrieli with a selection of "standards" that we seldom hear live, and other pieces that I had never heard. The musicians complemented the choir beautifully, and with a quality of intonation that shows how much historical instruments and their players have matured in recent times. This is the kind of performance that is of the highest standard that we might expect to hear anywhere in the world. — It's when you realise that this kind of affirmation is actually true, and not just chest-puffing self-indulgent praise, that you know that the last ten years (and all that preceded it) has been worth it.*

*I too thought the concert was one out of the box, and the box has been amazingly full for a long time! My congratulations, too, to everyone involved - it was a really special afternoon*

- Regional Victoria remains a point of focus in the ACC's annual calendar with concerts in Macedon, Geelong, Flinders and Castlemaine during the year.
- The Choir participated in the Morning Melodies program at the Darebin Arts & Entertainment Centre in June. A modified version of *By the waters of Babylon* was presented.
- The Choir visited Sydney in August, presenting *By the waters of Babylon* in the crypt of St Mary's Cathedral to great acclaim: see <http://bit.ly/2DECpOa> and <http://bit.ly/2BNvO21>.
- The same concert was presented in Bowral at St Jude's Church the day prior to the Sydney concert.
- The Choir's tour of Europe ran from 1 July to 22 July this year.
- We visited Italy, Austria and Germany on the tour, presenting concerts and participating in church services, including St Thomas' Church in Leipzig, Germany, the church where J S Bach was choir director from 1723 until his death in 1750. The tour finished with a concert in Beethoven's church: St Remigius, Bonn, Germany.



(credit: C Mostert)

- The concerts in Europe received rave reviews:

*I enjoyed your concerts so much ... It's very rare in our country to listen to choirs with this level of singing. Klaus Kuchling, Cathedral Organist, Klagenfurt, Austria, August 2, 2017*

*The concert was absolutely top class. It was an unforgettable experience for all those who attended. Douglas Lawrence, as conductor, is able to draw the absolute best out of his singers. I drove home feeling elated. Markus Karas, Cantor/Director of Music – Diaconate of Bonn, Germany, July 28, 2017*

*The voices of the 19 young singers are trained at the highest level. A lightning-crisp intonation rings through a naturally blended sound. The unaccompanied works of the evening begun in perfect tune without any preparatory humming, as the choir wended its way with the greatest security through music of many periods and styles. Echo, Darmstadt, July 20, 2017 (<http://bit.ly/2rFCxLu>)*

- A group of Friends accompanied the Choir on the tour of Europe, having the opportunity to attend most of the choir presentations as well as exploring some other European cities.
- The Choir and Friends celebrated the ACC's 10<sup>th</sup> birthday on July 4, dining in the midst of olive groves in the 14<sup>th</sup> century hamlet of Maiano, just out of Florence.

**Another fantastic year for the ACC.**

## REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT

Ten years of the Australian Chamber Choir – an amazing achievement. From a small beginning, the Choir has now achieved national and international fame and success. Our Melbourne concert series continues to grow in audience numbers and quality – the **best ever** was a common response to me after the *Venice* concert in November this year, with one writer saying how lucky I was to be president of such an august choir. Audience growth is such that we offered a repeat event for two concerts: July in Middle Park and November in Brighton. While the base numbers are acceptable for the repeat events, we will continue to invest in this development, using reviews to determine the most effective options for reaching a wider audience.

Concerts in regional Victoria remain part of the ACC's commitment to reaching a wide audience. Macedon is always a 'sell-out' event. We continue our push into Sydney with this year's concert attracting great reviews. On-going investment is part of our strategy to establish a strong Sydney base. The European tour is a highlight every two years in the ACC's schedule of events and this year's tour was no exception. The second accompanying Friends tour provided a great opportunity for the Friends to get to know more about the choir. The tour group were able to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> birthday of the ACC while in Florence.

There are many factors that contribute to the ACC's success. Douglas Lawrence, our Artistic Director, continues to create concerts that provide a breadth of musical styles with a balance of old and new, drawing on established composers as well as rising stars. The two pieces by Luke Hutton and Tom Henry in the '*By the waters of Babylon*' concert show the standard that can be achieved with our local composers.

Our Manager, Liz Anderson, ensures that program planning, subscriptions and concert seating arrangements operate smoothly. For this major task, we owe Liz our gratitude. Achieving grants and donations is now a significant challenge, given the crowded arts community space and the overall reduction in disposable funds. Liz must be congratulated for her success in obtaining significant funding to support the ACC's activities.

It is difficult to find words to express the brilliance of our singers. Expertly trained by Douglas, their commitment to the music shines through. The family atmosphere within the choir, to which I alluded in my report last year, undoubtedly contributes to its success. The musicians, who accompany the choir from time to time, add to the beauty of the music. The front-of-house staff and the ushers, all volunteers, contribute to the smooth operation of each concert event.

At the 2016 AGM, I outlined some of the challenges we are facing, challenges that are a consequence of our success and expansion. In early 2017, I organised a meeting with an accountant and auditor, both of whom were familiar with accounting procedures for 'not-for-profit' organisations. Their advice on how best to move towards establishing financial practices appropriate for auditing led to the creation of a Bookkeeper position to assist the Treasurer. We are pleased that we attracted Jan Boag to this position. I also initiated an independent review of the Manager's workload. Based on this review, the CoM identified that the tasks falling under the general headings of event and front-of-house management and administration could be undertaken by an Administrator appointee. After advertising these positions, we were pleased to attract Trudi Paton to join our management group. In closing our 2016 AGM, I referred to the need to commence a strategic planning exercise. This has commenced and it will be a major focus for the ACC in 2018.

I am looking forward to a successful 2018.

Robin Batterham,  
President  
7 March 2018

## **ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S PERSPECTIVE**

2017 was indeed a busy year. The usual three subscription concerts with the country repeats, a fine concert in St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney and a European Tour.

The European tour is a profound experience both for the choir and for the FRIENDS who accompany us on this adventure. There were many highlights; the Augustinerkirche, Vienna, where we gave a concert and sang for the Sunday morning mass, St Thomas' Leipzig, Bach's church, which has become a regular venue for the choir, the wonderful, uplifting ambience of the Cistercian Abbey at Stams, near Innsbruck and well, so much more. I must mention the visit to the Rieger Orgelbau in Schwarzach, Austria. Here we were taken on a tour of the factory which finished with a moving demonstration of voicing. For most on the tour, to watch for the first time a metal tube being turned lovingly into a musical instrument was a deeply moving experience.

The central activity of the choir is the subscription series. Here we had excellent audiences who seemed to revel in the music. We performed two new works: *Uncertain Journeys* by Tom Henry and Fern Hill, by Luke Hutton. The text for Tom's piece was drawn from various sources, new and old and Luke's work set to music the words of the great poem *Fern Hill* by Dylan Thomas. Over these ten years we have given many first performances. I see the performance of new works as an important responsibility. The ACC is fortunate to have singers of the highest calibre able to tackle these sometimes daunting scores.

Finally, I must again thank all our helpers. It would indeed be a long list if I named everyone who has helped the choir. The committee, led by Robin Batterham, Geoff Scollary our Secretary and Elizabeth Anderson our Manager must however be singled out for special thanks.

Douglas Lawrence  
2 February, 2018

## MANAGER'S REPORT

Douglas Lawrence and I were delighted to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the ACC in Florence in July with our singers and Friends group. We are extremely proud of the choir's achievements. This would not have been possible without the help of our tremendously supportive committee: From the beginning, we were assisted by Robin Batterham as Chairman and Richard Bolitho as Treasurer, with Kate McBride on the Management Committee and Michael Elligate, Bruce Fethers, Leonie Millard and Terence Tan as members of the Association. We were joined by Sarah Martin in 2008 (who was Public Officer from 2011 to 2016), George Littlewood in 2010, Stuart Hamilton in 2012 (Vice President from 2015), Alma Ryrie Jones in 2013 and Geoff Scollary in 2015 (Secretary from 2016). I would particularly like to thank Robin Batterham, Geoff Scollary and the members of the Management Committee for their extensive work assessing and interviewing all the applicants for our administrative positions and for their ongoing support. I am grateful to Alma Ryrie-Jones for her assistance with grant writing editing and program layout and to other members of our Association for their professional advice. As well as giving your time, most of you also support us financially. Thank you.

As we celebrate 10 years of the ACC, we can look back on some of our achievements:

### 2007 to 2017

Number of Donations Received: 684

Total Donations: \$354,556

Number of Project Grants Received: 12

Total Funding from Project Grants: \$185,386

Number of European Concert Tours: 6

Number of Public Performances in Europe: 98

### Performances in Australia

Number of Public Performances in Melbourne: 153

Number of Public Performances in Australia: 206

Number of Self-presented Performances in Australia: 45

## 1. Financial Support and Sponsorship

### a) Donations

Statistics for donations are shown in the table below.

Donations	2016	2017	% increase
Number of donations	154	187	21%
Number of donors	113	135	19%
Average donation/donor	\$369	\$425	15%
Donations from NSW	9	19	111%
Number of new donors	60	49	-18%
Donors giving monthly	3	3	0%
New bequests	3	0	
<b>Total donated</b>	<b>\$41,674</b>	<b>\$57,320</b>	<b>37%</b>

The 37% increase in the amount donated for 2017 exceeds the rate of growth of our Melbourne audience, which stands at 26%. The number of donors increased by 19%. Although there are less new donors in 2017 than in 2016, our donors have become more generous, with a 15% increase in the average amount given per donor. This is an excellent result given the current climate for philanthropy.

### b) Grants

In November 2017 we were awarded a **Google AdGrant**. This gives us ongoing in-kind support for up to US\$15,000 of advertising per month for an indefinite period.

During 2017 the costs associated with hiring instrumentalists for Concerts 1 and 3 were supported by \$6,080

from the **Robert Salzer Foundation** and \$27,558 from the **Margaret Lawrence Bequest**. \$13,690 from the **Lynnell Hughes Trust** supported our Sydney/Bowral visit in August 2017. A new grant of \$15,000, received in 2017 will contribute to the costs of hiring specialist musicians for our *Mozart Requiem* in April 2018. We have lodged applications for a further \$36,610 to assist with our Sydney visits and the production of a new CD. Outcomes of these applications will be published in June.

### c) Bequests

1. We are grateful to Lorraine Meldrum (Sarah Martin's mother), for the first bequest received by the ACC.
2. Rosemary Gleeson, who passed away in June 2016 stipulated a residual amount for the ACC, which is yet to be received. In June 2017 we received and acknowledged the formal report from TJ Mulvany & Co pertaining to the estate.

### d) In-Kind support:

On 8 November 2017 we were awarded a **Google AdGrant**. This gives us up to US\$15,000 worth of Google advertising per month for an indefinite period.

### We are grateful to:

**Emma and Tom's Fruit Juices**, and **Delatite** wines

**Ken Falconer** (for organ tuning) and **Scots' Church** (for rehearsal space)

**SalesForce** Database marketing software comes in a package for not-for-profits. We receive 10 free licences, of which we have now used 5.

We have partnerships with the **National Gallery of Victoria** and the **Ormond College Association**.

### European Support:

**Lars Rolner** Managing Director of Heavy Lift Shipping has given us a significant sum in return for a concert in Hamburg for our last five tours. As one of the major donors for the new Elbphilharmonie, he is discussing the possibility of using one of their halls for a concert in 2019.

Costs for our European tour are kept to a minimum due to in-kind support:

**Accommodation:** On our 2017 tour, many presenters provided free private accommodation or subsidised hotel accommodation in addition to an agreed concert fee.

**The Lupas Family:** Andrei Lupas (Director of Protein Evolution at the Max Planck Institute, Tübingen and his wife, Janice again gave a reception for the ACC, their host families and our Friends group following our concert in Tübingen.

**Elizabeth Anderson:** I worked an average of at least 20 hours per week during 2017 on artistic research, grant applications, managing ticketing, software systems, marketing, sponsorship and tour logistics. Taking into account bonus payments for successful grant applications, I worked a total of 299 hours on a voluntary basis during 2017.

## 2. Marketing

**Starting in 2007, ACC concerts have been marketed in two different ways:**

- a) **Packaged Concerts.** We market the program to another organisation, which pays us an agreed fee. We are not responsible for the costs of venue hire, marketing or publicity. We may however arrange to sell tickets on behalf of the outside organisation in order to benefit from collecting and retaining patron data.
- b) **Self-presented Concerts.** We market the program to the public and pay all presentation costs (venue hire, marketing and publicity). Income is generated from ticket sales.

### a) Packaged Concerts

In 2017, we received agreed fees for concerts in Preston, Castlemaine State Festival, Macedon, Flinders and Geelong. These were supplemented by services at St Carthages and at the Albury Festival of Chamber Music. The latter was presented by the ACC 8, as were a number of performances of Christmas Carols presented at Chadstone Shopping Centre during November and December. Our income from the above packaged performances during 2017 totalled \$70,341. Income from self-presented concerts in Melbourne,

Middle Park, Brighton, Sydney and Bowral totalled \$65,437. In addition, we received \$21,922 for concerts undertaken as part of our European tour. Nine of the twelve European concerts were for agreed fees.

For our 2018 season, we have secured fees for nine concerts in Castlemaine, Macedon, Clunes, Mornington, Geelong and the Art Gallery of NSW.

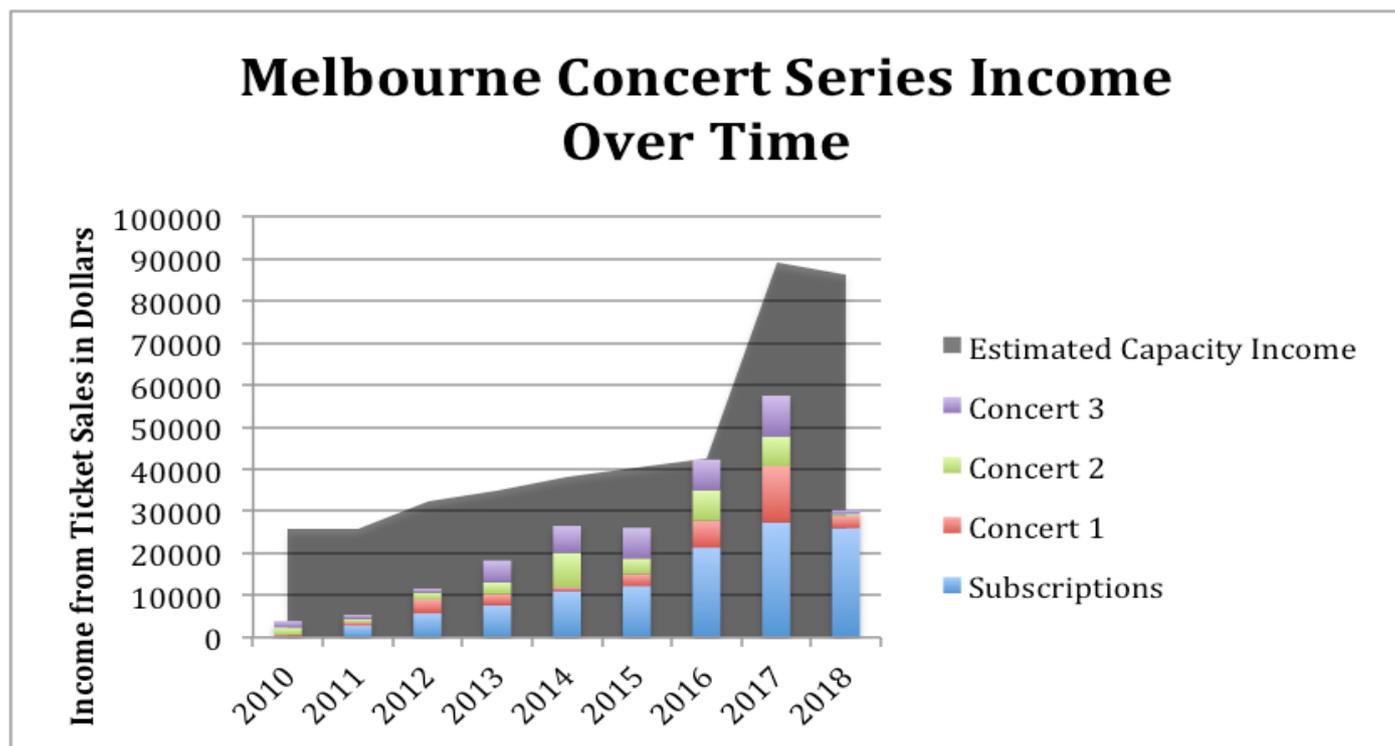
**b) Self-presented Concerts**

For our self-presented concerts in Melbourne and Sydney during 2017, the emphasis was on building our audience. The graph below shows Melbourne Concert Series Income Over Time from 2010 to 2017.

**Melbourne.** Following three capacity houses at Middle Park in 2016, during 2017, we experimented with new venues and repeat concerts:

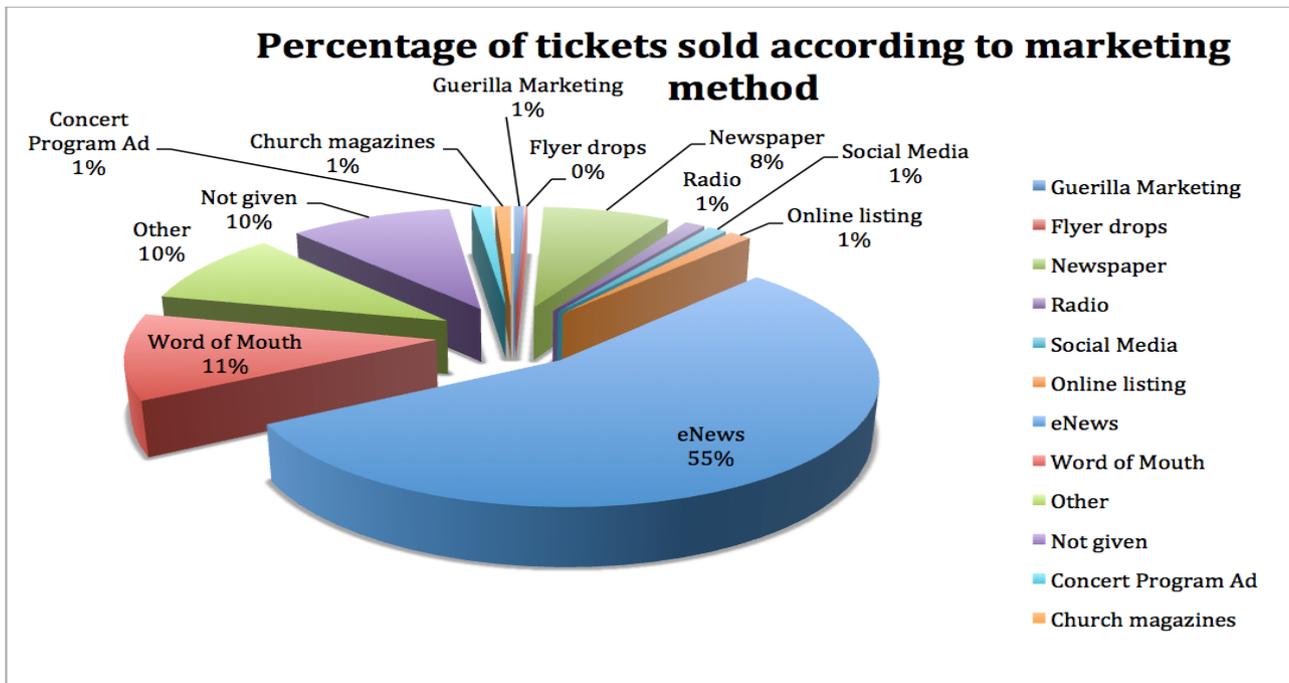
1. Concert 1, *A London Coronation* was held in the Scots’ Church. With an audience of 587, we exceeded the maximum full-house capacity of Middle Park by 137 and had 20 seats remaining to sell at Scots.
2. Concert 2, *By the Waters of Babylon* was an unaccompanied program, which we presented twice (Saturday and Sunday at 3pm) at our Lady of Mount Carmel on a June weekend. The audience for both performances, totalled 452. Mt Carmel’s capacity with extra seats is 450.
3. Concert 3, *Venice* was presented at St Andrew’s Brighton on a Saturday and at Middle Park the day after. The Brighton audience was 151 (up from 60 in 2015) and the Middle Park audience was 328. The audience for both performances totalled 479.

Overall, our Melbourne audience increased by 26%. However, this should be weighed against the additional investment of singers’ fees, venue hire and publicity for the two repeated concerts.



**Sydney.** Following on from the excellent response to our 2016 *Bach in the Castle of Heaven* concert in the Crypt of St Mary’s Cathedral, we once again invested in an extensive marketing campaign to present *By the Waters of Babylon* there. In response to feedback from the public and the press, the *Babylon* program included two works by Bach, which featured prominently in our advertising. The audience of 165 for our 2017 concert was disappointingly 24 less than our 2016 audience. Our NSW mailing list is currently 260, compared to a Victorian list of 1,970. To generate momentum and assist with audience building in Sydney in 2018, we have secured a second Sydney concert at the Art Gallery of NSW. Two months later, our self-presented *Baroque Christmas* program at St Mary’s Cathedral should attract a larger audience.

In 2018 we will self-present five concerts in Melbourne, Middle Park (2 concerts), Brighton and Sydney.



The graph above shows which marketing method patrons told us prompted their on-line ticket purchase (from a sample of 2,003 tickets to our 2017 season). The purple “not given” segment represents 220 tickets not purchased on-line.

From this survey and supporting statistics, we learn the following:

1. many patrons sign up to receive our eNews before purchasing their first ticket to an ACC concert
2. Our eNews, at approximately 1c per email is our most efficient form of marketing, followed by word-of-mouth
3. Patrons who receive our eNews are among our most loyal. The majority of tickets purchased by eNews recipients are subscription tickets
4. Newspaper advertising is an effective, if expensive way of attracting new attendees.

Some new marketing strategies for 2017 were

- A free listing in the on-line *What's On In Melbourne* was probably responsible for the larger than usual number of walk-ups for *A London Coronation* (Concert 1) at the Scots' Church. This concert, performed once only, and with a small number of accompanying musicians, was our most profitable for the year, with a total income of \$22,335. It is unfortunate that the acoustics of The Scots' Church, while acceptable for accompanied programs, are not sufficiently reverberant to do justice to unaccompanied programs.
- Google ads began two weeks before our Venice concert in Middle Park

### 3. European Concert Tours

The thirty Friends who accompanied us for the first 17 days of our 2017 concert tour were delighted to sing in our “Friends Choir” workshops, get to know choir members and chat with locals in addition to all the expected sight-seeing activities. I designed and marketed the tour and Cathy Sullivan from Eastern Hill Travel, who accompanied the Friends group, was responsible for booking and logistics. At least four ACC singers joined in each of the three Friends Choir workshops conducted by Douglas Lawrence. Several singers also enjoyed accompanying the Friends group for a private tour of the Rieger organ building factory in Austria. Singers travelled with the Friends group in their coach on the short journey from Stams to Lindau and we shared five evening meals and one post-concert drinks. Friends especially enjoyed a post-concert reception in Tübingen, where they met local choral singers and music lovers who had offered accommodation to our singers. Feedback from the Friends group suggests that we got the balance just right.

The tour came in just under budget. We retained \$14,900, compared to the budgeted \$14K.

Planning for our 2019 tour is running to schedule. So far, we have confirmed performances in Notre Dame – Paris, Trinitatis – Copenhagen and Ribe Cathedral. The tour will begin in Denmark and continue through

Germany. Jan and Mark Schapper have expressed interest in supporting us in our ambition to perform in London, so we are exploring various performance opportunities in the UK. A Friends group will accompany us for part of the tour.

#### **4. Insurance**

Tailored for choirs that are members of the Australian National Choral Association (ANCA) by Insurance Brokers AON at a cost of \$366 per annum. The specifications of the policies are as follows:

Period of insurance: 22/02/2017 to 21/02/2018

##### **Broadform Liability Insurance**

Insurer: SLE Worldwide

Sub Limit \$100K for goods in Care Custody & Control (third party)

Professional Liability \$1million (cap per claim) to \$2million (life of policy) in the aggregate

Deductibles: none

Geographical Limits: Australia and New Zealand. <sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub> Limits of Liability: Public Liability: \$20 million any one occurrence. Product liability: \$20 million any one period. Insured: Australian National Choral Association Inc. and their members, committees and volunteers and in particular Australian Chamber Choir.

##### **Volunteer Accident Insurance**

Insurer: AHI Insurance

\$100K Death & Capital Benefits

\$500 cap Weekly Benefits

No age limit

Claims for pre-existing conditions are excluded

Geographical Limits: Australia

##### **Travel Insurance**

It is a condition of participation that singers taking part in our European tours take out a personal medical and accident insurance that is appropriate for their needs and provide the details to us.

#### **5. Contractors and Employees during 2017 were**

Douglas Lawrence: Artistic Director

Elizabeth Anderson: Manager

Singers @ \$150 per singer for each concert that is not a part of a tour

Prue Bassett Publicity

Dianna Wells Design

Trojan Grafix printers

Fairfax Newspaper Advertising

Eleanor Bridger: Marketing

Mainwaring Sydney Brochure distribution

New contractors in 2017 were

3MBS Radio Ads

Mr Moto Melbourne brochure distribution and advertising screens

In November 2017, I was delighted to begin working with Trudi Paton (Administrator) and Jan Boag (Bookkeeper). I am very much looking forward to the next chapter with the ACC, achieving great things with our new team.



Elizabeth Anderson  
Manager

## **ADMINISTRATION REPORT**

### **Committee of Management (CoM)**

Office bearers for 2017, elected at the 2016 AGM, were

- President: Professor Robin Batterham
- Vice-President: Stuart Hamilton
- Treasurer: Richard Bolitho
- Secretary: Dr Geoff Scollary

The AGM decided not to fill the two additional positions on the CoM that are allowed under ACC rules. Rather, the AGM asked the CoM to advise on how best these two positions can be used to benefit the overall management skills set.

### **Meetings**

The CoM held seven meetings during the year, six of these face-to-face meetings and one by email. Some CoM members met with an accountant and auditor to take advice on financial structures the ACC as a 'not-for-profit' organisation. The Manager, Artistic Director and one ACC member also participated in this meeting.

The main new business for the year was the restructuring of our administration and financial support. Following advertisement for three positions of Bookkeeper, Event and front-of-house management and Administration the 300 applicants were reduced to two appointees: Bookkeeper and Administrator, the latter combining event management and general administration.

### **New appointments to the administration team**

#### *1. Administrator, Trudi Paton*

Trudi writes that she is delighted to join the ACC and is keen to strengthen income participation and the ACC brand in 2018.

*Trudi Paton (BBus, MAEMgt) is an Arts Manager and Administrator with two decades of work experience assisting committees of management, local government, arts professionals and arts groups to oversee operations and event production across a broad range of offerings. In particular, Trudi has worked with the Melbourne Youth Chorale (formerly Berwick Youth Choir) since 2000. Trudi is passionate about creating opportunities for participation in the performing arts, and especially in choral performance, which she believes offers an important means of expression to bridge gaps of cultural/social harmony and diversity, to mark historical periods and people of significance, and to connect communities in a way that is uplifting and emotionally and spiritually engaging.*

Trudi is especially keen to work with the ACC's stakeholders in 2018 to further develop the ACC's strategic plan, using creative innovation and industry experience to expand and sustain this wonderful organisation throughout its next decade. She is thankful to Liz, Doug and the committee for the warm and supported welcome that has been shown her.

#### *2. Bookkeeper, Jan Boag*

Jan writes:

*I've worked as a contract bookkeeper for many years now, mostly in small companies and for charities and the not-for profit-sector. I like the people side of being in a small organisation.*

*My husband and I have four adult children between us, all now living independently. This gives us time to spend our time doing things we love. We are both very active bushwalkers and keen travellers, having done many walks in Australia as well as overseas in places like Indonesia, Italy, Germany and Peru. And have just returned from 5 weeks through India, Cambodia and Vietnam.*

*Living close to the CBD we attend lots of arts and music events. We go to live music shows and my husband plays in a suburban concert band. Finally, I keep fit running and like to enter fun runs when I can. The last one I did, I came second in my age group.*

*I'm really enjoying being close to music with ACC and look forward to meeting more people associated with the choir as time goes on.*

### **Formal reporting requirements**

The ACC's 2016 formal reporting to Consumer Affairs Victoria and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission were completed within the required timeframe imposed by both government bodies.

The ACC is listed on the *Register of Cultural Organisations* and this allows us to be the recipient of tax deductible donations. The Ministry for the Arts is presently reviewing the 'gift conditions' for receiving donations as well as proposing a 6-monthly reporting of donations received by the cultural organisation. The CoM will watch this proposal carefully to ensure that we are not impacted in a negative way.

Geoff Scollary  
ACC Secretary